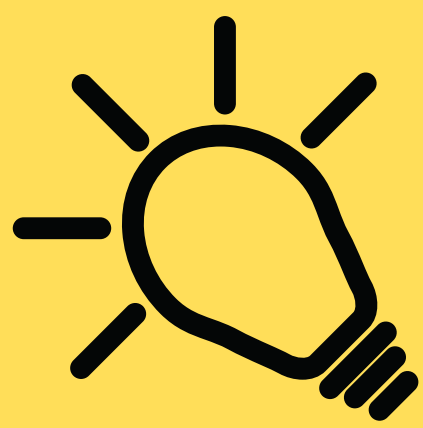


Storing

Storing our food correctly is one of the most significant ways of reducing food waste. If we know **how** to preserve food for as long as possible, not only will it significantly reduce the amount of food we waste from our homes but it will also save us money.

Your fridge & freezer

Your fridge and freezer are fantastic for prolonging the life of certain items but it can be easy when you're busy to lose track of when things went in there and when they should be eaten by.



TOP TIPS

Store any dairy at the back of your fridge as it will keep colder for longer.

Write onto or label when you opened, cooked or are freezing an item so you can see at a quick glance when you should use it up by.



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Your fridge & freezer

Which shelf?

Have the items you need to use first near the front of your fridge so you don't forget they are there!

Checking what you have

It may sound obvious but it's easy to miss - check you don't have a jar of something open in the fridge already before opening a new one!



Covering your food

You don't need clingfilm - a tupperware box, beeswax wrap, plastic takeaway container or just simply a bowl covered with a plate will do the trick.

Check your fridge temperature!

It should be between 0-5 degrees celcius - any higher then the items will spoil a lot quicker.



MILK

330,000 tonnes of milk are wasted every year and a lot of it from our own homes.





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Your fridge & freezer

DATES

Use by dates - you DO need to pay attention to these dates because they are usually on meats etc and are essential for food safety

Best before dates - are only a guide and you are the best judge as to whether these items are ok to eat or not



BREAD

We waste 25,000 tonnes of bread every year in Scotland!



EAT IT DON'T BIN IT!

Work out approximately how much bread you will eat over a few days & put the rest in the freezer.

You can then just use what you need when you want it by popping it straight into the toaster.

Slice then freeze

If you buy an unsliced loaf or make your own, make sure to slice it up before freezing so you don't have to defrost the whole loaf!



Storing your fruit

Bananas

We throw away a **lot** of bananas! When a banana starts to go brown on the skin, it's usually fine on the inside in fact it usually makes them sweeter. But if that's not your thing then make sure you use them up or preserve before they go that way. Bananas will ripen other fruit quicker so best to keep these in a separate area to your other fruits.

Smoothies

One great way of preserving bananas is to peel, slice them up and freeze them and then you can just add them straight from the freezer to your smoothie. You can do this with any of your fruit that is looking like it won't get eaten in time.



Preserving

If you've got a bit more time then making jams, juices, dehydrating the fruit or making fruit leathers are also tasty ways to make sure all your fruit is used up.

Any skins that won't be eaten such as banana or melon can go straight into the compost bin.

Storing your veg

Salad leaves

Salad leaves can wilt and rot very quickly. Add some kitchen roll into the bag of salad, it will soak up some of the moisture and keep it fresher for longer. You can also compost that piece of kitchen roll!



When it's salad season and they are in abundance, the best thing you can do is to just keep eating them with every meal you can think of! Growing the cut and come again leaves at home is a good way of being able to just pick what you need for that meal.

Eat whilst they are at their best

Certain veg goes off more quickly than others like broccoli for example. With these kinds of foods, you are best to plan these in for the meals at the start of your week if possible and make sure you get them eaten before they start to turn.



Growing your own



If you are growing food at home, make sure to check what is ready and eat with the seasons, that way you will make sure as little is wasted as possible. Anything you can't eat can either be frozen, pickled, made into kimchi or shared with a neighbour!

Batch cook meals if you have an abundance of food at one time & pop it in the freezer (just remember to label the box with the date you made it before you forget!)



Potatoes

You don't want to eat green potatoes but they only go green if exposed to light, so make sure you keep them in a cool, dark place and they will keep for a long time!

Where to store veg

Carrots

Carrots do not store well in plastic bags as they sweat. They will keep for longer if kept loose in the fridge



You can freeze carrots by chopping into matchsticks and blanching them for a couple of minutes in boiling water, freeze on a baking tray and then pop them into a bag.

Tomatoes

A good way of preserving tomatoes is by making a pasta or pizza base sauce and freezing. They can also be dried in an oven or dehydrator if you wanted to try this.

Mushrooms

Mushrooms store better in paper bags in the fridge rather than in the plastic boxes where they can sweat. Buying them in the bags also reduces packaging of course and the paper bags can be ripped up and put on the compost heap.



Greens & herbs

Greens, spring onions & herbs can be kept for longer by putting in a glass of water on a windowcill. Just put enough water for the roots & remember to refresh regularly so that the ends don't go mouldy.



You can chop up herbs and add to an ice cube tray with oil or water and freeze, that way you can just add a cube when you are making your dish. Pesto and other pasta sauces can be preserved this way too.

WATCH YOUR VEG REGROW!

Regrow your leeks, spring onions and celery! Once you've cut off & cooked with what you need, keep the last few cm's at the root of your veg and put them in a bit of water, refresh the water every day and you will see these regrowing. It's a really nice thing to do with kids as well.



Keep an eye on your cupboards

Dried Food

If you're lucky enough to have a refill shop near you, then you might already be using your own containers to refill & store your items. Either way, it is still good to store your ingredients in clear containers (either glass or plastic) so that you can easily spot how much you have left of each product. We waste a lot less food this way & it beats having half empty forgotten packets at the back of cupboards.



Clear storage boxes or jars mean you can easily see when your items are getting low & you can add these straight onto your shopping list, saving you time.





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Challenge

Pick one new storage habit to try this week:

▶ Check & alter your fridge temperature if needed

▶ Look at how you are storing your fruit & veg, can you make any changes here?

▶ Re-organise your food cupboards

▶ Have a go at pickling, fermenting, jam making or other way of preserving food.

Before you start:

Take a note of **how much money** you usually spend per week on food shopping.

▶ Take a note of **how much food waste** you create per week **before** making a change.



▶ At the end of the week, check what you spent on food and how much food waste there was, did any changes in habit make a difference?



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Further Resources

There are of course just some top tips on storage but there are plenty more resources & information out there on this topic.

Love Food Hate Waste have lots of great resources on how to make the most of your food.

[7 Foods you didn't know you could freeze](#)

[7 ways to keep your food fresher for longer](#)

[How to set up the right temperature in your fridge depending on the brand,](#)

[How to have the organised kitchen of your dreams](#)

[14 Storage hacks to save money & planet - Money saving Expert](#)

[Best Before & Use By Dates - Food Standards Agency.](#)



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