

THE FRIDGE

DETECTIVE CHECKLIST

Find the food clues. Stop waste in its tracks. Save money.

Every week, take 5 minutes to play “Fridge Detective.” Use this checklist to uncover what’s hiding in your fridge before it spoils. A little detective work = less waste, more savings, and fresher meals for your family.

Step 1: Scan Your Fridge (The First Clues)

- ☐ **Check expiry dates** on dairy, meat, and ready-to-eat meals (ask an adult to show you where to find this information!).
- ☐ **Look for wilted veggies or fruit** – can they still be cooked, blended, or frozen?
- ☐ **Spot any half-used jars or bottles** (like sauces, yoghurt, or spreads)? Add them to this week’s meals.
- ☐ **Identify leftovers** – when were they cooked? Label with the date to avoid forgetting.



Step 2: Record Your Findings (Detective’s Notebook)

- ☐ **Make a use-first list:** Write down items that need to be eaten soon.
- ☐ **Stick the list on the fridge door** so everyone in the house sees it.
- ☐ **Plan meals around these ingredients** before buying more.



Step 3: Take Action (Solve the Case!)

- ☐ **Freeze what you can't eat in time.** (Bread, berries, meat, cooked rice, soups – freeze before waste happens!)
- ☐ **Prep ingredients into ready-to-cook portions** (e.g., chop wilting spinach for tomorrow's omelette).
- ☐ **Mix & match:** Combine odd bits (like half a pepper, the last carrot, or leftover chicken) into a stir-fry, curry, or soup.



Detective Tips (Pro Secrets)

- **Store milk & dairy on the middle shelves of the fridge**, not near the door (it's too warm).
- **Keep fruits & veggies in separate drawers** (some fruits give off gases that spoil veggies faster).
- **Label leftovers with a piece of masking tape & date.**
Saves guessing later!
- **Always move older items to the front of the fridge** ("first in, first out").



Mission Complete

Being a Fridge Detective isn't about being perfect – it's about being smart. Every clue you uncover saves food, money, and the planet. Small steps = big wins!

Want more tips & tools? Visit foodwaste.cgcsa.co.za to download meal planners, leftover inspiration guides, and kid-friendly activities.