



TIPS & TRICKS FOR WASTING LESS FOOD

Wasting less food will save you money. You can make the foods you have last longer, and you won't have to buy new items to replace the ones you threw away (along with the money you spent on them). The challenge is to waste less food without spending too much more time or effort. Here are some of our favorite [resources](#) and tips to help you waste less food.

Wasting less food when eating at home

- ♻ Before you cook a meal, make a [plan](#): take an inventory of what you have in your pantry and fridge (including [leftovers](#)), and then plan a meal around that.
- ♻ Store food correctly:
 - ↳ Learn the [best way to store](#) different foods.
 - ↳ Consider investing in a [vacuum sealer](#). Vacuum sealers may be expensive but they can save you money in the long run.
- ♻ Know the [shelf life](#) of foods, and use those with a shorter shelf life first.



- ♻ Don't forget the freezer. If you're not going to eat leftovers, or you're not going to cook food before it goes bad, freeze it. Here is a guide to [freezing food](#). Don't forget to [cook that frozen food](#) someday.
- ♻ Create an "Eat Me First" area or bin in your refrigerator where you can store items like leftovers and foods that have been hanging around for a while. Stick a little sign on it for a reminder when you open the fridge with the munchies. It's best to keep this area at eye level.
- ♻ Enlist your neighbors or friends in reducing food waste. Have a weekly potluck night where everyone brings their leftovers or makes a dish from food that needs to be used quickly.

Shopping to waste less food

- ♻️ Make a meal plan for the week before you shop, so you know what and how much to buy. There are [meal plan apps](#) and [guides](#) to help you.
- ♻️ Using a [shopping app](#) can help you stay on budget and get only what you need.
- ♻️ A [meal-oriented shopping list](#) can simultaneously help you meal plan and streamline your shopping.
- ♻️ Be savvy about [date labels](#). Most dates on food aren't actually expiration dates or indications of safety or fitness to eat, even though that's how we often interpret them. "Best-by" or "use-by" dates tell you if food is at its peak flavor or intended texture. "Sell by" dates are instructions to retailers about stock rotation.



♻️ If you plan to use a food product right away (i.e., for a meal you'll make within the next day or two), buy the one with the closest date or a ripe and ready texture, leaving items with a longer useful life for another shopper.

♻️ If you're buying fresh produce, consider buying foods with a [longer shelf life](#), such as apples, winter squash, beets, carrots and cabbage.

♻️ Buy frozen food. It's often cheaper, it lasts longer, and it can have more nutrients because it's preserved right after harvest.

♻️ Shop online and pick-up your groceries. This allows you to shop and plan from the convenience of your home! As you shop online, keep your recipes and lists at hand so you only buy what you need.

You'll save time and money when you're not distracted by other food products at the grocery store.

If you still have questions about food ethics or want to go beyond the Two Strategies, check out the [Questions and Queries](#) and [More Resources](#) pages of our website. If we've piqued your interest in ethical food systems and you're in for a deeper read, our [Core Ethical Commitments](#) page explores many other problems in the global food system.



<https://bioethics.jhu.edu/choose-food>