

IF YOU WASTE LESS FOOD YOU SAVE MORE MONEY

**YOU COULD SAVE UP TO £60 a MONTH
JUST BY CUTTING FOOD WASTE.**



 wiseuptowaste.org.uk

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TO WASTE**



Everyone throws a bit of food away here and there but this really adds up. In fact, one fifth of food we buy gets thrown away!

save YOUR MONEY

The average household in the UK, with children, spends about £60 a month (that's £700 a year) on food that is never eaten. That is almost an entire meal thrown away every day! The amount of food wasted each year in the UK is equivalent to 1.3 billion meals which costs us, as a nation, £6 billion each year.

save THE EARTH

Here in the UK, households are wasting enough food each year to fill Wembley Stadium nine times! This is a real environmental concern, because it generates greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide and methane. If we stopped wasting food in the UK, it would be the same as taking one out of four cars off the road.

Our top six tips to reduce your food waste and save you money

- 1 Plan your food shop:**
 - What's in your kitchen already? Look before you shop
 - Only buy what you need - you could make a meal using ingredients that have been forgotten about at the back of your cupboard
 - Write a shopping list on your phone or in a notepad and stick to it
 - Read more on page 4
- 2 Understand food dates:**
 - Food is often still safe to eat past its best before date
 - Read more on page 8
- 3 Understand your portion sizes:**
 - Be wise about portion size
 - Read more on page 10
- 4 Store your food correctly:**
 - Make your food last longer by improving your food storage methods
 - Understand how the fridge can help keep foods fresher
 - Read more on page 12
- 5 Freezing food:**
 - Your freezer is like a pause button meaning food never goes off. You can freeze excess food as well as leftovers
 - Read more on page 16
- 6 Food Waste Recycling:**
 - Use a food waste collection service or try home composting.
 - Read more on page 20

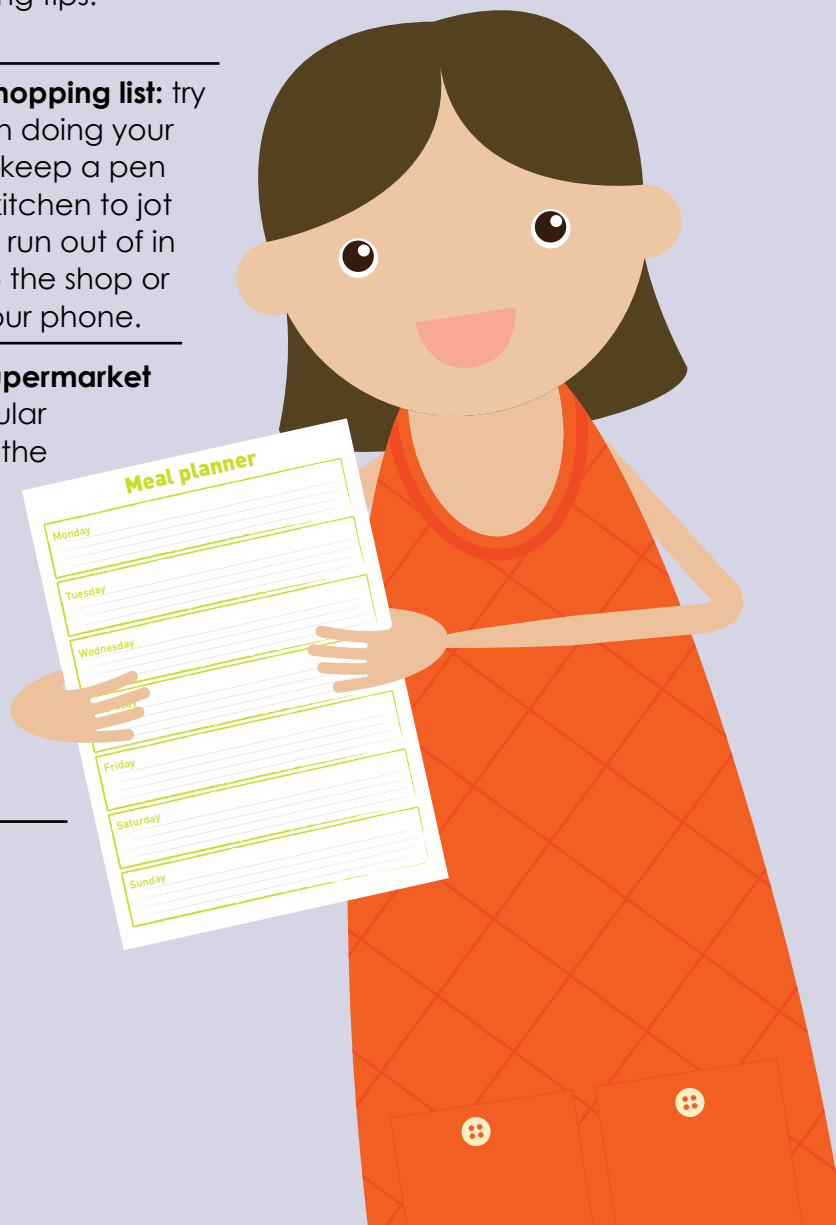


TOP TIP ONE: PLANNING AHEAD

Planning in advance can be a great way to ensure you buy only what you need and really help you shop smart and reduce your food bills. Here are some top planning tips:

Always write a shopping list: try to stick to it when doing your shopping. Either keep a pen and pad in the kitchen to jot down things you run out of in between visits to the shop or make a list on your phone.

Avoid ad-hoc supermarket trips: stick to regular planned visits to the supermarket to help encourage you to plan and to help prevent buying excess food that potentially could end up wasted.



Batch cook meals: these can be frozen to use at a later date for a quick and tasty home cooked meal or eaten for lunch the next day.

Look for split packs: some foods are available now in split packs (such as ham or part baked baguettes) – look out for these to make your food last longer or to allow you to freeze half to use at a later date.

Look for smaller packs: some products are now available in smaller packets, for example you can buy half loafs of bread. If you end up never quite eating all of one particular product, check that you can't buy a smaller version of it in the first instance. You may be surprised at the amount of reduced sized items now available.

Look in your fridge: when writing your shopping list, look at what is currently in your fridge and use the internet to help you come up with a recipe by typing in the exact ingredients you have available.



Make use of technology: there are some great free apps available to help you with meal planning. One of these free apps is the 'Love Food, Hate Waste' app which allows you to keep track of food planning, shopping, cooking meals and making the most of leftovers. There are also apps that allow you to keep shopping lists on the go, so when you run out of an item, add it into your shopping app! Some supermarkets also have online shopping apps now too to make sure you only order what you need.

Meal planning: you don't have to plan every meal in the week – you may plan four or five meals in one week which allows flexibility with unexpected leftovers.

Identifying a meal from the freezer each week means that if your plans change and you're eating out one night, then you can eat that freezer meal the following week.

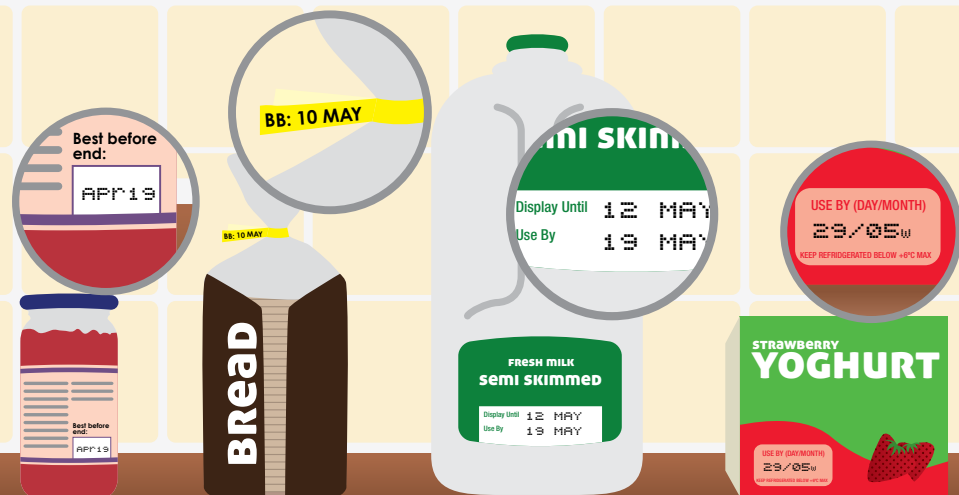
Use by date: always look for the foods with the longest use by date – these may be at the back of the shelves in a supermarket.



When buying fresh ingredients, you should:

- plan them in meals that you will cook sooner rather than later
- Plan a meal the following day that has those same fresh ingredients, if you know that you will not use them all in just one meal. For example, make a stir-fry to use up leftover fresh vegetables from the day before!
- consider using up all of the fresh ingredients by making extra portions and freezing some for another day
- consider whether you can freeze any of the fresh ingredients if you don't use them all (see page 16 for more information about what you can freeze)

TOP TIP TWO: a GUIDE TO DATE LABELS



Some date labels on foods are more important than others.

Use by date

It's important to eat foods by the end of the 'use by' date which is found on perishable foods that could make you ill if you eat them after this date. Most foods with a 'use by' date can be frozen. Freeze any time up until the end of that date and keep them frozen until you need them.

Best before date

The 'best before' date refers to quality rather than food safety and is found on frozen, dried, canned and other foods. If the item looks and smells ok, then it is usually ok to eat after the 'best before' date. The only exception to this is eggs – the Food Standards Agency guidance states never keep eggs longer

than the 'best before' date. You can test whether your egg is off by placing it in a bowl of water. If it sinks, then it is safe to eat. If it floats, then do not eat it. If you like a runny yolk, make sure the egg is well within the 'best before' date (so any salmonella doesn't have the chance to grow).

Storage guideline labels

Storage guidance on packaging can tell you the best place to store food at home. Have a look at the packaging next time you are not sure.



Freezer label

If you don't know whether food can be frozen, look for the snowflake symbol on the packaging which shows you can freeze that item.



TOP TIP THREE: a GUIDE TO PORTION SIZES

The most important thing with portions is to get to know what is right for you and your family, and then stick to it. It is really easy to cook too much or too little, but grabbing those weighing scales can be a real help in saving you money on food and also reducing the amount of cooked food that you throw away. Here is a list of foods commonly over cooked and wasted, along with our recommended healthy eating guidelines to show an approximate portion measure:

Rice: one mug of dry rice will feed four adults once cooked
(75ml – 100ml per person)



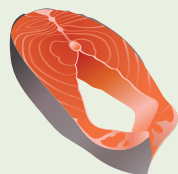
Pasta: An average portion is **75 – 100g per person**. Stand your spaghetti on the circles below to measure one, two or three portions.



Vegetables, beans and lentils: 3 tablespoons
(80g) per person



Meat, poultry and fish:
one piece about the size of
your hand **(100g) per person**.



Free rice and spaghetti measurers are available at a range of events organised by North London Waste Authority – pick up yours from one of the events listed at wiseuptowaste.org.uk/events

A free online portioning tool is available at lovefoodhatewaste.com/portion-planner



TOP TIP FOUR: HOW TO STORE YOUR FOOD



Using your fridge correctly can help you make your food last longer and help you save money. Here are our top fridge tips:

Apples: always store apples in the fridge in their original packaging. They will last longer than if left out in a fruit bowl.

Bananas: do not store your bananas in the fridge as it makes them turn black.

Butter: you can freeze bars of butter you don't plan to use quickly. This will prevent spoilage and the scent absorption of other foods in your fridge. In the fridge, unopened butter should last about four months.

Brown sugar: store brown sugar in an airtight container and include moist items like marshmallows, a slice of bread, or apple slices; the sugar will soak up the moisture. This will help to prevent the sugar from hardening.

Bread: do not store your bread in the fridge as it makes it go stale quicker. It is important to keep bread sealed to prevent the air from getting to it - either with the sticker provided as part of the packaging or with a reseal clip.

Carrots and celery: put old carrots and soft celery into a glass of water in the fridge with the root in the water to revive them.

Eggs: are best kept in their boxes in the fridge.

Flour: keep whole wheat flour chilled. High oil levels in the wheat germ can make this baking staple go rancid if kept in the pantry too long. If you use it infrequently, store in an airtight container in the fridge, where it can last two to six months.

Fruit: with the exception of tropical fruit, such as bananas and pineapple (which should be kept cool but not refrigerated), keep fruit in the fridge. It should also be kept in the pack that it comes in. Be careful what you store near your bananas as they emit ethylene which accelerates the ripening process of fruit / vegetables around them.

Ham and cold meats: keep in the fridge in sealed containers or wrapped in foil or cling film. Use sliced meats within three days or freeze. Unsliced meats can last for longer in the fridge.

Leftovers: cooked leftovers can be kept in the fridge for up to two days. It's safe to re-heat leftovers once.

Maple syrup (100%): pure maple syrup should last indefinitely unopened in the pantry; once opened, it can last up to a year refrigerated.

Mayonnaise: store in the fridge door. In the inner part of the fridge, mayonnaise may get too cold, which will cause it to separate and leave oil at the top of the jar. If kept in the fridge door, the mayonnaise will last two to three months past the opening date.

Onions and Potatoes: do not store your onions in the fridge; keep them in a cool dark place.

Salad: a whole lettuce should be stored in its packaging in the fridge. Buy whole lettuces rather than bagged salad as it will keep for much longer and provide value for money. Once a whole lettuce is cut, put the leaves in a tub lined with a piece of kitchen paper to keep them fresher for longer.

Spices: stash red spices in the fridge. Paprika, cayenne powder, and chili powder will stay fresher and keep their bright colour, which can be dulled by light and heat, for longer.

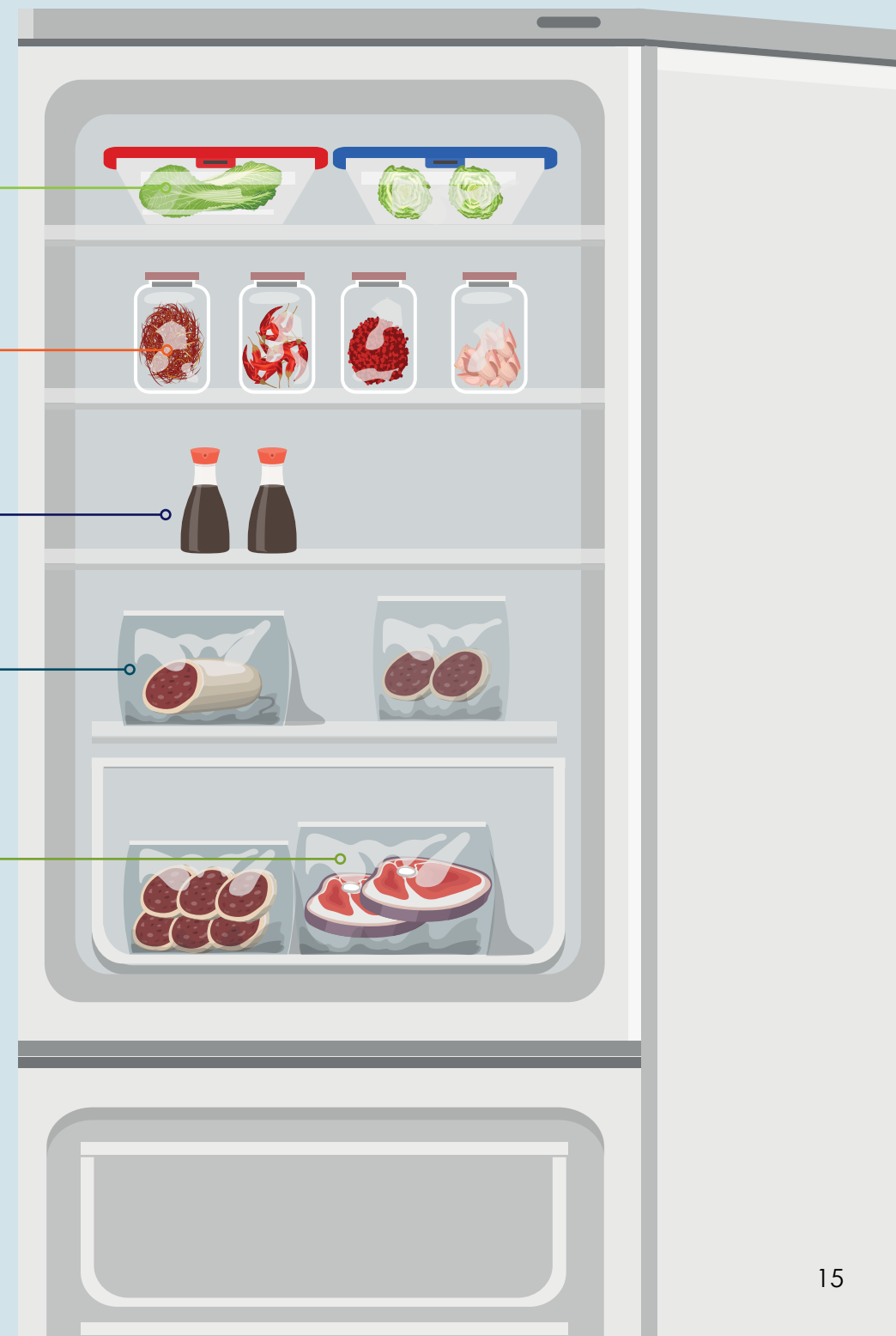
Soy Sauce: this doesn't need to be kept chilled, but refrigeration will help the flavour remain at peak quality longer. It should last up to two years this way.

Meat: all raw meat, poultry and fish should be stored on the bottom shelves of the fridge in clean, sealed containers to stop them touching or dripping onto other things.

Organisation of your fridge: seal raw meat and fish well and store on the bottom shelves of your fridge. Keep cooked meats separate and make sure they are well wrapped. Make sure food is not pushed right up against the back of the fridge or it may freeze and spoil the food.

Temperature: keep your fridge below 5°C, ideally 3°C. A fridge thermometer can help you to keep an eye on the temperature of your fridge.

Free bag clips for storing food in the fridge are available at a range of events organised by North London Waste Authority – pick up yours from one of the events listed at wiseuptowaste.org.uk



TOP TIP FIVE: FREEZE YOUR FOOD



The most important thing to know here is that you can freeze pretty much anything.

As long as food stays frozen, it can't go off. Even if you've had food frozen for years it should still be safe to eat, but the quality or texture may deteriorate over time.

When freezing leftovers, after cooking, cool the food down quickly, place in an airtight container, label and pop in the freezer.

HERE ARE OUR TOP TIPS FOR USING YOUR FREEZER

Batch cooking: cook a big batch of your favourite meal, divide into serving-sized portions, label and freeze for a quick dinner another time.

Bananas: peel and freeze bananas to use later in smoothies, banana bread or to add to ice cream.

Butter: you can freeze bars of butter you don't plan to use quickly. This will prevent spoilage and the scent absorption of other foods in your fridge. It can stay in the freezer for about a year. Leave wrapped bars in the original packaging, then enclose in a freezer bag.

Bread: you can store bread, crumpets, pitta breads, bagels etc in the freezer and can even toast from frozen. You can also make sandwiches with the frozen bread in the morning and by lunchtime the bread will have defrosted and kept your filling nice and cool.

Cakes: you can freeze cakes. Just make sure they are cut into portions before freezing so you only defrost small amounts at a time.

Cauliflower or broccoli: make a big batch of cauliflower or broccoli cheese and split into individual portions for freezing. You could also add some garlic in the cheese sauce, top with breadcrumbs and parsley, freeze and then bake when defrosted.

Cheese: you can freeze cheese either as whole block or grated in sealed containers. Soft cheese doesn't freeze well because it changes the texture.

Chillies: chop your leftover chillies and freeze them.

Cooked meats: leftover cooked meats, such as chicken and lamb, can be frozen. You can thaw in the fridge overnight and use as normal, or put into a delicious risotto or curry.

Defrosting raw meat: the safest way to defrost meat is by placing it in the fridge overnight until it is no longer frozen. You can also defrost your meat in the microwave using the defrost setting.

Eggs: eggs can be frozen but you must separate yolks from the whites first.

Freezing extra meals: cook a big batch of your favourite meal, divide into serving-sized portions, label and freeze for a quick dinner another time.

Fruit: you can freeze fruit before it turns bad, and use to make smoothies, straight from frozen. You can also slice and freeze lemons and limes, then pop straight into your drink. Frozen grapes and strawberries also make great ice cubes.

Garlic: if you think your garlic won't last, crush or chop it and freeze it in a sealed ice cube mould.

Ham and cold meats: you can freeze sliced meat.

Herbs: fresh herbs can be chopped, bagged, frozen and cooked with another day.

Label everything in the freezer: a useful top tip we think as it can be hard to identify some frozen items when covered in frost.

Lemons: leftover lemons can be juiced, poured into an ice cube mould and frozen – add them to a drink, your cooking or use them to prepare a vinaigrette.

Milk: freeze as soon as possible after buying and thaw in the fridge when needed. Shake well before using.

Potatoes: you can actually freeze potatoes. Simply boil for about 5 minutes and freeze them for later. When you want them, thaw overnight and roast the next day. Mashed potato also freezes well.

Re-freezing: if products are frozen raw in the home, then thawed and cooked, the product can be re-frozen. If products are bought frozen, then thawed and cooked, the product can still be re-frozen.

Rice: you can freeze and defrost portions of cooked rice. Just make sure it has been heated thoroughly before eating.

Stale bread: turn into croutons or bread crumbs which can be frozen and used in many dishes another time.

Storage containers: store food in sealed containers or wrap in two layers of cling film to prevent damage caused by freezer burn. Free bag clips for storing food in the freezer are available at a range of events organised by North London Waste Authority – our events, listed at wiseuptowaste.org.uk/events

Temperature: make sure your freezer is set to -18° degrees.

Tomatoes: very ripe tomatoes make a wonderful homemade tomato sauce. You can freeze the sauce once made. Alternatively, remove the stalks and freeze whole in freezer bags.

Vegetables: you can buy frozen vegetables which are usually cheaper and means you only take out what you need.



TOP TIP SIX: RECYCLING OF UNAVOIDABLE FOOD WASTE

If you have reduced your food waste as much as you can and still have things that need to be thrown away, you can use the food waste collection service provided by your local council. Alternatively you can try home composting and recycle your food waste in your garden. For further information and useful tips visit wiseuptowaste.org.uk/waste-less/home-composting

HOW TO GET INVOLVED



You can download your free copy of the North London Food Lovers' cookbook from wiseuptowaste.org.uk/foodwaste for a range of great recipes which will help you use up your leftovers.

Come and find us at one of our local events to find out more and get your free portioning tools (see page 10) – to find out when we will be in your area, visit wiseuptowaste.org.uk/events

Share your handy hints for cutting food waste or send us your food saving recipes via Facebook or twitter.

Book a free food waste workshop for your community group – call us on **020 489 1187** or email us – wastepreventionteam@nlwa.gov.uk