

# Selection, Storage and Handling of Watermelon

## Watermelon has Safe Handling Practices

According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), you should wash all fruits and vegetables, including all melons, in clean, running water before eating them. If you purchase a cut piece of watermelon, rinse the rind portion in fresh water. Don't forget to dry too! This is true of all fruits and vegetables, rinds or not.

### Here are some steps to consider when enjoying watermelon:

1. Select the best melon possible to last the longest in your kitchen. The outside of the melon should be firm and free of any major cracks or dents. But once you've brought your watermelon home, the general rule of thumb is, "when in doubt, throw it out." At some point, everyone who purchases fresh produce may not get around to consuming it in time.
2. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before cutting watermelons.
3. Before cutting, wash the outer surface with cool tap water and dry to remove surface dirt.
4. Wash all food-contact areas and equipment, such as cutting boards, counter tops, peelers and knives with hot water and soap to avoid cross contamination.
5. Maintain the temperature of watermelons. If you purchased it at room temperature, you can keep it at room temperature. If you refrigerate it after purchasing, be sure to keep the watermelon cool.
6. Always refrigerate watermelon once you have cut into it. Either place in covered container, or cover the cut surface of a melon with plastic wrap to prevent the flesh from becoming mushy. Always refrigerate immediately.



## How to Choose a Watermelon

It's as easy as 1, 2, 3.

**Look the watermelon over.** You are looking for a firm, symmetrical watermelon that is free from bruises, cuts or dents.

**Lift it up.**

The watermelon should be heavy for its size. Watermelon is 92% water so most of the weight is water.

**Turn it over.**

The underside of the watermelon should have a creamy yellow spot from where it sat on the ground and ripened in the sun.

