

Reduce Food Waste

Many of us have food in our fridge, pantry, or on our counter that needs to be used up. This might be prepared food that wasn't eaten at the end of a meal, (called leftovers), or other foods or ingredients that weren't used up.

Try these tips to help you waste less and get the most from your food.

Plan ahead

By planning meals, you can use leftovers, as well as ingredients for more than 1 meal or snack. You can search for meal planning tools, including a *weekly menu planner* at healthyeatingstartshere.ca.

Prepare or cook extra food to use in another meal or snack.

For example:

- Wash and cut up extra peppers and mushrooms so you have enough for chili one day and salad or a stir-fry another day.
- Cook extra chicken, fish or eggs when making supper so that you can use them for sandwiches later in the week.



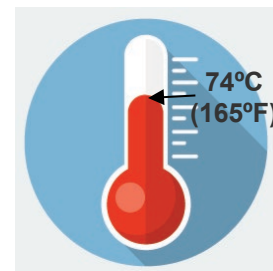
Store leftovers safely

Whether you have a small amount of leftovers that will be eaten this week or want to freeze leftovers for another time, it's important to store them safely. Here are some tips:

- Wrap leftovers tightly or place them in a covered container.
- Refrigerate or freeze leftovers within 2 hours of preparing or cooking.
- Label leftovers with the date, and use the oldest ones first.



- Leftovers stored in the fridge can be safely eaten within 3 days after cooking. Leftovers can be frozen up to 3 months.
- Use microwave-safe containers to reheat leftovers.
- To keep food safe reheat leftovers to 74°C (165°F). You can check the temperature with a digital thermometer.
- Reheat leftovers only 1 time.



For more information, go to healthycanadians.gc.ca and search for [Food Safety Tips for Leftovers](#).

Use up extra food

Try these tips and ideas to help you get the most from your food.

Vegetables

- Add zucchini, mushrooms, or spinach to a pasta salad.
- Mix chopped peppers, onions, or mushrooms into tomato or pasta sauce.
- Add to a casserole or use potatoes as a casserole topping.
- Use in an omelette or frittata.
- Grate raw carrots or zucchini into muffins.
- Use as pizza toppings.
- Add to curry, soup, stew, or stir-fry.
- Mix mashed sweet potato or yams into biscuits, buns, muffins, or pancakes.
- Add tomatoes or peppers to a sandwich or wrap.



Fruit

- Add to cereal, cottage cheese, or yogurt.
- Blend into a smoothie.
- Use in a salad.
- Cook apples, berries, pears, or rhubarb and make into a sauce.
- Freeze overripe bananas to use in loaves, muffins, or smoothies.
- Add berries or chopped fruit to muffins, pancakes, or waffles.
- Freeze berries or grapes to eat as a snack or to use in smoothies.



Grain Products

- Add cooked barley, couscous, rice, or quinoa to a casserole, salad, soup, or stir-fry.
- Bake or toast pitas to make pita chips to have with hummus, or add to a salad.



- Use leftover cooked pasta in a casserole, salad, or soup. Cut long pieces of pasta into bite-sized ones for a salad.
- Stuff peppers or other vegetables with leftover beans or grains.
- Use tortillas to make quesadillas or breakfast roll-ups with peanut butter and sliced banana.
- Slice tortillas thinly, bake until crisp, and use as a crunchy topping for a salad or soup.
- Make breadcrumbs or croutons from dried (stale) bread. Use crumbs to coat chicken or fish. Add croutons to a casserole, salad, or soup.
- Freeze cooked grains to use in a soup or casserole.

Milk and Alternatives

- Add milk or yogurt to a smoothie.
- Use milk instead of water or buttermilk in recipes.
- Add milk to a sauce or soup.
- Use milk to prepare hot cereal such as oatmeal and desserts such as milk or rice puddings.
- Use yogurt and sour cream to make a dip or a marinade.
- Add cheese to a casserole or salad.
- Grate cheese and freeze to use for a casserole, pasta, or pizza.
- Freeze individual containers of yogurt to have as a frozen snack.



Meat and Alternatives

- Add beans, boiled eggs, chickpeas, fish, poultry, ground meat, lentils, nuts, or seeds to a salad.
- Use leftover beans, beef, fish, or poultry in a stir-fry, casserole, pasta sauce, soup, stew or curry.
- Add ground meat, poultry, or tuna to macaroni and cheese (or other pasta).
- Use leftover ground meat or poultry with beans to make a chili.
- Slice leftover poultry or meat, and use to make a sandwich, wrap, pizza, or pita.

