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They say the world is built on two people, and the world of food is no exception. Cooking dishes really want to eat with minimal waste, the goal of cooking one, and don't be afraid: you can do it too, just a little foresight and planning. Here's how. Get to know yourself and your real eating habitsAspirational shopping for death by eating at home and you need to buy things you know that you love to eat so you can eat them. To do this, make a list of vegetables, fruits, meats and dairy products that you know you have enjoyed in the past, and try not to deviate too much from it. If you like to try new things, limit it to one or two adventurous purchases a week, so you don't end up with a fridge full of things you don't really like. If you have a hard time coming up with a list from memory, keep track of your food keeping food diary or snap a quick picture with your phone. For lunch on Tuesday last week, I had a vegetable stir fry mixed with curry minced beef and a... MoreSimilarly, it helps to get a handle on the real feelings of the leftovers. Are you the kind of person who can eat the same thing for several days in a row or need variety? It's all ok to have a large pot of chili on a Sunday night and eat it until Friday, provided you like chili enough to eat five days in a row. As a person, you can always assume that you are the only one who eats from this large batch of anything; No one's going to save you from your chili. G/O Media can get commissioned by MySmile Teeth Whitening Kit Finally, take a hard look at how much you eat out, without judgment or criticism. I'm a big fan of eating out alone, but sometimes I forget to subtract those dishes from my entire meal plan and set the shopping need. If it's worth it to buy the lunchtime sandwich, instead of taking the time to have one every night, you can just buy the sandwich and leave bread, ham, and sandwich bags off your shopping list. Being realistic with yourself about who you are and what you eat is one of the most important factors in planning your meal. I want to be the kind of woman who starts every day in a kale-acai smoothie bowl? yes, but I've tried, and all I got was a bunch of wilting kale and a neglected blender. I'm the kind of woman who starts the day with a can of diet coke and knowing that it helps me buy it. In the words of Maria Bamford, you can't change people. You can't change me... I'm a sea cow. I know the speedboats are going to hit me, but I'm swimming here! If you have a clear idea of who you are and how you eat, it's time to make a list (or more lists). Plan your attack before you even go to the store, go through the fridge and pantry, throwing out any old or questionable items and taking into account what you already have. (This is a good way to that you do not end up seven bottles of jam.) If you are a list maker, consider keeping a bullet diary to keep track of what you buy, how much you spend, and any favorite items or recipes you would like to buy and/or cook again, making everything a little more streamlined. Unless it's not common on the Internet a lot, you've probably heard of bullet logging... Read moreIf you want to get things done in the current century there are some great meal planning applications out there like Cooksmarts, Peppers, and plan to eat. Copy Me This is also a great, free option that works on all devices and generates shopping lists for recipes you choose. If you really want to be really highfalutin, check out Eat This Much, which creates personalized meal plans and grocery lists for you, based on your diet needs and food preferences. Of course, there's nothing wrong but plain old pens and paper; The most high-tech I get is taking a picture of my writing out grocery list on my phone so I don't have to carry the piece of paper. In addition to keeping track of the things you eat, it's also useful to keep a diary of food you throw away so you can either buy less or make the item (or not at all). Once you have the lists in order, it's time to head to the store. It's easy to overshop and buy too much food in the store. Inevitably, the food will eventually... Read moreShop Smart, and buy what I actually EatTold the fact that I have a smaller than normal refrigerator and no car, I prefer smaller, more frequent trips to the store. Fresh food is more delicious (which means you're more likely to eat it) and keeping your fridge on the emptier side will help you actually see what's there. As for perishable, I try to follow one or two of each category rule: One protein: Minced beef, fried chicken, tofu and even deli meat all fall into this category. Buying one at a time not only forces you to eat it all, but encourages you to think of new and creative ways to produce that protein. One Dairy (two if you're a milk-drinking adult): In addition to milk, I just allow myself a dairy like labneh or cheese on a shopping trip. It's mostly not like I'm eating cheese. One bread: Bread is amazing and can be tempting to stock up on sandwich bread, bagels, and make delicious looking baguettes at the bakery, all at once. It's ok if you have enough space in the freezer (bread keeps it well there), but it's also a good way to end up with a lot of sad, moldy, or stand-up bread. Two fruits: Aim for one to keep for a while (like apples or oranges) and one that you can make you eat pretty quickly (like berries). Two vegetables: You can stretch it more if you get frozen, but sticking to the two fresh ensures that they both get consumed. A treat: a bottle of wine, a pint Anyway, I'll try to stick to a lawsuit hike or I'll buy just treats and eat dishes consisting of crisps, ice cream, and alcohol. A Dozen Eggs: Eggs are the best food for a person to be around. They immediately add protein, vitamins, and delicious yolk-y richness to each meal and keep it much longer than other proteins like meat. In addition to all the fresh stuff, the one-man pantry should be filled with non-perishables that are quickly and easily assembled into satisfying dishes. These include, but are not limited to: Dry beans, lentils, and rice: All kept for a long time and have a great base for a healthy meal. Canned fish: Tuna, sardines, anchovies, and other canned fish add a good bit of protein and fatty acids to salads, cereal bowls, or whatever else you throw at them. Canned beans: Although I prefer dried legumes, I like to keep a few cans of black, pinto, and garbanzo beans around to beef up soups and salads, or pick up a quick hummus or bean dip. Shopping for one can be tricky. When the only person you have to be good with is your shop... Read more Instead of buying meat, cheese and seafood from the pre-packaged part, make friends with the deli, meat and seafood throughout the grocery store. Cheesemongers are always more than happy to cut a wedge to their exact specifications, and getting lunch meat from the deli allows you to customize the order off the slice. As for meat, if the cut just comes in a pre-packaged container of eight, you can usually take it to the meat counter and ask for a smaller amount to be repackaged. It's also a good idea to use some system to track expiration dates, whether it's a spreadsheet or a table. If you need a primer for storage and expiration dates, check out StillTasty, which will tell you how and how long to store your food, and this graphic that will show you how to keep your pantry full of fresh things. Finally, don't forget the little extras that you want to cook for yourself. It can be an ornate oil, crispy, flakey salt, or a flavor wrapped in spice or seasoning like harissa. We tend to think of good cooking as something you do for others, but you deserve tasty food whether you're sharing them or not. Get to Cooking (Or not) First of all, I know that no food is out of the question to you as a person, even pancakes. Almost every recipe can be scaled down to just a small divide, but if you don't have one in mental mathematics, a handy calculator can help you out. The Kitchen also has a good number of recipes specially crafted for one person, including cupcake, brownies, and a tasty soba pasta bowl. Let's say you have a great recipe for a flat cake, but only round cake pans. Or maybe furtherif you don't feel like doing any math at all, try to add recipes that can be repurposed and reformatted so you don't suffer from mouth boredom. chicken (or pork fried or roast beef) is an obvious choice, as it can be incorporated into salads, sandwiches, fritatas, or pasta, and almost every grain dish can be given a new life by giving it a fried rice treatment. Don't even bother reheating leftover steak though, turn that business into a cold salad instead. I'm also a big fan of just shoving things into omelettes; I once chopped up a slice of pizza and folded it into an omelet with a little cheddar. It was really good. Although I'm sure none of you have ever experienced this leftover steak, I've heard... Read moreIn terms of take-out, the video above has some great ideas on how to repurpose last night's spaghetti (make sliders), cheesesteak (use the filling of the egg rolls) and even fries (crisp them with a waffle iron). I'm also a big fan of buying too much pasta from my favorite Thai joint and then adding more vegetables to them later to bulk up on what I didn't eat in the first session. Make friends with your freezer Your freezer is your secret weapon in the one-man food storage. Besides the foods on this list (which are mostly raw foods with high moisture content and creamy things,) almost nothing can be frozen, so you can consume time. Some of the things you freeze to take advantage of in your icebox: Great items: As mentioned above, it's important to know that you're the kind of person who enjoys eating the same thing over and over again. If not, you can also make a large batch of something, just partially out of a single serving, so you have as much or as little as you like in a week. If you need some pointers on how to properly store food in the freezer, check out our guide on the subject here. Bread: I love bread, but good bread breaks down before I can work my way through a loaf. To prevent this tragedy, I'm going to take half the package, put it in a freezer bag, and leave it there until I'm ready. (It goes beyond sandwich bread, and it can also be made from whole bread to homemade things, bagels, English muffins, tortillas, or any other breadly item.) Bacon: I've never had trouble eating a packet of bacon before it went wrong, but if I just eat a few pieces a week, freezing the strips of each roll is the way to go. Herbs are the opposite of bacon for me that I would never, ever use them completely if I didn't freeze them. The best way to do this is to blanch, dry, cut and coat them with a neutral oil, then freeze them in flat plastic bags. Not only does it let you get old bit of the oil/herb mixture at a time, but it takes up less space than an ice cube tray. Desserts: Cookies, cakes, and brownies all freeze super well and can be eaten straight from the freezer without thawing. True story: I only had one frozen birthday brownie mere moments ago and it was August.If none of it sounds like there are always frozen burritos and Hot Pockets. Sous vide Hot Pockets is the peak single dish. Illustration: Angelica Alzona. Photos by aehdeschaine, Caden Crawford, Stephen Yeargin, and Kathleen Franklin. Franklin.

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