

# Planning

## Meal planning

The most significant way to reduce our food waste is to **buy only what we will eat** and the best way to do this is by meal planning. Not only does meal planning reduce food waste but it also saves money and has the potential to help us make healthier food choices.



REDUCES



SAVES



HEALTHIER  
CHOICES



## Keeping it simple

Life can be very busy and although meal planning will take a little bit of extra thought at first, it does end up **saving time** in the long run. Once you've planned & shopped for what you need, you don't have to think about it again that week - you've already decided! Decision fatigue is a real thing so make life easier for yourself.





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# Which meals to have?

## Getting creative

If you have the time and enjoy getting creative in the kitchen, then meal planning can be a great way to plan in one new recipe a week.



**TOP TIPS**



### Keep hold of your weekly meal plans

so that when you are struggling to think of ideas on what to make, you can just copy some off a previous week. Keep it as easy as possible for yourself and it's much more likely to become a habit.

### Who's in & who's out?

Check the calendar so you don't end up making too much or too little.

### What do you already have?

Before you write your meal plan, have a look at what is in your fridge, freezer & cupboards already and needs using up. Check dates and look at when you opened them to make sure you use these first.

**SAVING  
TIME**







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# Looking after your budget

## Budgeting

Remind yourself of your weekly food budget and create a plan that helps you stick to it. Working from a set budget and creating your meals around it means making the most of the food you already have.



If you have food that needs to be used, make sure to plan these into a meal at the **start of the week**. It means you'll use them before they go off and saves some money at the same time

## Make substitutes!

Recipe calls for carrots but you don't have any? What have you got at home already you can use instead. Most recipes you can swap in what you do have at home ready to go.







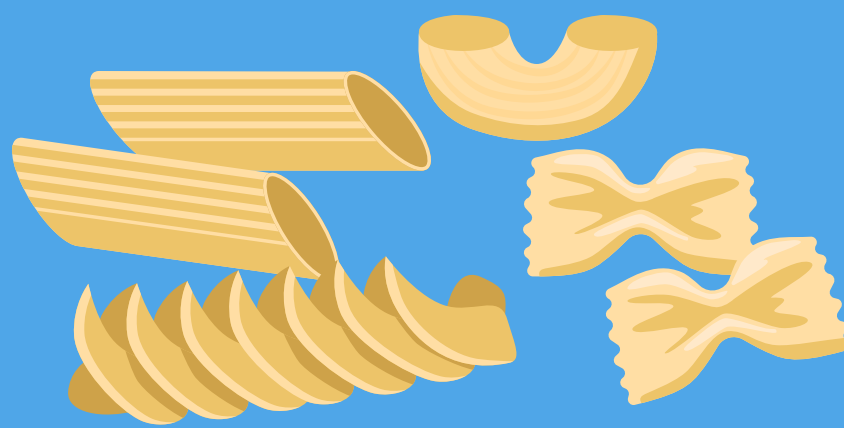
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# Make your meals go further

## Use your staples!

Making the most of your food staples helps you balance your meal plan with your budget.



## Batch cooking

Batch cooking can be an excellent way of saving time for the rest of the week and is another good way of making healthier food choices easier. Having a pre-prepared homemade meal ready to go means avoiding the much more expensive ready made meal when you're hungry and just need to eat!



It could be just enough for 2 nights in a row or you may decide you want to dedicate a bit of time each week to preparing several meals which can go into the freezer.





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# Keep it simple

If you've not meal planned before, start simple and have a go at **planning your evening meals for 1 week.**

Once you get used to it and if it's helpful for you, you can go as far as to add in breakfasts, snacks and lunch if you are super organised.

Getting started is always the most challenging part!

Once you have:



**Checked your cupboard, fridge & freezer**



**Looked up any new recipes you want to try**



**Written your meal plan**

**SHOPPING LIST**

Keep a list handy & add to it as you run out



Then it's time to **write your shopping list!**

You may be surprised at how much of a difference doing these simple practices save a lot of money as well as waste.





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# Shopping list ideas

## Find a method of writing a list that works for you

### Using your mobile

Go to your 'notes' app and create a note called 'Shopping List'. You can then write a list of your go-to foods, delete what you already have & just add new items when required.

To save time, you could copy and paste your go-to list of foods at the top of your notes so you don't have to re-write it every time you create a new list.

A hand holding a smartphone, displaying text on the screen.

You can use an app such as [kitchen.co](https://www.kitchen.co.uk/) to keep track of what food you have and help find recipes.

### shopping list

A magnetic **white board** on your fridge will help you keep up to date as you run out of food. Simply take a photo of your board to go shopping.

### Shelfie

Run out of time? Take a quick photo of your cupboard and fridge before you hit the shops.



# Find a way that suits you

## Notepad

Sometimes you can't beat just a bit of pen & paper! If you prefer to write out your list so that you can tick it off in the shop then simply use a note pad and pen. It means you'll need to write it out every time, however, if it works best for you in the shop then stick with it!

To save time, you can create a master list that includes ALL of the items you usually buy and then have a quick check of this when you make your weekly list so you don't forget anything.



Keep your list up to date throughout the week then sense check it just before you go. Saves you having to write a list in the moments before you hit the shop when you are likely to have the least amount of time.







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## Further resources

Try to organise your list around the shop layout – group the same types of foods together so that you don't have to keep going back for items you forgot about. You could add the frozen food last on your list to keep it cooler for longer.



If you're already a list maker then you'll have your own method of what works best for you. If you're new to it, you will probably be surprised at the amount of time, money and food waste it saves you.



## Further resources

Choose your favourite way of meal planning at [Easy Meal Plans](#) | [Love Food Hate Waste](#)

[Olio is an app where you can pick up or give away surplus food.](#)

[Christmas Meal Portion Planner](#)

[Downloadable Meal Planner](#)





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# Challenge!

You may already be doing some of these planning practices so just pick one that is new to you.

- ▶ Writing a shopping list
- ▶ Meal planning
- ▶ Using up what you already have
- ▶ Batch cooking

## 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.



▶ During the week of this challenge, make sure to keep track of how much food waste you are creating as well as how much money you are spending.

▶ What changes did you make and did you see an impact?



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