



Banana Information Sheet

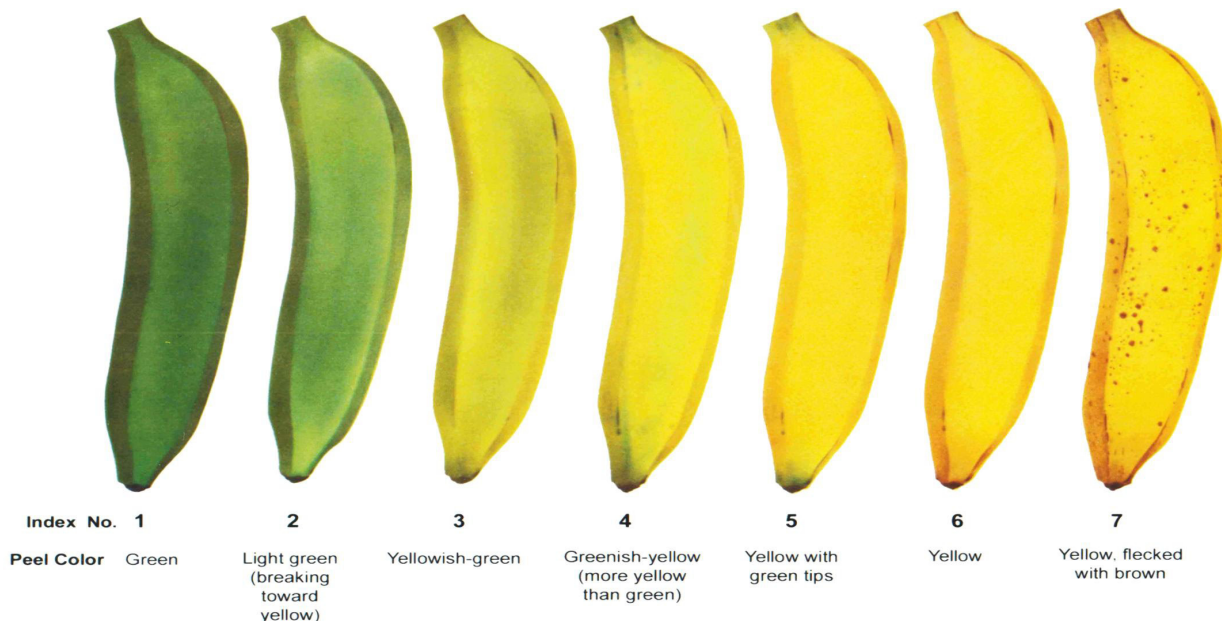
Purchasing Specifications

Specify size and color. Color should be green to dark yellow with brownish flecks depending on ripeness. Peels should have no brownish or gray coloration. No more than 10% should have defects that make bananas unusable, and no more than 1% should be affected by decay. There are no established U.S. grades for bananas.

Measure	Bunch Size Minimum
Small	Under 5 1/2"
Medium	5 1/2" to 8"
Large	Over 8"

BANANA RIPENING GUIDE

COLOR INDEX NUMBERS FOR BANANA RIPENING



The index number will increase every 24 to 48 hours if bananas are left in the carton they are received in with the plastic bag overwrap. Bananas received at index 1 or 2 will typically ripen to desirable color and taste within 5 days.

Availability

Bananas are available throughout the year and primarily come from Central America. Bananas are not grown for commercial purposes anywhere in the United States.



Banana Information Sheet, continued

Receiving Guidelines

Color is the main characteristic of bananas. Green to bright yellow fruit are the most appealing. Fruit with brown speckling is ready to eat within a couple days or will become soft and less desirable. Bananas with fewer blemishes are more appealing to serve whole.

Product Defects

- Scarring may affect the appeal of bananas if they are being served in the peel.



Decay



Bruise



Internal Bruise



Scarring

- Bananas are very sensitive to chilling injury, which makes the fruit unusable and unappealing. Notice the grayish brown discoloration affecting the area under the peel of the fruit.

Chilling Injury



Storing and Handling Guidelines

- Store bananas ideally at 58 °F with a relative humidity of 90 to 95%. Green fruit stored at between 60 and 70 °F will ripen in approximately 5 to 7 days. Bananas stored below 75 °F will have approximate shelf life of 5 days. **Do not refrigerate.**
- Store bananas with any non-refrigerated produce. To slow the ripening process, remove the box top and plastic cover to release ethylene gas. To speed the ripening process, keep the box top and plastic cover on the bananas to trap ethylene gas.
- Wash bananas just prior to serving under cold, running water.
- Serve bananas when ripened to a uniform yellow or yellow with brown flecks. Bananas ripened to a uniform yellow with tiny brown flecks will have an approximate shelf life of up to 3 days.
- Dip or coat the cut-end of the banana (when serving halves) with an acidic solution of 1 part lemon juice to 3 parts water or use an appropriate commercial product according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Store overripe bananas in the refrigerator or freezer for later use in baked goods. If freezing, remove the peel, puree the flesh with a small amount of lemon juice to reduce browning, and freeze for up to two months.

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