
Reduce Your Food Waste

Reducing food waste saves money, is good for the environment, and helps manage food resources. Throwing away leftovers or spoiled food is expensive and unsustainable. Try these food tips to help reduce the amount of food waste in your household.

Make a food plan

- Check your food needs and budget
- Make a menu and simple recipe plan
- Include healthy shelf-stable and frozen foods
 - Examples: whole grains (brown rice, wheat berries, quinoa, whole wheat pasta), legumes (dried peas, beans, lentils, and chickpeas), nuts and nut butters, frozen fish, frozen poultry, frozen fruits & vegetables

Make a shopping plan

- Shop your kitchen first
- Check for grocery specials
- Buy fresh when in season
- Shop at local farmers markets and farm stands when possible
- Reduce food packaging & one-time use containers
- Bring your own bags
- Buy in bulk

Store food properly

- Wash and store fresh fruits and vegetables in see through containers
- Check expiration dates; rotate food by the method, “first in first out”
- Freeze any foods with short use by dates, such as ground meat

Organize cooking tasks

- Make beverages from teas, powders, and concentrates and store in reusable containers
- Stock your kitchen with basic food items like olive oil, eggs, canned beans, canned tuna, whole grains, flour, and spices/herbs
- Learn how to cook plant-based proteins
- Batch cook plant-based proteins and whole grains for multiple meals
- Repurpose leftovers and food scraps for future meals and snacks
- Freeze, dry, or ferment leftover foods
- Donate or compost uneaten food

Daily habits

- Make your own beverages and carry reusable containers
- Pack food in reusable food containers
- Ask for reusable food ware at stores and restaurants
- Skip the straw or bring a reusable straw
- Cook at home; use less take-out food
- Compost & recycle

Special event ideas

- Make a food plan for just enough food
- Include plant-based proteins, vegetables, fruits, and homemade beverages
- Use reusable plates and utensils
- Offer recycling and composting bins
- Pack any leftovers in reusable containers for guests to take home

Resources

Websites	Resource
https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home	Composting at Home
https://www.epa.gov/recycle	Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
https://www.fda.gov/food/consumer/tips-reduce-food-waste	Tips to Reduce Food Waste
https://www.usda.gov/foodlossandwaste	Food Loss and Waste