



Guide to Reducing Food Waste at Parties

1. Plan Your Menu Thoughtfully

- **Estimate Portions Accurately:**
 - Use portion calculators to determine how much food you need based on the number of guests.
 - Plan for about one pound of food per adult and half a pound for children.
- **Consider Your Guest List:**
 - Confirm RSVPs to avoid over-preparing.
 - Adjust portions based on the crowd (e.g., lighter meals for afternoon events, heavier for dinner parties).
- **Serve Foods That Keep Well:**
 - Opt for dishes that can be easily repurposed if leftovers remain (e.g., pasta salads, casseroles).

2. Choose Smart Serving Styles

- **Buffet Style with Smaller Plates:**
 - Smaller plates encourage guests to take only what they can eat.
- **Pre-Portion Items:**
 - Serve certain dishes in pre-portioned sizes (e.g., sliders, mini tacos) to reduce uneaten food.
- **Label Foods:**
 - Clearly label dishes and ingredients to help guests choose foods they'll enjoy and avoid waste due to dietary preferences or allergies.

3. Avoid Overbuying Ingredients

- **Shop with a List:**
 - Make a shopping list based on your planned recipes and stick to it.
- **Use What You Have:**
 - Plan dishes around ingredients you already have at home.
- **Use Bulk Bins for Specialty Items:**
 - If you need small amounts of specific ingredients, buy from bulk bins.

4. Manage Leftovers Effectively

- **Have a Leftover Plan:**
 - Set out containers for guests to take home food.
 - Provide compostable or reusable takeout boxes.
- **Store Leftovers Properly:**
 - Freeze extras or store in airtight containers to extend shelf life.
- **Repurpose Leftovers:**
 - Turn leftovers into new meals (e.g., roasted veggies in a frittata, fruit into smoothies).

5. Compost Food Scraps

- **Set Up a Compost Station:**
 - Place a clearly labeled compost bin for food scraps.
 - Inform guests about what can be composted (e.g., fruit peels, coffee grounds, eggshells).
- **Check Local Composting Options:**
 - If you don't compost at home, see if your city offers food scrap collection.

6. Donate Surplus Food

- **Identify Donation Options:**
 - Contact local food banks or shelters about donating surplus food.
 - Ensure food is unopened and meets donation guidelines.
- **Share Unopened Items:**

- If you have unopened non-perishables, consider donating them after the event.

7. Educate and Inspire Guests

- **Encourage Conscious Eating:**
 - Share your intention to reduce food waste at the start of the party.
- **Highlight Sustainable Choices:**
 - Use reusable plates, cups, and utensils.
 - Serve plant-based options to reduce the environmental footprint further.

8. Reflect and Improve

- **Track What Was Left Over:**
 - Note which dishes had the most leftovers and adjust portion sizes for next time.
- **Learn for the Future:**
 - Keep a list of crowd favorites and quantities for future events.

9. Pro Tips for a Zero-Waste Party:

- Opt for finger foods to reduce utensils.
- Batch drinks in dispensers instead of individual bottles.
- Offer guests “to-go jars” for leftovers.
- Encourage guests to bring their own reusable containers.