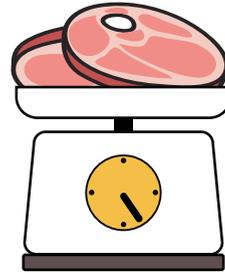


### Choose the exact amount

Favour food (cheese, meat, fish, nuts, etc.) from the open counter. That way you can purchase just the amount you need and avoid over-buying and wasting food.

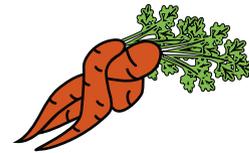
### Think twice!

Before choosing 3-in-1 or “mega pack” items, consider whether you need them. If you do, make sure you store them correctly and consume them before the expiry date.



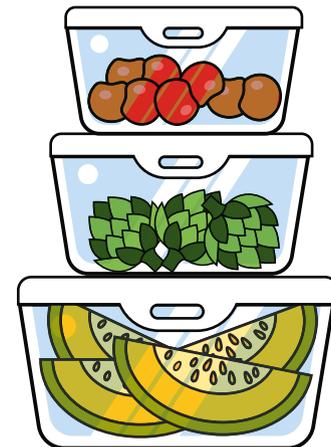
### Funny-shaped fruits and veggies

Many fruits and vegetables are thrown away because their size, shape or colour don't quite match what we think they should look like. But for the most part they are perfectly good to eat.



### Suggestion 3: Store your food wisely

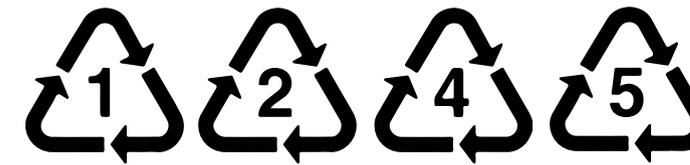
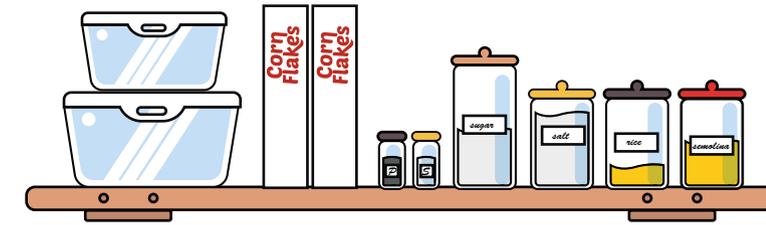
Much of the food we waste could have been refrigerated or frozen to eat at a later date. Proper storage and handling of food at home not only helps to ensure food safety, but it also helps you to maintain food for longer without it going off. Here are some tips on organising your kitchen, storing fruits and vegetables and getting the most out of your freezer to cut down on food waste.



“ Where possible, always **favour containers made from glass or stainless steel**. Try to use as little plastic as possible to store your food. This might sound impossible because plastics are everywhere, but try. Just do some research to find the best options for you. Even glass containers can be put in the freezer – just be aware of the amount and what to store. ”

### Basic tips on storing food stuffs

- Be aware of what food products you have and arrange your shelves, cupboards, fridge and freezer. Think about how and when you use different foods and group them accordingly using boxes, trays, bowls and the like. Don't forget to label them in the most convenient way.
- Try to make it a habit to look through your shelves and cupboards and regularly (weekly or monthly) make a list of items you have. Maintain an ongoing list of items that are running low.
- Another good idea is to arrange items so that the oldest are at the front and the newer items are at the back.



“ When using plastic containers, prefer the ones that has a recycling symbol and a number (1, 2, 4, 5) within a triangle. Containers with other numbers might not be safe for food storage. ”

“ Make sure your plastic container/bag is free from BPA (bisphenol A), which is a hormone disrupter associated with cancer and other health-related issues. ”

### Storage tips for fruits, vegetables and herbs

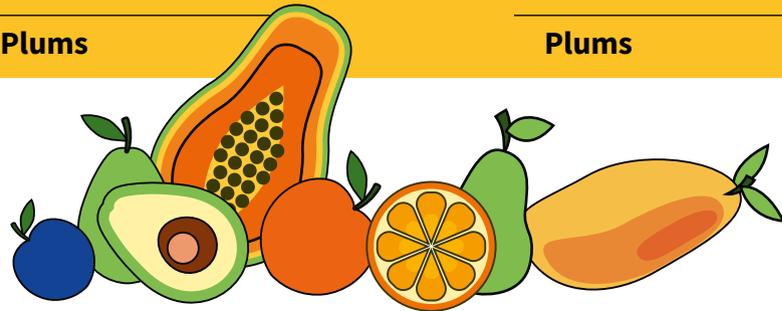
Keep fruits and vegetables separate. Most fruits produce a lot of gas called ethylene during the ripening process. Most vegetables are particularly sensitive to ethylene, which can cause them to go off sooner than they otherwise would. If you want to extend the shelf life of your fruits and vegetables, keep ethylene-sensitive products away from those that produce it. (Conversely, place them next to one another if you want to hasten the ripening process.) Bear in mind the proper place for storage – whether it is at the room temperature or in the fridge.

## THE BEST PLACE TO STORE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

### Keep these food seperated at room temp

Ethylene-Sensitive Produce	High Ethylene-Producing Produce
<b>Bananas</b> (Unripe)	<b>Bananas</b> (Ripe)
<b>Cucumber</b>	<b>Tomatoes</b>
<b>Eggplant</b>	<b>Apricots</b>
<b>Green Beans</b>	<b>Avocadoes</b>
<b>Onions</b>	<b>Mangoes</b>
<b>Potatoes</b>	<b>Melons</b>
<b>Summer Squash</b>	<b>Nectarines</b>
<b>Sweet Potatoes</b>	<b>Papayas</b>
<b>Watermelon</b>	<b>Peaches</b>
<b>Winter Squash</b>	<b>Pears</b>
	<b>Plums</b>

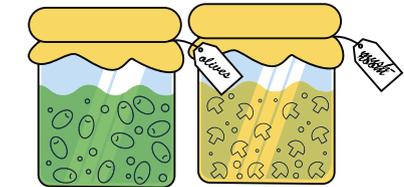
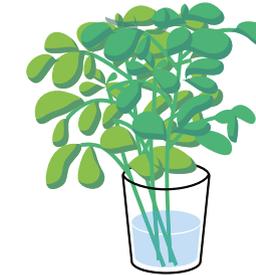
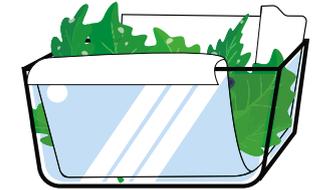
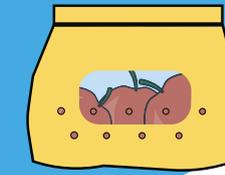
transfer these to fridge when ripe



### Keep these food seperated in the fridge

High Ethylene-Producing Produce	Ethylene-Sensitive Produce
<b>Apples</b>	<b>Broccoli</b>
<b>Blueberries</b>	<b>Brussels Sprouts</b>
<b>Apricots</b>	<b>Cabbage</b>
<b>Avocadoes</b>	<b>Carrots</b>
<b>Mangoes</b>	<b>Cauliflower</b>
<b>Melons</b>	<b>Dark Leafy Greens</b>
<b>Nectarines</b>	<b>Leeks</b>
<b>Papayas</b>	<b>Lettuce</b>
<b>Peaches</b>	<b>Peas</b>
<b>Pears</b>	<b>Berries</b>
<b>Plums</b>	

- Don't store fruits and vegetables in airtight plastic bags – they need to breathe. Poke holes in the bags you store them in or keep them in reusable mesh bags or a paper bag. Don't pack fruits or vegetables tightly together either – they need space for the air to circulate or they'll go off faster.
- Salad leaves and herbs will last longer if you sprinkle water on them, wrap them in kitchen paper, put them in a bag or container and store them in the fridge. That way they'll be crispy for a week.
- Put herbs like basil, parsley or peppermint in water (as you do with flowers). You can store them in the fridge or at room temperature away from direct sunlight. That way they'll last longer.
- Don't forget traditional methods for preserving food, like drying herbs and fruits or vegetables and canning and bottling for jams, pickled gherkins, salads et al.



### Storage in a fridge

- A fridge is a high-tech device that helps you store food in the optimal conditions. Not only does a fridge have different compartments that serve different purposes, they also have different temperature zones. Read on to see if you are storing your food in the right place.

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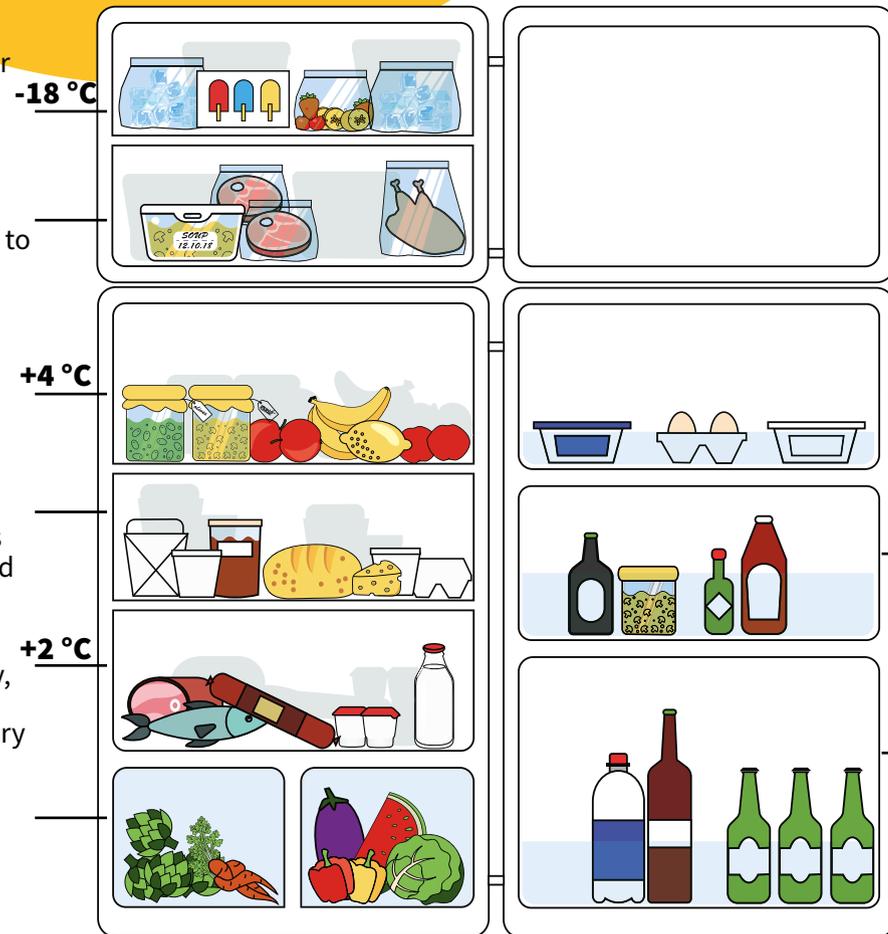
*Every fridge tends to have slightly different temperature zones, depending how close they are to the cooling element. Check your fridge's specifications.*

”

“ The average temperature in a fridge should be +2 to +4 degrees Celsius. The door compartment is a little warmer and might be as much as +10 degrees Celcius. ”

**Freezer**

Frozen meats and other heat- or light sensitive items that might go rancid  
Freeze soups, stocks, and sauces in plastic bags, and lay them flat to minimize freezer burn



**Top Shelf**

Ready-to-eat prepared foods, condiments, pickled products, and fruits

**Middle Shelf**

Leftovers, cheese, eggs in carton, cold cuts, and sandwich bread

**Bottom Shelf**

Raw meats and poultry, fish, (best cooked day-of), milk, and other dairy products

**Vegetable Crisper**

Vegetables and herbs

**Top Shelf**

Eggs, butter and frequently used cheeses. Store cheese wrapped in wax paper or parchment paper

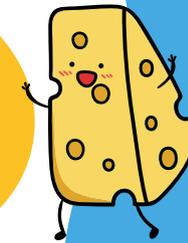
**Middle Shelf**

Condiments and premixed vinaigrettes

**Bottom Shelf**

All beverages

- Once opened, store foods in separate containers to prolong their shelf life (storage conditions may differ for each product). Usually the package food comes in is not airtight once opened. Products can cross-contaminate, start to smell bad or simply spoil faster due to bacteria in the fridge, etc. For example:
- Don't put warm dishes in the fridge. Cool the dishes as quickly as possible (ideally within two hours). Don't forget to put some sort of lid on the dish to reduce the risk of contamination.
- Use labelling or other methods to mark the food in your fridge. You can avoid a lot of food going to waste if you write what it is and add the date. For example, use red clothes pegs/baskets/labels for items you need to eat sooner.



Never cover cheese in plastic wrap – it is a living thing and needs to breathe. Your best option is to wrap the cheese in parchment or waxed paper or loosely in a wrap or bag. This method provides a little bit of breathability for the cheese without drying it out.



**Storage in a freezer**

- Food products should be tightly and carefully covered or wrapped in moisture- or vapour-proof containers or materials, ensuring that no air gets in and no moisture escapes or evaporates (otherwise the food might get freezer burn). For example, you can use glass, metal or plastic containers or bags that are BPA-free and marked as freezer-proof.
- Write the date you are freezing the food on the bag/ container so that you know how long it's been frozen for.



“ Freeze your food in realistically-sized portions. Divide ready-made foods into portions you can eat in one go. If you buy a big piece of meat, cut it into portions for one meal. That way you'll waste less food and money. ”

“ For store-bought foods with a “use by” date, it is safe to freeze them any time before said date and then defrost them in the fridge and use them within 24 hours. ”

## A LIST OF FOOD PRODUCTS THAT ARE SAFE TO FREEZE AT -18 °C

**Fruits.** For example, ripening bananas (peeled and sliced) are great to freeze for smoothies. Make a smoothie bag from different fruits that are starting to ripen and berries that can be easily blended. **Safe to freeze for up to 6-8 months.**

**Vegetables.** Most vegetables (low-moisture ones like carrots, broccoli, peas, spinach, pepper and corn) are suitable for freezing, but many should be blanched first – e.g. beans and cauliflower. **Safe to freeze for up to 8 months.**

**Ready-made food.** Soups, stews, pasta, rice, etc. are safe to freeze for up to 3 months.

**Bread and bakery products.** Sliced bread can be toasted straight from frozen. You can also freeze muffins, quiche, etc. – just take them out of the freezer and heat them up in the oven. **Safe to freeze for up to 3 months.**

**Ready-made meat products** (sausages, minced meat and ham). **Safe to freeze for 1-6 months.**

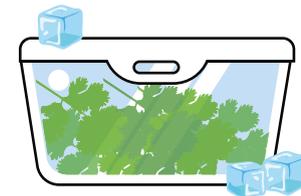
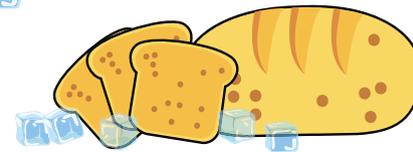
**Herbs.** It's a good idea to freeze dill and parsley in a container, a zip-top bag or an ice-cube tray mixed with oil. **Safe to freeze for up to 8 months.**

**Butter and margarine for no more than 3 months.**

“

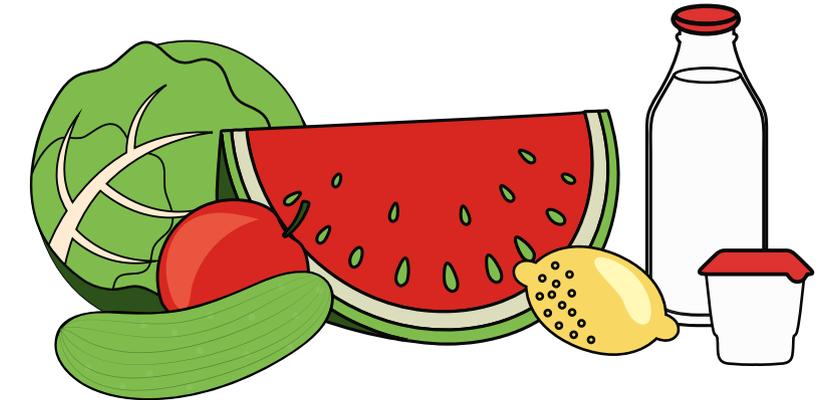
*Once the food has thawed out don't freeze it again, because the quality and safety of the food could both suffer.*

”



## A LIST OF FOOD PRODUCTS NOT TO FREEZE OR WHICH ARE NOT COMMONLY FROZEN

**Produce with high water content** (like green salads, lettuce, potatoes, cucumbers, sprouts, radishes), soft herbs, dairy products (like cottage cheese) which can separate, and anything carbonated.



## Suggestion 4: Use your leftovers

There's always something left in the tub of yoghurt, from the loaf bread or from last night's rice. We often choose the easiest and most convenient way of making dinner – starting from scratch – but be creative and use what you have in the fridge to prepare a new meal. Here you'll find some suggestions on what to do with the most common leftovers.

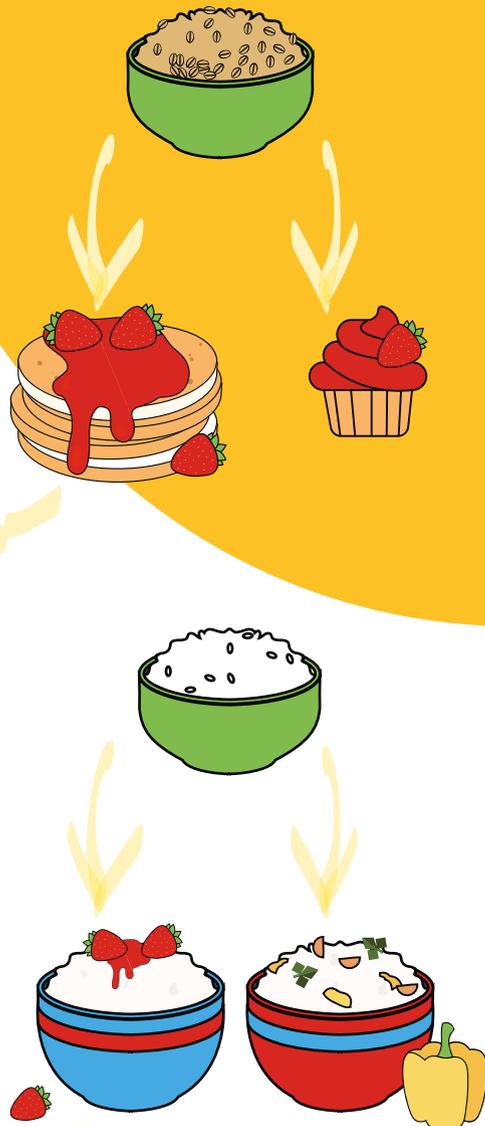
### Made too much food?

- Invite your friends over!
- Divide food into portions that you can reheat as your next meal. And don't forget to label it!

For tips on storage, see suggestion 3.

## A makeover for the most common leftovers

- Keep vegetable scraps for stock. Use a container or bag to collect the scraps, keep them in the freezer and then use them when you have enough to make stock.
- Steamed, baked and grilled vegetables can all be used in a creamy soup. Heat them up with some vegetable or chicken stock and add some cream or coconut milk. Purée the soup and season to taste.
- Boiled potatoes or rice, meat, sandwich toppings that are losing freshness and shrivelled-up vegetables can all be used in an omelette.
- There's often some leftover oatmeal – and it's perfect for use in pancakes, muffins, cookies and even smoothies.
- There are always a few pieces of bread sitting there going stale. You can turn them into crunchy croutons for a salad, use them as an ingredient in meatballs or make French toast, which kids love.
- Mushroom stems are perfect for stock, providing unique umami flavour. Alternatively, just throw the stems in your morning omelette.
- Even Italians use their leftover pasta, so why shouldn't you? Use it in a cold pasta salad, for noodle soup or for spicy fried noodles.
- There's always some rice you can use for further meals, like fried rice with vegetables or a delicious rice pudding for dessert.



## Suggestion 5: Compost your scraps

Most household waste (40%) is compostable material like fruit and vegetable scraps, leftovers and coffee grounds. If there's no bio-waste collection system in your area there are some great ways of composting. If you live in a residential area you're most probably already familiar with outdoor composting, so let's focus instead on indoor composting.

Composting has many advantages. For a start, you save money as there's no need to buy chemical fertilisers for your herbs or plants – you have your own valuable nutrients. You also save on resources, as you keep this useful organic material out of landfill and thus you reduce the amount of greenhouse gases.

“

*Homemade compost is perfect for balcony containers for flowers and herbs, as well as for plants. If you have more compost than you need, share it with your friends or neighbours.*

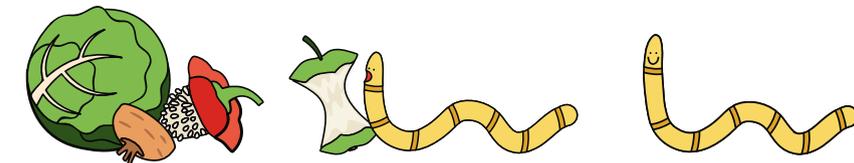
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## Indoor composting

The best-known way of composting indoors is using a worm bin, but not everyone is up for keeping hundreds of worms in their home. The good news is that you can set up an indoor composting system without worms. For example, a Japanese method called bokashi uses a mix of micro-organisms to cover food scraps or wilted plants in order to reduce smell, limit the risk of attracting pests and accelerate decomposition. There are various other methods and types of equipment you can use for perfect indoor composting – just do some research to find the best option for you.

You can compost all organic material that comes out of your kitchen, and from other rooms in your home (coffee grounds, tissue paper, cardboard, etc.) Just don't compost any animal matter like bones, meat and fish scraps, fats and oils, dairy products, eggs or pet waste.



## 4. SINCERELY, what does it all mean?

*Best before* = This date is about quality, not safety. The food in question will be safe to eat after this date, but may not be at its best. Its flavour and texture might not be as good. Best-before dates appear on a wide range of items, including frozen foods, dried foods and tinned foods.

*Biodiversity* = A contraction of “biological diversity”, this term reflects the number, variety and variability of living organisms. It includes diversity within species (genetic diversity), between species (species diversity) and between ecosystems (ecosystem diversity).

*BPA* = Bisphenol A is an industrial chemical used to make certain plastics. Products with BPA may have a negative effect on your health.

*Carbon footprint* = The total amount of greenhouse gases produced directly and indirectly because of human activities, usually expressed in equivalent tons of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>).

*Climate change* = A change in the statistical distribution of weather patterns when that change lasts for an extended period of time (i.e. from decades to millions of years).

*Composting* = A process in which organic material is decomposed and the resulting product is called “compost”.

*Food waste* = Food which was originally produced for human consumption but was then discarded or not consumed by humans. Includes food that goes off prior to disposal and food that is still edible when thrown away.

*Freezer burn* = When food which has been stored in a freezer loses moisture, the resulting greywhite spots or patches on the surface of the food are known as “freezer burn”. It is not harmful but will lead to the deterioration of the product. Small affected areas can be cut away from the food before or after it has been defrosted and cooked.

*Greenhouse gas* = A group of compounds (mainly CO<sub>2</sub>, methane, nitrous oxide and fluorinated gases) which are able to trap heat in the atmosphere, keeping the Earth’s surface warmer than it would be if they were not present. These gases are the fundamental cause of the greenhouse effect. Increases in the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere are amplifying the greenhouse effect, which is leading to global warming and consequently climate change.

*Pesticides* = Substances which are designed to control pests, including weeds, fungi and insects. The term covers herbicides, insecticides, insect repellent and more.

*Use by* = A date on food which is about safety. This is the most important date to remember. Foods can be eaten until the use-by date, but not after. You’ll find use-by dates on food that goes off quickly, such as meat products and ready-to-eat salads.



## References

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The handbook uses materials with our own design from the following sources:

Food portions on page 20. Heart Foundation webpage.  
Storing fruits and veggies on page 24. Eating Well webpage.  
Fridge on page 26. Serious Eats webpage.



