

# Waste Less Food Handbook

A Guide to Reducing  
Food Wastage and Saving Money



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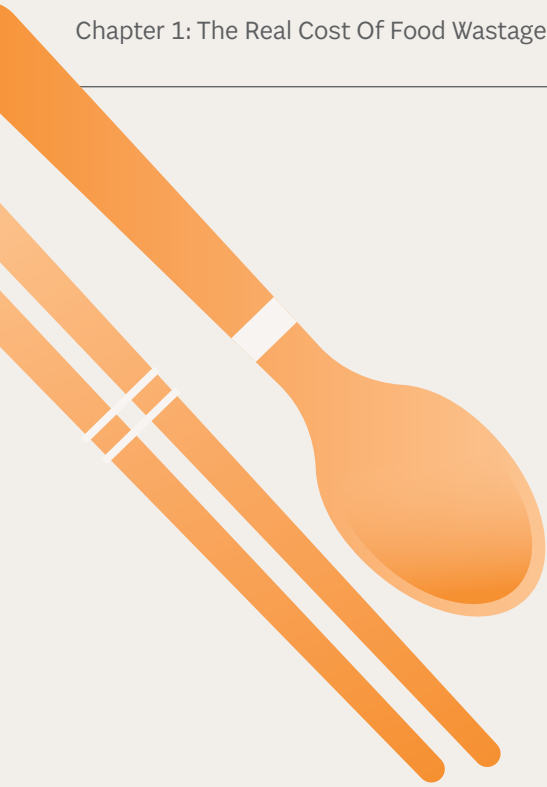
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# The Real Cost of Food Wastage

We toss out more than we realise.  
Let's take a closer look at food wastage  
and where it all ends up.





# The Real Cost of Food Wastage

In Singapore, food brings us together. But sometimes, we contribute to food wastage when we order, cook or buy more than we need.

## Food Waste

refers to all unconsumed food substances that are disposed of or recycled.

## Food Wastage

refers to avoidable food waste that occurs as a result of retailers' or consumers' behaviour.

## How much food does Singapore throw away each year?

# 646,000 tonnes

**2 bowls** of food per person each day



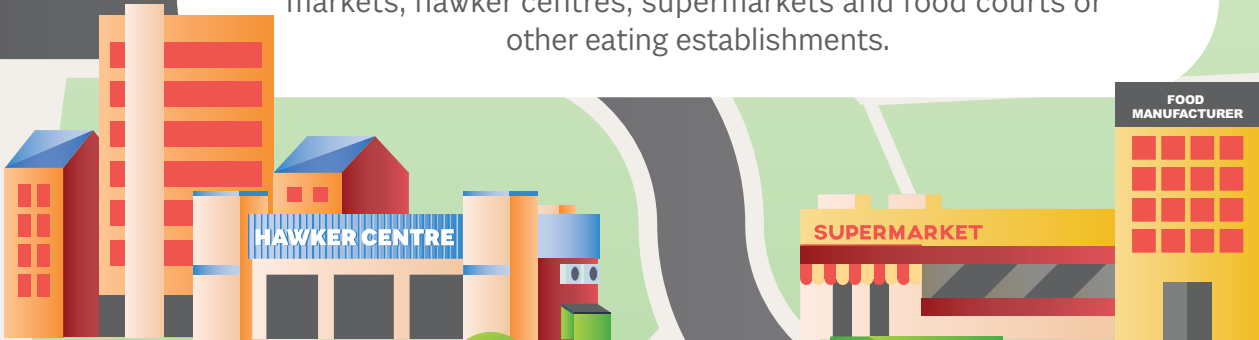
OR

**44,400** double decker buses



# Where does it all go?

Food waste is generated from food manufacturers, households, markets, hawker centres, supermarkets and food courts or other eating establishments.



About **18%** of the food waste in Singapore is recycled.



The rest is incinerated and the resulting ash is sent to the Semakau Landfill.



# Why does it matter to us?

Singapore is a small country with limited space. At the rate we are producing waste, **we will run out of space to site new incineration plants and landfills.**

The resources and labour used to produce the food also go to waste, along with hard-earned money we use to buy food.

## Those side dishes you don't finish could cost you **\$1,100** a year

Cost of a side dish at a fast food outlet ranges from \$3 to \$7. Assuming purchasing a side dish 3 times a week = \$21, 52 weeks in a year = \$1,092.

That's approximately \$1,100 worth of unfinished side dishes wasted a year!

### Sources

<sup>1</sup><https://www.cgs.gov.sg/sayyes/theres-a-price-to-waste/>

## The groceries you forget in your fridge could cost you **\$300** a year

1 in 3 Singaporeans throw away more than 10% of food weekly. That works out to throwing away an average of \$258 worth of unconsumed food a year.

Taking inflation into consideration<sup>1</sup>, \$258 in 2019 would cost \$297.01 in 2023.

That's approximately \$300 worth of food wasted a year!



## Wasting food means we're...



**Causing our landfill to run out of space faster**



**Wasting precious resources**



**Wasting money**

## Chapter 2

# Love Your Kitchen Creations



We love home-cooked meals,  
but let's not let food wastage  
be part of the recipe.

# Tips for Home-cooked Meals



## Re-purpose food scraps for flavouring

Offcuts of meat and vegetable stems or roots can be used to make stocks. Citrus fruit rinds and zest can add flavour to other dishes.



## Keep track of what's in your kitchen

Plan meals according to what you have and what's expiring soon.



## Cook with what you have

Use what's already in your kitchen, including leftovers.



## Sharing is caring

Pack any excess food for your guests, friends or neighbours.



Try this little trick!

## Meal Mash-Up Bingo

Use what's in your fridge and shop smart!

Plan 1 meal per day for yourself over the next 3 days by combining leftovers with new ingredients from the supermarket. The goal: waste less food and get creative with what you have.

### How to play

- In the 3x3 Bingo grid below, each cell is an ingredient in the fridge.
- Circle the ingredients you would use in your meals.
- Completing a row = 1 Bingo point
- See how many rows you can complete over 3 days!
- Bonus: Use all leftover ingredients in the grid to be a "Waste Less Hero"!

Leftover Chicken	Bread	Milk
Eggs	Leftover Tofu	Apple
Pasta	Rice	Leftover Mixed Vegetables

### Quick reflection

Was it easy to use leftovers to create a new meal? How can you reduce leftovers/food wastage next time?

### Tip

Discover more tips on reducing food wastage while cooking at home on page 7 to 11.

# Turn Scraps Into Treasure

Get creative!

Yesterday's roast chicken can become today's fried rice, soup, or sandwich filling.

## Asian-Style Fried Rice

Serves: **2-3 pax** | Main leftover ingredient: **Cooked Chicken**

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup cooked rice (preferably chilled)
- ½ cup shredded leftover roast chicken
- 1 egg
- ½ cup mixed vegetables (e.g. peas, corn, carrots)
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tsp sesame oil (optional)
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 stalk spring onion, chopped



### Method:

- Heat oil in a wok or pan, scramble the egg, and set aside.
- Sauté garlic and vegetables for 2–3 minutes.
- Add rice, chicken, soy sauce, and sesame oil; stir-fry until heated through.
- Mix in the scrambled egg and spring onions before serving.

### Tip:

Add a squeeze of lime or a spoonful of sambal for extra flavour!

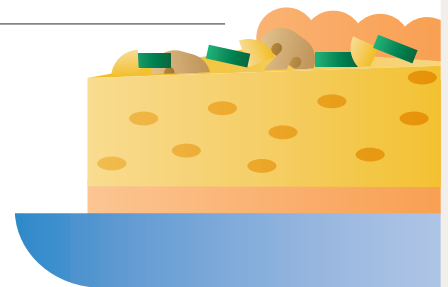
Recipe inspired by: <https://thewoksoflife.com/>

## Cheesy Veggie Frittata

Serves: **3-4 pax** | Main leftover ingredient: **Cooked or Roasted Vegetables**

### Ingredients:

- 1–2 cups leftover vegetables (e.g. broccoli, bell peppers, mushrooms, potatoes)
- 4 eggs
- ¼ cup milk
- ¼ cup grated cheese (cheddar or mozzarella)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 tsp olive oil or butter



### Method:

- Whisk eggs, milk, cheese, salt, and pepper in a bowl.
- Stir in chopped leftover vegetables.
- Heat oil in an oven-safe pan and pour in the mixture.
- Cook on low heat until the edges are set, then bake at 180°C for 20–25 minutes (or cover and cook on stovetop until firm).

### Tip:

Serve with toast or salad for a wholesome meal!

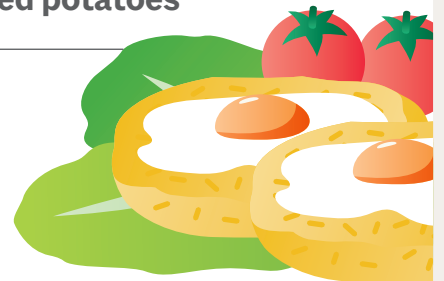
Recipe inspired by: <https://www.bonappetit.com/>

## Egg Breakfast Hash

Serves: **2-3 pax** | Main leftover ingredient: **Cooked or roasted potatoes**

### Ingredients:

- 1½ cups diced leftover potatoes
- ½ cup chopped vegetables (e.g. bell pepper, onion, spinach)
- 2 eggs
- 1 tbsp oil or butter
- Salt and pepper to taste



### Method:

- Heat oil in a pan, sauté vegetables for 2–3 minutes.
- Add potatoes and cook until crisp and golden.
- Make small wells and crack eggs into them.
- Cover and cook until eggs are set to your liking

#### Tip:

Top with cheese or herbs for added richness.

Recipe inspired by: <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/>

## One-Pan Pasta with Roasted Veggies

Serves: **2-3 pax** | Main leftover ingredient: **Roasted vegetables**

### Ingredients:

- 1–2 cups leftover roasted vegetables (e.g. zucchini, capsicum, pumpkin)
- 150g uncooked pasta (penne or spaghetti)
- 2 cups vegetable stock or water
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¼ cup grated cheese or a spoon of pesto
- Salt and pepper to taste



### Method:

- Heat oil in a pan, sauté garlic briefly.
- Add pasta and stock, and bring to a boil. Cook uncovered, stirring occasionally until pasta is al dente and most liquid is absorbed.
- Add roasted vegetables and toss until heated through.
- Top with cheese or pesto before serving.

#### Tip:

Add a squeeze of lemon juice before serving for a fresh, zesty finish.

Recipe inspired by: <https://www.marthastewart.com/>

## Hearty Soup Bowl

Serves: **2 pax**

Main leftover ingredient: **Cooked Rice or Noodles**

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup leftover rice or noodles
- 2 cups chicken or vegetable broth
- ½ cup shredded cooked meat or tofu
- ½ cup mixed vegetables (fresh or leftover)
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- ½ tsp sesame oil
- Optional garnish: spring onions or fried shallots



### Method:

- Bring broth to a simmer in a pot.
- Add vegetables and cook until tender.
- Stir in leftover rice/noodles and meat or tofu.
- Season with soy sauce and sesame oil.
- Top with garnishes before serving.



### Tip:

Great for reviving dry rice or noodles — it becomes a comforting one-pot meal!

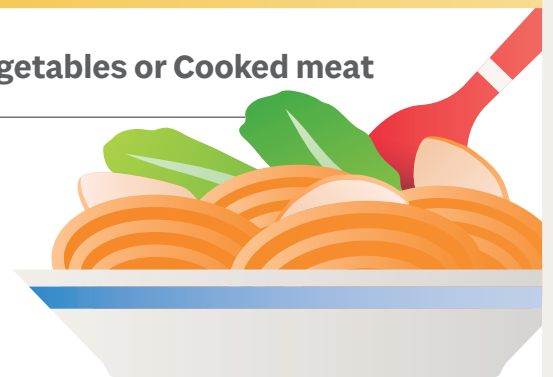
Recipe inspired by: <https://thewoksoflife.com/>

## Asian Ginger-Soy Stir-Fry Noodles

Serves: **2 pax** | Main leftover ingredient: **Leftover vegetables or Cooked meat**

### Ingredients:

- 150–200g cooked noodles
- 1 cup leftover vegetables
- ½ cup leftover meat/tofu
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp oyster sauce
- 1 tsp sesame oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ½ tsp grated ginger
- 1 tbsp oil
- Optional: chilli flakes, spring onions



### Method:

- Sauté garlic and ginger in oil.
- Add vegetables and cook for 1–2 minutes.
- Add meat/tofu.
- Toss in noodles.
- Mix in soy sauce, oyster sauce, sesame oil.
- Garnish and serve.



### Tip:

Add a splash of water if noodles clump together.

Recipe inspired by: <https://thewoksoflife.com/>

# Make Your Groceries Go Further

We love a good grocery haul, but let's shop for only what we need and store it right so nothing goes to waste.



# Tips for Grocery Shopping



## Check your kitchen first

Avoid buying duplicates by knowing what you already have.



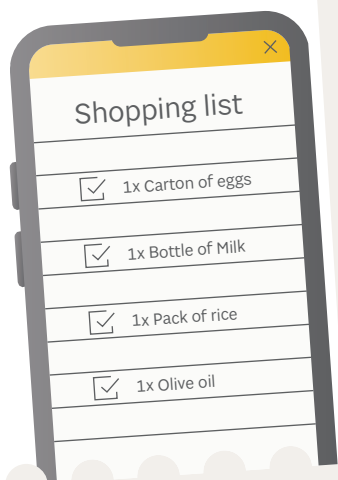
## Don't be fooled by bulk deals

Bigger packs may look like a good bargain, but if you don't finish them, it's wasted money and food.



## Make a shopping list and stick to it

Planning ahead helps prevent impulsive purchases and ensures you only get what you'll use.



## Give 'imperfect' produce a chance

Odd-looking, bruised, or blemished fruits and veggies are just as tasty and more affordable.



# Hacks to Get The Most Out Of Your Food



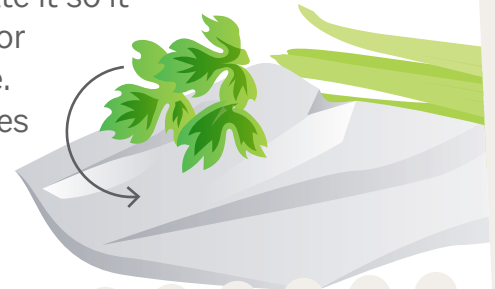
## Keep garlic and onions fresh

Put garlic and onions in mesh bags (e.g. unused stockings) to keep them fresh.



## Let celery last longer

Trim the leafy tops off celery, then wrap the trimmed celery tightly in aluminium foil and refrigerate it so it stays fresh for a longer time. Save the leaves for a tasty salad meal.



## Prevent bananas from ripening too fast

Wrap the stem of bananas with a plastic wrap to keep them for a longer time.



## Make full use of chocolate spread

Pour some warm milk into a jar of leftover chocolate spread, cap it, and shake it up for a delicious cup of hot cocoa.



## Keep herbs fresh and handy

Mix chopped herbs with butter or olive oil and freeze them in an ice-cubed tray. Use the frozen cubes to season popcorn, meat, steamed vegetables or defrost to spread on toast!



## Grow your own ingredients

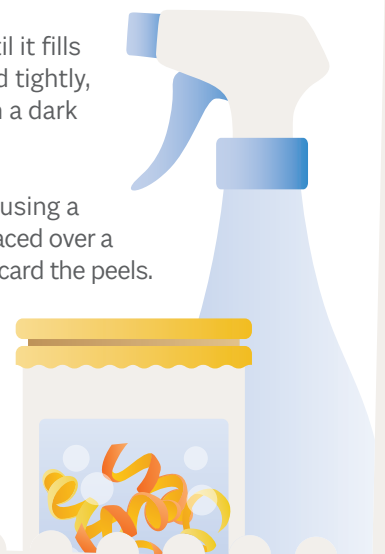
Throw leftover plant parts such as ginger roots or garlic bulbs into a pot of soil. You'll get a new pot of ingredients in 2 weeks!



## Make your own all-purpose home cleaner

Turn citrus peels into an all-purpose home cleaner with these easy steps:

1. Fill half a large glass jar with citrus peels.
2. Pour vinegar in until it fills the jar, close the lid tightly, and place the jar in a dark place for 2 weeks.
3. Strain the mixture using a fine mesh sieve placed over a large bowl, then discard the peels.
4. Pour the liquid into a spray bottle, and start cleaning with it!



# Tips for Storing Food

## Seal and Store

Use airtight containers or bag clips for snacks, cereals and opened packs to keep them fresh.



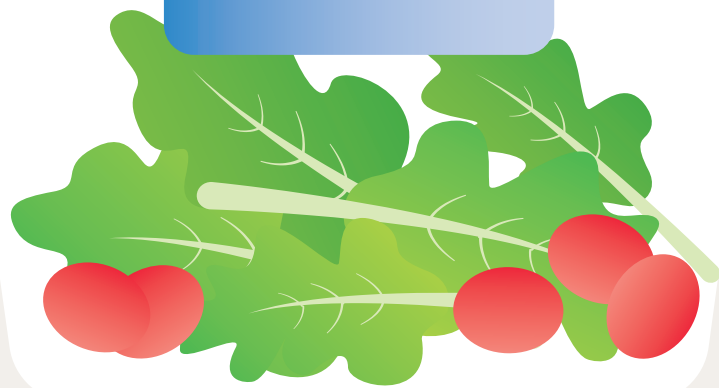
## Follow “First In, First Out.”

Place near expiry items at the front of the fridge or pantry so you'll use them first.



## Check Your Fridge Temperature

Keep the chiller between 0–4°C and the freezer at -18°C or below.



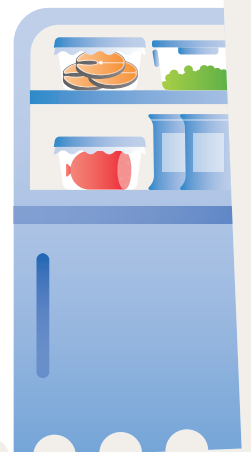
## Label your food

Mark leftovers and stored food with consume-by dates.



## Use Your Freezer

Freeze leftovers in portions so they'll last longer and are easier to reheat for the next meal.



# Food Storage Chart

Storing food in the fridge or freezer doesn't mean it can be kept forever.

Use this guide to determine how long you can store your food in the fridge or freezer.

Refer to [www.sfa.gov.sg/food-safety-tips/safe-food-practices/food-safety-tips](http://www.sfa.gov.sg/food-safety-tips/safe-food-practices/food-safety-tips) for more storage tips for the different food groups.

Freezer temperatures may vary according to different models or types. Check and avoid consuming food that has passed its expiry date.

## Storing your food at safe temperatures:

Type	Temperature
Fridges and Chillers	4°C and below
Freezers	-18°C or below

## Optimising the storage conditions for your food:

<b>Cold food (chilled/frozen)</b>	Keep cold food in the refrigerator or freezer, or on a bed of ice until it is time to serve.
	For storage of frozen meat in larger packaging, thaw the meat just enough (to about -10°C) to separate into smaller portions, then deep freeze in individual packs.
	Do not thaw food at room temperature. It is safer to thaw food by defrosting overnight in the refrigerator, or by using the microwave oven at defrost setting.
	Do not overstock your meat supply. Follow the rule of first in–first out, i.e. use older stock first.
<b>Dried and preserved foods</b>	Store in a cool, dry place, or in the refrigerator to prolong shelf life. Warm and humid conditions can cause dried food to turn mouldy and rancid at a faster rate.
	Transfer loose or unused contents of opened packages into airtight containers. The container or packaging should not allow entry of air or water vapour into the package to prevent rancidity or growth of mould on food.
	Mouldy food should be discarded as it may contain harmful mycotoxins.
<b>Cooked Food</b>	Always try to cook just enough for the current meal. If you are cooking for more than one meal, apportion and keep the extra food in clean, covered containers.
	Cooked food should be stored in the refrigerator or freezer once it is cooled.
	Spoon out the portion you want to consume onto a separate dish, to prevent contamination of the remaining food in the container.

## Chapter 4

# Mindful Makan Moments

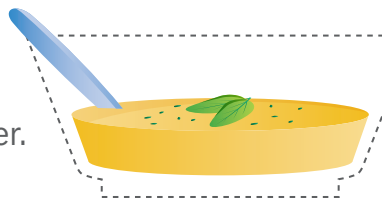


We love eating out and hosting get-togethers. Let's enjoy every bite and cut down on food wastage.

# Tips for Eating Out

## Order only what you can finish

Start small — you can always add more food later.



## Downsize your order

Ask for less rice or noodles if you know you cannot finish the dish



## Swap sides

If there's a side you don't usually eat, ask for a replacement.



## Ask for advice

Consult the server on portion sizes to determine how much to order.



## Share dishes

Offer a portion to your dining partner(s) before you start eating.



## Don't rush to order more

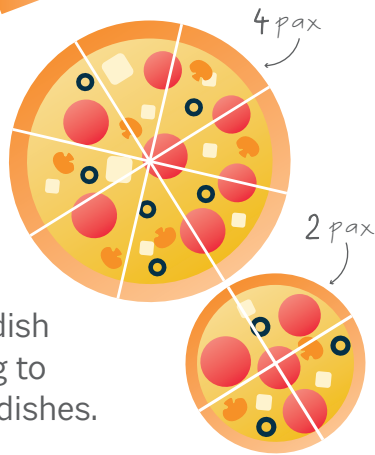


It takes 15–20 minutes to feel full, so wait before asking for more.

# Tips for Events and Parties

## Match portions to guests

Downsize the portions of each dish if you are planning to serve a variety of dishes.



## Know what your guests are bringing

Potluck meals should be carefully planned. Ask your guests the type and quantity of food that they're bringing.



## Encourage guests to bring reusable containers

Let them pack extra food home. They can safely enjoy it if eaten within 4 hours.



## Cater for less than the actual number of guests

Check with caterer on appropriate quantity of rice or noodles to order as carbohydrate items are commonly wasted at catered events.

1 tray of rice will do for 10 pax!



# Tips for Festive Gifting and Feasting

## Prepare just enough

Make a shopping list and check it twice. Buy only what you need. Cater for 10-15% less than the number of expected guests.



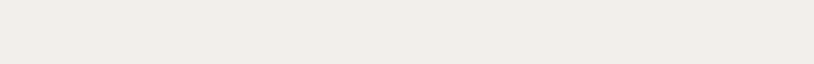
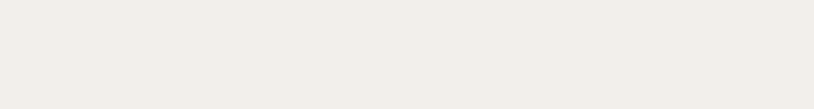
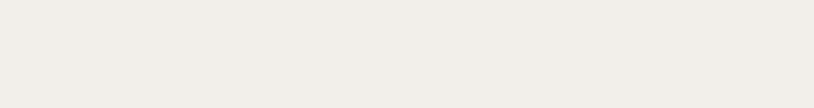
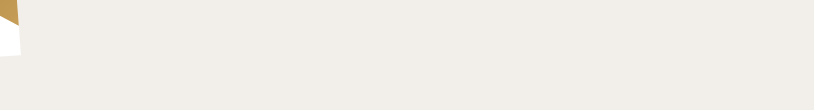
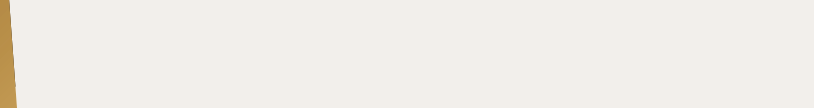
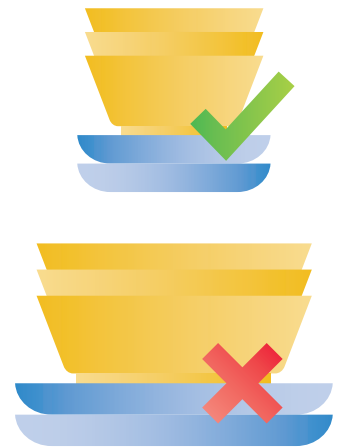
## Give it thought

Avoid highly perishable items. Choose food gifts that you know the recipient would enjoy.



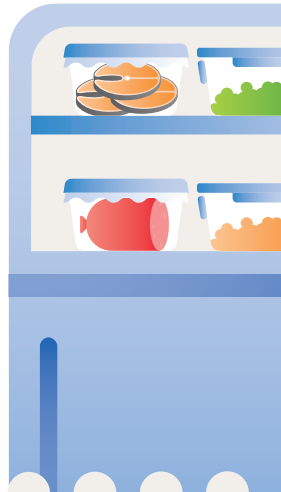
## Go small

Provide smaller plates for guests to encourage smaller portions, reducing the amount left on plates.



## Freeze your leftovers in small portions

Divide leftovers into small portions and pack them into airtight containers before freezing them.



## Make chips crispy again

Chips and nuts that have turned soft can be made crispy again after baking for a few minutes.



## Give away excess food from your hamper

Consider sharing or donating excess non-perishables.



Try this little trick!

# Mindful Makan Habits Tracker

Track your mindful makan habits and level up your food-wastage-fighting skills!

**The goal:** eat mindfully, reduce food wastage, and enjoy your meals responsibly.

## How to play

- Look at the habits below.
- Each time you do a habit, tick it in the tracker.
- Try to complete all habits over the week or month to become a “Mindful Makan Champion”!

Habit	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Only order a portion that I can finish when eating out	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask the server for advice on portion size.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Swap or share sides with a dining partner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pause 15–20 mins before re-ordering more at your next meal.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encourage event guests to bring containers for leftovers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Downsize or cater for fewer guests. Pack or donate extra food from events to charitable organisations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Quick reflection

Which habits did you try? How did these habits help reduce food wastage or eat more mindfully?

### Tip

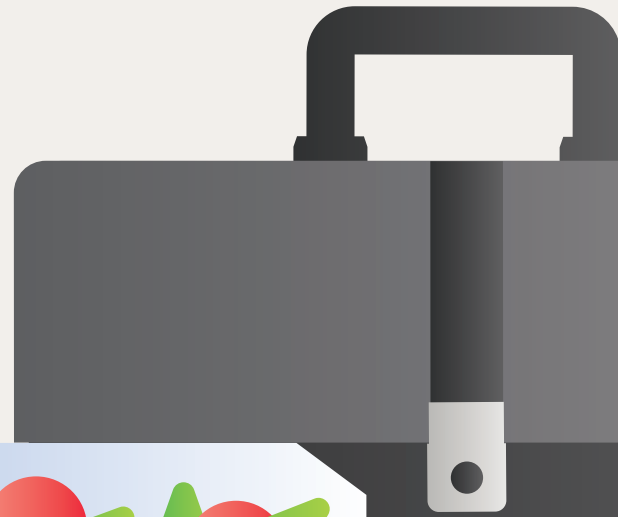
Discover more tips on reducing food wastage during makan sessions on pages 18 to 22.

# Smart Office Pantry Habits

Office snacks and pantry treats are great, but let's be smart and cut down on food wastage.

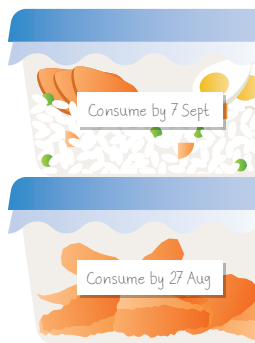


# Manage the Food in Your Office Wisely



## Ensure proper storage and label your food

Use containers to keep food fresh longer and mark expiry or purchase dates so nothing gets forgotten.



## Clear the pantry day

Set aside a day every week and get your colleagues to finish up the food.



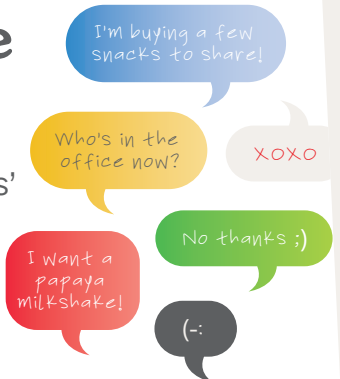
## Smart group ordering

Order just enough for meetings and events by checking the list of confirmed attendees and have a backup plan for leftover catered food.



## Check before you buy

Check your colleagues' preferences and the quantity to purchase so that food doesn't go to waste.



## Set up an "Eat These First" spot

Gather the soon-to-expire food in one area and encourage your colleagues to help themselves to it.



Try this little trick!

# Office Food Hero Word Search

Find the hidden tips to reduce food wastage and become an Office Food Hero!

## How to play

- Look at the **word list** below.
- Find and **circle each word** in the grid. Words can go **forward, backward, up, down, or diagonally**.
- **Note: For the answers, please turn to the next page.**

**Word List:**    **LABEL** – before you store    **CHECK** – before you buy  
                   **CLEAR** – the pantry day    **EATFIRST** – set up an “Eat These First” spot

C	X	A	H	L	E	T	F	I	R	L	T	L
L	A	R	E	C	P	Q	Z	W	A	L	F	A
S	H	A	R	E	N	B	V	C	B	D	I	B
T	S	R	I	F	T	A	E	H	Y	E	K	E
B	E	A	L	B	L	Q	W	R	T	A	C	L
M	N	B	V	A	S	D	B	K	C	E	H	C
E	F	T	A	I	S	R	T	H	J	K	L	B
C	L	E	A	R	P	O	I	U	Y	T	R	I
H	S	H	A	R	E	L	K	J	H	G	F	L

Discover more tips on reducing office food wastage on page 24 to 25.

# Answer Sheet

Did you get them all?

C	X	A	H	L	E	T	F	I	R	L	T	L
L	A	R	E	C	P	Q	Z	W	A	L	F	A
S	H	A	R	E	N	B	V	C	B	D	I	B
T	S	R	I	F	T	A	E	H	Y	E	K	E
B	E	A	L	B	L	Q	W	R	T	A	C	L
M	N	B	V	A	S	D	B	K	C	E	H	C
E	F	T	A	I	S	R	T	H	J	K	L	B
C	L	E	A	R	P	O	I	U	Y	T	R	I
H	S	H	A	R	E	L	K	J	H	G	F	L

## Bonus!

Print out these last-mile reminders to paste around your office to remind your colleagues to reduce food waste.

\*Also available on page 30.



### Label before you store

Stored on: \_\_\_\_\_ Use by: \_\_\_\_\_

### Clear the pantry

Every: \_\_\_\_\_

### Check before you buy

Check your colleagues' preferences and the quantity to purchase so that food doesn't go to waste.

### Eat these first

These items are expiring soon, so help yourselves to them!

## Chapter 6

# Share the Love with the Community



**Save edible food from the bin.  
Pass it on and share with someone  
who needs it.**

# Donate Your Excess Food

Have canned or packaged food that you're unlikely to consume?

As long as the items are unopened and not expired, you can donate them to the following charitable organisations.

It's a simple way to reduce food wastage and support those in need at the same time.



## Food Bank Singapore

- 🌐 Website: [www.foodbank.sg](http://www.foodbank.sg)
- ✉ Email: [enquiries@foodbank.sg](mailto:enquiries@foodbank.sg)
- ☎ Contact No.: 6831 5395

## Fei Yue Community Services

- 🌐 Website: [www.fycs.org](http://www.fycs.org)
- ✉ Email: [admin@fycs.org](mailto:admin@fycs.org)
- ☎ Contact No.: 6563 1106

## Food From The Heart

- 🌐 Website: [www.foodheart.org](http://www.foodheart.org)
- ✉ Email: [info@foodheart.org](mailto:info@foodheart.org)
- ☎ Contact No.: 6280-GIVE (4483)

## Willing Hearts

- 🌐 Website: [www.willinghearts.org.sg](http://www.willinghearts.org.sg)
- ✉ Email: [willingheartsingapore@gmail.com](mailto:willingheartsingapore@gmail.com)
- ☎ Contact No.: 6476 5822

*Information accurate as of December 2025.  
For full list of organisations, refer [here](#).*

**💡 Tip: Before donating, check that all items are...**

- Unopened and properly sealed
- Within the expiry or "best before" date
- Stored in good condition (with no dents, damage, or rusty canned food)

# Stickers

## Label before you store

Stored on: \_\_\_\_\_ Use by: \_\_\_\_\_

## Clear the pantry

Every: \_\_\_\_\_

## Check before you buy

Check your colleagues' preferences and the quantity to purchase so that food doesn't go to waste.

## Eat these first

These items are expiring soon, so help yourselves to them!