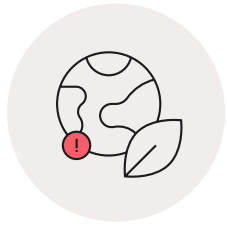


How to meal prep without waste



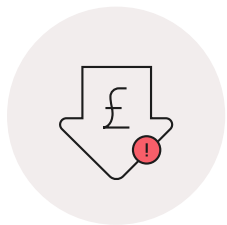
Did you know that nearly **one-third of all food produced globally goes to waste?** According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), food waste is a significant global issue, contributing to environmental decline, economic losses, and food insecurity. The good news? By planning your meals, storing food properly, and using up leftovers, **you can make a big difference.**

Why food waste matters



1. The environmental cost

When food is thrown away, it's not just the food that gets wasted. All the energy, water, and resources used to grow, transport, and package it is wasted too. And when food ends up in landfill, it produces methane, a greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change. Globally, food waste accounts for **8-10% of annual greenhouse gas emissions**, equivalent to the third-largest emitter after China and the United States.



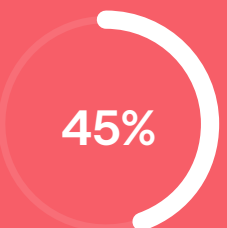
2. The financial impact

Globally, the economic cost of food waste is **estimated at one trillion dollars annually**. For households in the UK and the Republic of Ireland, this translates into significant financial losses with avoidable food waste costing billions. By adopting better meal-planning and storage practices, families can save money while reducing waste.

Step 1: Plan your meals

Start with a weekly plan

Take 10 minutes each week to plan your meals. Start by checking your calendar for busy nights and plan quicker meals for those days. Think about what you already have in your fridge, freezer, and cupboards. Then make a shopping list of the ingredients you need. This stops you from buying food on impulse and reduces waste.



Use up what you have

Globally, 45% of root crops, fruits, and vegetables are wasted annually. Before you shop, take a good look at what's already in your kitchen. Have some vegetables that's a bit past its best? Plan a soup, stir-fry, or curry. Got half a loaf of bread? It can be turned into breadcrumbs, croutons, or bread pudding.

Be realistic

Plan meals you'll want to eat. If you don't like kale, don't buy it just because it's on sale. Be honest about how much time you have to cook. If you're busy, choose simple recipes or batch-cook ahead of time.

Step 2: Store food properly

Know your fridge zones



The coldest shelf (bottom) is ideal for raw meat and fish.



Middle shelves work best for dairy and cooked foods.



The salad drawer is perfect for fruits and vegetables.



Freeze for later

Freezing is one of the easiest ways to make food last longer. Be sure to cool cooked food before freezing it and use **freezer-safe bags or containers** to prevent freezer burn. Bread, meat, cheese, and even some cooked meals can be frozen and thawed when needed. Just label your containers so you know what's inside.

Use airtight containers

Store leftovers in **airtight containers** to keep them fresh for longer. This also helps prevent cross-contamination and keeps your fridge tidy.



Step 3: Make the most of leftovers



Love your leftovers

Leftovers don't have to be boring. Get creative by **turning them into new meals**. For example, roast chicken can become chicken salad or a hearty soup. Leftover pasta can be baked into a frittata. The possibilities are endless.

Keep track of expiry dates

Use labels or a whiteboard to note when food needs to be eaten. A **"first in, first out"** rule can help ensure nothing gets forgotten at the back of the fridge.



Share or compost

If you've got too much food to use up, share it with a neighbour or a **food-sharing app**. And for scraps you can't eat, composting is a great way to put them to good use.

Quick tips for reducing waste

- **Buy loose produce:** This way, you can get exactly the amount you need rather than buying pre-packaged quantities.
- **Embrace “ugly” veg:** They might not look perfect, but they taste just as good.
- **Don’t shop when hungry:** It’s harder to stick to your list when everything looks tempting.
- **Learn portion control:** Cooking too much often leads to waste. Measure out ingredients to avoid this.



Small changes, big impact

Reducing food waste **doesn’t require drastic changes**. By planning meals thoughtfully, storing food effectively, and rethinking how you use leftovers, you can save money while helping the planet. Globally, more than one billion tonnes of food are wasted annually. Small individual actions can **collectively make a significant difference** in tackling this issue.

Contact **HealthHero** today for more support and advice. We’re with you every step of the way.