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## Proper wrapping will keep your bread fresh

*MARTHA STEWART*

**Q.** What is the best way to store a loaf of freshly baked bread? The ones I buy seem to go stale overnight.

**A.** Keep the bread in its paper bag, and slip that into a larger cloth bag or wrap it in plastic. The bags I buy are long enough for baguettes and can be sealed with a twist tie. Fresh Italian or French bread generally does not last longer than one day, unless you freeze it. When you take the bread out of the freezer, leave it wrapped until it comes to room temperature. Once it has defrosted, heat it in the oven for a few minutes.

**Q.** I'd like to hang an antique print in my bathroom. Is there a way to safeguard it against moisture damage?

**A.** With fluctuations in humidity and temperature, a bathroom is no place for your finest art. Moisture causes paper to swell, which can lead to buckling or wrinkling. It also increases the risk of mold and foxing, a term for spots caused by a type of chemical degradation.

If the print is rare or of sentimental value, forgo the bathroom and hang it in a stable environment, such as a hallway or a powder room. Better yet, have a digital reproduction made on antique paper, and subject this to the elements.

If the print is inexpensive and worth the gamble, take it to a reputable framer. In skilled hands, the artwork can be protected to minimize damage. You might want to trade glass for Plexiglas, which is less prone to condensation buildup, says April Hann of the Chicago Conservation Center ([chicagoconservation.com](http://chicagoconservation.com)). The print should be set back from the glass, either with a thick mat or with spacers resting on the rabbet, or lip, of the frame. Hann suggests then encapsulating all the layers -- backing board, mount board, art, mat or spacers, and Plexiglas -- into a sealed unit by binding together the edges with archival tape.

As a final touch, attach rubber surface protectors to the paper backing to encourage air circulation behind the frame. Ventilation is also important: Open the window and run the fan for 15-20 minutes after bathing to air out the room.

**Q.** I'd like to pickle watermelon rinds this summer. How do I store the rinds until I have enough to pickle?

**A.** Watermelon rind, pickled with sugar and spices such as cloves and cinnamon, is a traditional condiment in the South. With a sweet-and-sour flavor and slight crunch, it serves as a bright counterpoint to pork and other rich meats.

Most recipes call for the rind of a large watermelon. If the entire fruit is to be eaten at one sitting, cut the rind from each piece before it's served, and then rinse it and wrap it tightly with plastic wrap. Refrigerate the rinds for up to a week. Freezing is not recommended -- high water content leads to ice-crystal damage, which makes the rinds mushy once thawed. (If you serve the watermelon with the rind intact, do not leave it in the sun; doing so accelerates bacteria growth and shortens shelf life.)

Follow standard pickling procedures, such as sterilizing jars with boiling water. The rind should keep for up to a year in a cool, dark place. For recipes and more information on pickling and canning, visit the National Center for Home Food Preservation's website, <http://uga.edu/nchfp>.

Questions should be sent to Martha Stewart Living, 11 W. 42nd St., New York, NY 10036. Questions may also be sent by e-mail to [mslletters@marthastewart.com](mailto:mslletters@marthastewart.com) or [mslletters@marthastewart.com](mailto:mslletters@marthastewart.com). Include your

*name, address and daytime telephone number.*

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