

# Self-Audit

## Household Food Waste

An American family of 4 loses **\$1,500–\$2,000** yearly from tossing edible food. That's **\$792** per person, per year.

A **food waste self-audit** is a form that helps you see how much food gets thrown away in your home, and why. This helps you identify ways to reduce waste and save money.

The food-waste audit is similar to a journal in that, you will keep track of all food that goes into the trash for 1 week, and the best approach is to keep it simple. Once your audit is complete, you will have a strong start to making changes in your home to save money and reduce your waste.

Household food waste accounts for



of all food wasted in the United States.

To get started you will need

One week of time, a food waste log, and everyone on board!

## 5 EASY STEPS

1

**Pick a 1-week timeframe for the audit**



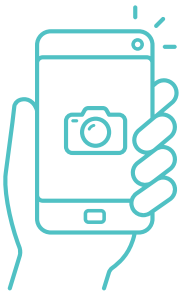
Before you jump in, it's important to plan a time frame to complete the audit that will work for your household. Avoid holidays or celebrations, and pick a typical week so you get an accurate reflection of your eating and waste habits. Normal occasions like kids events and dining out are fine to plan around.

## 2

### Plan out your data collection



Consider how you want to collect your data. You and your family will be committing to recording all food waste for a week, so considering how to record keep is important. The most common way is through a waste log, where you simply write down your food waste. Another option is recording it on your phone or computer. A **food waste log** can be found at the end of this audit for collecting your data.



Consider if you would like to take pictures of your food waste. A picture is worth a thousand words, and can certainly provide you with a powerful information about your food waste and help shape your goals for reducing it.

## 3

### Explain the plan to all members of the family



When your audit is planned out, be sure that everyone on the family is on board with the rules, that way, you can be sure you get an accurate idea of your waste during your audit.

## 4

### Begin tracking



#### Name of food

Be sure to include edible, and inedible food waste. Edible is the normal food we are used to eating. Inedible are parts of the food that can't be eaten, but this varies from person to person. For example, apple cores, fruit peels, and chicken bones.

### TIPS

Find a balance in jotting useful information, but avoiding long notes which will take more time to sort through at the end of the audit!



### **Amount**

Consider how you want to determine the amount being thrown away. While the most accurate way is weighing food waste on a scale, it can be time consuming. You may prefer a different measurement, such as describing food in cups, slices, or other estimates.



### **Where it was thrown away**

Where did the food waste happen, at home, from leftovers at work, or uneaten from a kid's packed lunch box? Be sure to include any food you purchased in your audit.



### **Reason for wasting**

Try to go beyond reasons such as "molded" or "old leftovers." Adding extra notes here such as, bought too much, plans changed, didn't store it properly, had to buy a bigger bag than needed at the grocery (packaging size options), didn't like it, didn't know how to cook, or made too much, are a few examples.



### **Ideas to reduce waste**

This is a great section to think into the reason the food was tossed, and jot down ideas for how this could be prevented. This will be a big help when you finish the audit and are ready to make changes in your home.

## **5**

## **Evaluate and make goals**



Once your self-audit is complete, you are ready to review and set some goals for change. Try to identify some of the major trends or "culprits" to your food waste.

Then, plan out 1-3 attainable goals for your family. Remember to start small and work towards reducing your waste over time for success. Take time to reflect on what changes have made a difference, what you have enjoyed, and feel proud in the progress you have made!

# Household Food Waste Log

[illegible]