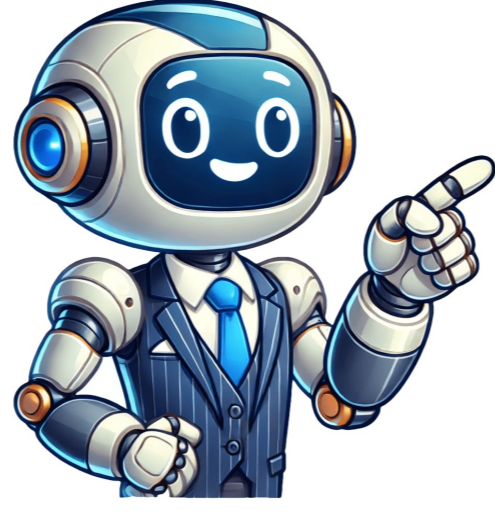


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Cigars stored outside a humidor and without any preservation methods will last up to two days. If you are a cigar lover, you need more than this lifespan. The cigar humidor is the best way to preserve the freshness of cigars. But if you are to do a trip or vacation far from home and find a rare stick to enjoy later at home, you will have to improvise with what is available. We have all experienced such situations and learned how to store our sticks and enjoy them later. Even if you have a humidor, it's helpful to know that storing cigars without a humidor is possible. Here you can learn how to do it: You can store your cigars for a few weeks in a Ziploc bag and a sponge or humidification pouch. This is not a long term method of keeping the moisture of your cigars. But it is fine for a few cigars you plan to smoke in the next few days. The more often you open the Ziploc bag, the faster your cigars will dry out. Place your cigars in the Ziploc bag and put a damp piece of sponge inside. The sponge should not be so soaked that the water leaks inside the bag. Make sure the sponge does not come in contact with the cigars. Too much moisture increases the risk of mold growth. Instead of a wet sponge, you can use a humidification pouch such as Boveda. Humidification pouches are small packets that create ideal conditions for your stogies. In this case, you do not have to worry about your cigars getting soaked. If you use an airtight container and a sponge or a humidification pouch, your cigars can last up to three months. It is crucial that the container is tightly sealed and that it is clean and odor free. This method is similar to the Ziploc method. Be careful not to soak your cigars with the sponge. A Boveda pack and an airtight container can preserve the humidity of 25 cigars for ninety days. We prefer this as DIY humidor improvisation because the rigid box protects your cigars from being crushed in your luggage. A cooler, also called a cooler, is a great way to store cigars for an extended period of time. If you want to turn your cooler into a humidor, you will need to buy a humidification unit and a hygrometer. A single humidification unit can keep up to forty cigars fresh, and the built-in fan provides adequate airflow. And the hygrometer will help you maintain the optimal humidity and temperature. Read more: How long do cigars last in a humidor You can keep cigars in their original box. Usually, cigar manufacturers package their premium cigars in boxes with a cedar interior. As long as it is sealed, the cigars can be stored in it for up to a month and a half. When you open the box, the cigars dry out for about thirty days. The period depends on the room temperature and the climate outside your home. In a sealed box, cigars can last up to six weeks. A cigar sold individually in cellophane wrappers retains its freshness for about 30 days. A premium cigar can be re-humidified if it has dried out, but it probably will not taste as good as it should. When the cigar is completely dried out, its essential oils are gone. No, they do not. The refrigerator is too cold and too dry to keep your cigars in. Cigars Since most goods have an expiration date or "best used by" date, it makes sense that cigars would have one, too, right? Well, yes and no. The real answer is a bit tricky because cigars don't expire like foods and perishables do. In fact, some premium cigars even improve in flavor with age — meaning the longer you store or age them, the better they get. That's not true with all cigars, as some you don't want to age at all, but the gist is that there's no official expiration. That said, cigars must be stored properly in a humidor while keeping the humidity and temperature levels optimal. Otherwise, the cigar will dry out quickly, losing its nuanced flavor. Let's discuss it in more detail, shall we? How long does a cigar last? Digital Trends Most cigars will last indefinitely if stored properly in a humidor with ideal temperature and humidity levels. Premium cigars tend to improve with age, which is why cigar enthusiasts often talk about aging their cigars. That means they merely store the cigars for an extended time and do not smoke them to let the tobacco blend rest. Some cigars that age great are: However, depending on the particular blend, some cigars do not age well. They're best smoked as soon as you get them or soon after. There are a few reasons for this, including the quality of the cigar itself, the tobacco and ingredients used to roll the cigar, and the pre-aging of the tobacco. Before putting them on the market, many cigar brands already age the cigars, sometimes for years at a time. The most essential element of cigar aging is the flavor or, rather, the experience you'll have because of it. Like fine wines, a cigar's complex flavors can intensify as it ages. But again, it depends almost entirely on the blend and quality of the cigar. If you try to age a cigar that should not be and then smoke it after a long rest, much of the flavor will be gone — it will be like more smoking flavorless paper, which is not enjoyable. If you don't store cigars appropriately, they will dry out and not taste as good. Here's a primer on what cigars taste like for comparison. How do you know if a cigar is dried out or expired? The Manual A telltale sign of a dried-out cigar is a cracked or damaged wrapper. You may also notice crumbling, or when you feel the cigar, it's not suitably spongy, meaning it's extra hard and doesn't respond when you squish it ever so slightly. A humid cigar will feel balanced and have a somewhat spongy response, yet it's still durable. Thanks to the moisture inside, it won't crack, break, or compress too much when you squish it. The opposite can also happen. A cigar can be too humid. The same signs may appear like a cracking or broken wrapper, primarily because of too much expansion from the extra moisture, but you may also see mold. Mold is not good. If you find a cigar with mold in your humidor, you'll want to clean it out and check your other cigars immediately. That's one reason we recommend keeping the cellophane on your cigars even when stored inside your humidor. They're relatively protected and isolated from others if ever there's a mold or beetle problem. Both situations — dry or too wet — will result in a poor smoking experience. Cigars that are too dry or humid will burn hot, maybe even burning your lips, mouth, or throat. They will burn unevenly or tunnel and may even fall apart as you smoke. The wrapper can come loose and unravel, or the heat buildup inside the cigar can cause further issues. You must store cigars in the correct conditions to ensure a pleasurable smoking experience. Curious what that's like? We have a guide that explains precisely how cigars make you feel. How long does a cigar last while out of the wrapper or outside a humidor? Yamil Lage/Getty Image/Getty It depends on the type of cigar and how it's been stored. The ideal humidity range is between 62 and 70 Relative Humidity (RH). I like to keep mine right in the middle, around 65 RH, as do most cigar enthusiasts. The higher the humidity, the longer the cigar will retain moisture, with one exception: the climate where you live. You want to keep the humidity levels lower in a humid place like Florida, where I live. That's because as soon as you take the cigar out of the humidor and step outside, it begins soaking up more humidity. In a dry place like Arizona, you want more humidity. As soon as you step outside with that cigar, it will begin drying out faster than anywhere else. The amount of time you can keep that cigar out of the humidor and out of its cellophane differs depending on the climate and humidity. More humidity means it will be fine for longer unless it's in a dry environment. There are further exceptions to this, of course, and your real-world experience will always change, but as a general rule, that's what we're working with. As soon as you take your cigar out of the humidor and out of the cellophane, preparing to smoke it, you should do so within the next 24 hours. I would argue that you should smoke it within the next few hours when the flavor will be strongest. Some cigar enthusiasts like to "dry box" their cigars before smoking them. They'll take them out of their humidor up to a day before and let them dry a little to bring the humidity down. Even so, they still smoke them relatively soon, so they're not drying for long. Some things to keep in mind: Don't freeze or refrigerate your cigars. Always store your cigars in a humidor, whether a large cabinet-style one or a smaller tabletop or desk humidor. Some even use a plastic Tupperware-style humidors that seal up tight. Maintain humidity in your humidor. You can use a humidifier or automatic system, filling it regularly with distilled water. If your humidor is smaller, Boveda packs also work great. Check them regularly for signs of damage. If you are considering investing in one, experts highly recommend them because cigars can go bad so easily for so many different reasons. Plastic wrap does not keep cigars nearly as fresh and high-quality as a cigar humidor will. Plastic can only do so much, but a humidor controls all aspects of the cigar's environment to keep it ideal. No one wants to spend money on fancy cigars to realize they are dry and expired when you go to smoke them. Prevent this by buying a humidor for your precious cigars. Many cigar enthusiasts will agree it is well worth the investment. Here are frequently asked questions about how long cigars last to give you more information on the subject. How do I know if a cigar is bad? A bad cigar will be super dry or have spots of mold, which is how you can visually tell the cigar has expired. Another way is to smell the cigar. If it has little to no smell, it is likely bad and won't be enjoyable. And if you light it and it tastes awful, it probably went bad. Do I need a humidor? If you don't have a cigar collection that you hold onto for months or years before smoking them, you probably don't need a humidor. But if you plan to hold onto even one cigar for more than three months, you should consider buying a humidor. Do cigars expire? No. Do cigars go bad? Yes, but only if they are not stored in ideal conditions. Cigars are not perishable like fruits or vegetables. Premium, handcrafted cigars will actually remain fresh, or at least smokable, indefinitely, if they are stored correctly. Cigars can be aged similar to wine. As a cigar ages, its flavor can improve, peak, mellow out, or even dissipate. "Stale cigars," however, are usually the result of too little or too much humidity. The optimal conditions for storing cigars are 70% humidity and 70 degrees Fahrenheit but ranges of 65-72% humidity and 65-72 degrees are acceptable. Fluctuation is expected due to season and climate changes, however, keeping that fluctuation to a minimum is key. That's why a good humidor is important if you plan to start a cigar collection. Cigars can last indefinitely with a proper humidor. If you're storing cigars without a humidor, consider a handful of convenient alternative methods for achieving a consistent relative humidity and temperature to keep your cigars fresh. You can simply buy one of the small white spots of plume and enjoy the smooth flavor and aroma. Different Between Cigar Plume and Cigar Mold? Cigar mold is a fungus that grows on the surface of the cigar. It can be easily removed with a soft brush. Plume is a natural byproduct of the cigar's aging process and is quite the opposite. Mold on cigars can occur when they have been humidified with tap water, as opposed to distilled water. Mold typically appears as a bluish or green substance. It harbors a musty smell and will not brush off your cigars. It can also easily grow on the interior of your humidor. If you utilize a traditional humidification unit in your humidor, refill it with only distilled water to avoid the potential for mold to occur. If you notice signs of mold on any cigars, remove them from the environment immediately and throw them out, as they will infect the other cigars you're storing. Mold can also grow in the lining of your humidor and is very difficult to remedy. Often, humidors affected by mold should be discarded. How Long Do Cigars Last? Some cigar enthusiasts will obsess over pre-embargo Cubans, which if legit, have been aged for more than fifty years. That's an incredible amount of time. Previously, I've aged cigars in my personal collection for six to seven years. Some blends delivered a wonderfully enhanced flavor, while others lost their complexity and tasted flat. I recently had the pleasure of smoking an Ashton VSG from 1999 and it was positively sublime. Whether you plan to store your cigars for eight days or eight years, they will stay fresh, burn perfectly, and taste great if you keep them humidified, but expect their flavors to change. Subjecting premium cigars to extreme changes in temperature and humidity can ruin them. It's worth noting, handmade versus machine-made cigars can be stored differently. Machine-made cigars can stay fresh outside of a humidor for twelve to twenty-four months, but that's because they are made from dry-cured tobaccos. Wrap Up A cigar collection is an investment. As you develop a palate for premium cigars, it's fun to experiment. When you've discovered a brand or a blend that you're fond of, buy a handful and try aging cigars for different amounts of time to taste how their flavors evolve.