

Party tips

- Leftover party foods such as quiches and sausage rolls can be frozen over Christmas and used in packed lunches for when you return to work – they'll make any colleague or fellow pupil jealous!
- If you're inviting friends around for Christmas dinner or having a Christmas party with the family, remember that you can put much of your raw kitchen waste into your home composting bin afterwards, along with your Christmas tree pine needles and holly – just check out what you can include by visiting www.recyclenow.co.uk/compost
- Christmas and New Year are perfect times for dinner parties and you may need to cook for a large number of people. Use the Love Food Hate Waste Perfect Portions planner for advice on how much ingredients to use per person which will save you money and unnecessary food waste: http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com/perfect_portions

Make your fridge and freezer your festive friend

- It may be cold outside but you also need to check that your fridge is cold enough too. Chilled food will stay fresh for longer if you keep the fridge at a cool 1-5 degrees.
- Our most perishable (and often most expensive) Christmas food is kept in the fridge, so keep tabs on their use-by dates - the freezer may be the option for food you won't get round to eating in time and you can enjoy them well after Christmas is over.
- Lemons, apples and tomatoes stay fresh for even longer in the fridge. And keeping them in a loosely tied plastic bag or in the pack they were bought, helps them retain their moisture. Brits throw away 1.6bn apples every year, costing us £317m!

- Any leftover fish needs to be wrapped well and chilled. It's best eaten within a day of cooking or frozen. Pile leftover smoked salmon onto toasted bagels spread with cream cheese and sprinkle with lemon juice and black pepper. Or mix into Scrambled eggs for a Boxing Day breakfast.
- If you make too much food over Christmas don't throw it away! Pop it in a container in the fridge or freezer and eat at a later date. That means you can enjoy Christmas treats well after the day is over! What with having spent lots on food and pressies, this tip will save you money and time too
- You can freeze your excess Christmas cheese – hard cheeses can be frozen grated to use on pizza toppings or cheese on toast without defrosting. Stilton freezes really well without grating and can be defrosted for the cheese board or for a quiche or soup. Did you know over 17,000 tonnes of open cheese is thrown away each year?
- Leftover turkey makes a great sandwich filler or salad you can take to work in your packed lunch, by buying fewer lunches this can save you money too – we waste £16m worth of turkey portions each year.
- To find out more useful tips on the storage of food, tantalising Christmas recipes and advice on portioning this holiday season, visit www.lovefoodhatewaste.com

"Christmas is a time for indulgence but it's very easy to find you've cooked a little too much," explains Ainsley Harriott. "If we get our portions right, we not only help the environment, we can keep money in our pockets for the New Year sales!"

"If you do happen to have any food left over, or in the fridge, then make sure you put it to good use and make some tasty soups or Boxing Day salads," adds Ainsley.

Fab food facts

- With many shops closed over the holiday season, you might run low on the essentials such as bread and milk. To freshen up your loaf of bread, hold it very briefly under a running cold tap. Give it a good shake and pop in a hot oven for about 10 minutes; it will be lovely and crusty

- Did you know that putting bread in your fridge won't keep it fresh? In fact, it will make it go stale quicker! All is not lost though as bread is perfect for the freezer so, if you've bought a big loaf cut it in half and freeze one part for later in the week. More bread is thrown away while in date than any other foodstuff. This is especially useful if your local store is closed over the Christmas period so you won't run out before they reopen. You could freeze your Christmas crumpets too – 9,000 tonnes of them are thrown away yearly!
- 2 for 1s can be good value at Christmas, as long as you plan how to use the extra food. Have a think what festive meals you could cook with the items, and whether some of it could be frozen to avoid it simply going off
- Love your Christmas leftovers: visit www.lovefoodhatewaste.com for loads of great festive recipe ideas to help you make the most of that leftover roast turkey, cut ham or Christmas pudding. As well as saving food, and money, the family will love the new dishes made from these ingredients
- Use vegetables twice - Keep the onion left over from making bread sauce. Chop it and mix into the stuffing for the bird.
- Chestnuts are highly perishable because of their low fat content. To keep them fresh enough to use for a week or so, put them in a plastic bag in the salad drawer of the fridge. Freeze those you don't wish to eat over Christmas and enjoy them in the New Year. We waste 1,100 tonnes of nuts over the course of each year.
- The most important date to remember at Christmas is the 'use by' date. 'Best before' is for quality rather than indicating when a food goes off 'Sell by' and 'display until' are for the store staff only. Over a third of consumers treat 'best before' dates as the same as 'use by' ones.
- The big Christmas food shop doesn't need to be stressful – if you remember to plan in advance by making lists – the trip will be a lot easier and you are more likely to just buy what you need, saving you money and food waste in the long run!
- Did you know potatoes are the most wasted food item? We throw away 359,000 tonnes of them every year. Alternatively they could be turned into a great salad with mayonnaise and spring onions.

- If pudding leaves you feeling stuffed why not have it later with coffee and tea? Britons throw away 9,000 tonnes of cakes and gateaux yearly. Remember you can also refrigerate leftover custard from your Christmas pudding: we waste almost 36,000 tonnes of milk puddings every year.
- Britons throw away 259m unused portions of chocolate and sweets every year, costing £40m and that's on top of the £36m we waste on hot chocolate that never gets drunk.
- Every year we spend on £106m on sausages, £95m on bacon and £121m on tomatoes that never get eaten – that's a pretty expensive fry up!