

TAKE THE CHALLENGE:

KEEP GOOD FOOD FROM GOING TO WASTE

INSTRUCTIONS

What is the Challenge?

Did you know that, on average, American households throw out more than a quarter of their food purchases? Research shows that nearly everyone wastes more than they think they do.

The challenge is about helping you figure out how much food is really going to waste at home and what you can do to waste less. A second purpose of the challenge is to collect data that will help in the design of future programs to reduce food waste.

The challenge takes place over four weeks:

WEEK 1

Measure how much food currently goes to waste in your household.

WEEKS 2 AND 3

Try out one new strategy for preventing waste.

WEEK 4

Measure the impact of that strategy.

Some Definitions

There are two categories of food waste:

- **PREVENTABLE** food waste is food you bought to eat but has since spoiled or food that was prepared but was not eaten and then thrown away.
- **NON-EDIBLE** food waste includes items such as egg shells, bones, fruit pits, and non-edible peels—food parts that are typically discarded during food preparation or consumption.

Keep in Mind! During the challenge, keep to your usual routine as much as possible with the exception of the strategy you try. For example, if you do not regularly clean out your refrigerator, please don't start now.

What's in the Challenge Kit?

- Two printed paper bags for collecting food waste in Weeks 1 and 4
 - Four compostable bag inserts for the paper bags
 - This instruction sheet
 - A data collection sheet
 - Meals in Mind Shopping List template
 - Fruit and Vegetable Storage Guide
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**TOO GOOD
TO WASTE**



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WEEK 1

1. Explain the challenge to members of your household and ask for their participation.
2. For one week, collect PREVENTABLE food waste in one of the two paper bags provided with the kit lined with a compostable bag. *(If you are concerned about leakage, then you might use a plastic bag as a second liner.)*
3. In a separate bag or other container (not provided), collect NON-EDIBLE food waste.
4. At the end of the week, weigh both bags and record the weights on the Challenge worksheet. Here's how:
 - Using a bathroom scale, first weigh yourself and jot down your weight. Then, climb onto the scale while holding the food waste bag. Subtract your weight from this second number to get the bag's weight.
 - If either bag fills before the end of 7 days, weigh the full bag and record how many days you collected food in that bag.
 - Mark how full the food waste bag got by circling a hash mark or fraction on the bag itself and record this on the Challenge worksheet.
5. Keep track of how many meals each person ate away from home.
6. At the end of the week, return your worksheet for Week 1 to [\[insert survey monkey url number 2 or insert email, address, etc\]](#).
7. If you have curbside collection of food scraps in your community, place all collected food in your cart.

WEEKS 2 AND 3

Select one of the five strategies listed below to try. Continue for a minimum of two weeks.

- ☐ **Make a shopping list with meals in mind:**
This involves making a list based on how many meals you expect to eat at home before your next shopping trip. Specific directions on this strategy can be found on the meals-in-mind shopping list template.
- ☐ **Buy no more than you need:**
This involves buying less at a time, focusing on your immediate needs.
- ☐ **Keep fruits and vegetables fresh:**
This involves storing fruits and vegetables so they stay fresh longer. See the Fruit and Vegetable Storage Guide for specifics.
- ☐ **Prep now, eat later:**
This involves preparing fruit and vegetables as soon as possible, preferably post-shopping, for use later as snacks and in meals.
- ☐ **Eat older food items and leftovers first:**
This involves being mindful of leftovers and old ingredients that need using up.

WEEK 4

1. Continue using the strategy you adopted.
2. Repeat the instructions for Week 1, steps 2 through 5.
3. Return your worksheet for Week 4 to [\[insert survey monkey url number 2 or insert email, address, etc\]](#).

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE CHALLENGE!



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**TOO GOOD
TO WASTE**

FULL
.....

7/8
.....

3/4
.....

5/8
.....

HALF
.....

3/8
.....

1/4
.....

1/8
.....

Week 1

Find out how much food
your household wastes.

Weeks 2 & 3

Test strategies to
prevent food waste.

Week 4

See how much food
you saved from going
to waste!



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