

Organize Your Fridge Checklist

By Lauren Meir

- Keep it Fresh...or Frozen**
 - Clean and wipe down shelves and drawers regularly
 - Don't wash fruits or vegetables until they're ready to eat Unwashed produce lasts longer.
 - Check expiration dates before eating or drinking. If all else fails, smell it first!
 - Place paper towels in bags of lettuce and other greens It will absorb the extra moisture and foods will stay fresher longer.
 - Wrap parsley, cilantro, and leafy greens in newspaper or papertowel- They won't wilt as fast.
 - Extend the life of your apples by keeping them in the fridge They'll stay good for weeks.
 - Tomatoes don't care for cold ..save room and keep them in a cool place outside the fridge.
 - Too hot and no air-conditioning? Put tomatoes in the fridge, but keep them away from other veggies. Tomatoes emit a gas that hastens the spoiling process
 - If you're worried about bread going bad, put in the freezer When ready for eating, warm it up in the microwave for 30 seconds and then toast.
 - Too much dairy, not enough room? Don't throw it out ..freeze dairy products like cheese and yogurt. Defrost when ready to eat. Partially defrosted yogurt tastes like ice cream!
 - Freeze berries and ;bananas They can be used in ;recipes, blended in shakes or as cereal or yogurt toppers.
 - Keep nuts like almonds, walnuts, cashews and pistachios in the freezer They'll stay fresh and crunchy for ages.
 - Freeze your flour It'll keep longer.
- Get Organized**
 - Keep foods organized by shelf or drawer Keep dairy together or with meats. Place fruits and veggies in the appropriate drawers.
 - All condiments and bottled goods should be stored in the door.
 - Conserve space If you have just a little bit of something in a large container or bottle, move it to a smaller container. Just make sure it's labeled so you know what you're eating!
 - Place unopened products that don't require immediate ;refrigeration ;(like salad dressings and sauces) in the cupboard first.
 - Put frequently used products towards the front of the fridge.

- No space for more containers?** Store foods in plastic sealed sandwich bags to save room.
- Ensure all perishables have legible expiration dates.** If it's hard to see or you're moving to another container, make a label first!
- Throw out the carton** Place eggs in an egg organizer, just make sure the shells are labeled so you know when to toss.
- Get stackable, clear containers in different sizes** These are great for everything from sauces to leftovers, are durable and great space-savers. Just make sure they're transparent so you can see what's in 'em.