

FOOD WASTE AUDIT

Thank you for participating!

What is required?

- ✓ Complete First Kitchen Check to Record Discarded Food
- ✓ Complete Daily Food Waste Logs (**at least 4 days**)
- ✓ Complete Last Kitchen Check to Record Discarded Food

We have provided the following set of instructions:

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INSTRUCTIONS: Kitchen Check

When do I record this?

- First Check: Complete BEFORE starting Day 1 of the Daily Food Waste Log
- Last Check: Complete AFTER recording the 4th day of the Daily Food Waste Log

What do I record?

Look through the food and beverage items in your **fridge, freezer, pantry/ cabinets, and kitchen counters**, and find any items that will likely go uneaten or be thrown out.

Use a digital scale to weigh food waste at home (**see page 4**).

Food that is still in its unopened, original package does not need to be weighed on the scale. Instead, follow the directions on page 5 for "**Special Situations**."

 **Record:** Enter the following information on the **Kitchen Check**.

- Description of discarded food/beverage – be as detailed as possible
 - ✓ Record any food/beverage you throw away (pour down the drain, run through the garbage disposal, put in the trash, compost, or even feed to pets).
Examples include leftovers, full and partially packaged foods/beverages, etc. – essentially any food or beverage you are discarding, *including* pits (cherries, peaches, etc.), peels (bananas), bones (meat), coffee grounds, and tea bags.
 - ✓ Only list one food/beverage item per row; if it is a mixed dish (i.e., lasagna), describe it to the extent possible.
 - ✗ Do not record water.
- Weight of food *in grams* (as measured with a scale, see page 4; see page 5 "Special Situations" for certain packaged food).
- Where the food had been stored
- Reason(s) for discarding (i.e., throwing away) – ✓ all that apply.
- Where it was discarded
- Comments – provide additional explanation as needed

REMINDER: The Kitchen Check must be completed BEFORE starting the 4 days of the Daily Food Waste Logs. If you have no waste to report, indicate that on the log.

INSTRUCTIONS: Daily Food Waste Logs

Record at-home food waste for you AND all household members for the entire day for **at least 4 days**. Be sure to continue with your other normal food practices. Don't change how you usually prepare or discard food/beverages.

Use a digital scale to weigh food and beverage waste (**see page 4**).

 **Record:** Enter the following information on the **Daily Food Waste Log**.

- Time of day that meal/snack is eaten or food/beverage waste discarded.
(NOTE: record waste as it happens)
- Meal/Snack – ✓ the appropriate column
- Description of discarded food/beverage – be as detailed as possible.
 - ✓ Record any food/beverage you throw away (pour down the drain, run through the garbage disposal, put in the trash, compost, or even feed to pets) – including pits (cherries, peaches, etc.), peels (bananas), bones (meat), coffee grounds, and tea bags.
 - ✓ Only list one food/beverage item per row; if it is a mixed dish (i.e., lasagna), describe it to the extent possible.
 - ✗ Do not record water or food consumed away from home (e.g., at a restaurant, packed lunch consumed at work or school, etc.)
- Weight of food in grams (as measured with a scale, see page 4; see page 5 “Special Situations” for certain packaged food).
- Reason(s) for discarding (i.e., throwing away) – ✓ all that apply.
- Where it was discarded
- Daily comments – provide additional explanation as needed. Include anything unusual (i.e., had a party, didn't eat much due to illness, etc.).

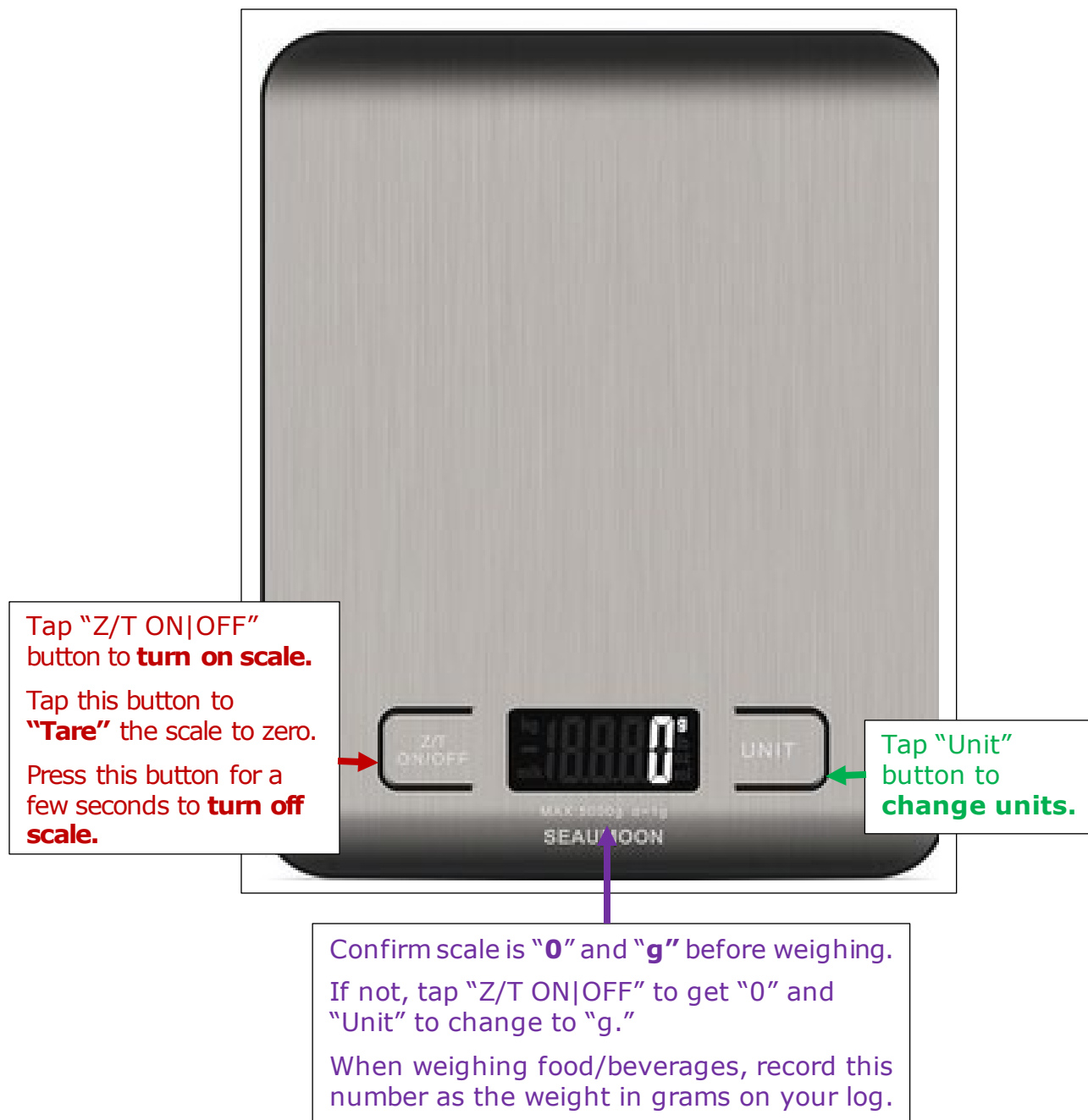
REMINDER: Record food waste for you AND all members of your household. If you have no waste to report, indicate that on the log.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: 4th day of Daily Food Waste Log

After recording information on your 4th Daily Food Waste Log, complete your Last Kitchen Check. As you did on the First Kitchen Check, look through your **fridge**, **freezer**, **pantry/cabinets**, and **kitchen counters** to find any items that will likely go uneaten or be thrown out. Record the items on the Last Kitchen Check per the instructions on page 2.

How to use a digital scale

(NOTE: these are general instructions – consult your owner’s manual)



Weighing tips






"Zero" or "tare" the scale before weighing food. If a container (i.e., bowl, dish, etc.) is used, zero/tare the scale with the empty container, then place the food in the container and record the weight.



Do not include food packaging or wrappers when you weigh food.

Special Situations

<p>Waste from an <u>UNOPENED</u> packaged food. Find the “Net Weight” on the package in grams.</p>		<p>Example of how to record:</p> <table><tr><th>Description of Discarded Food or Beverage</th><th>Weight of Food Discarded (in grams)</th></tr><tr><td>Granola Cereal, packaged</td><td>340 g</td></tr></table>	Description of Discarded Food or Beverage	Weight of Food Discarded (in grams)	Granola Cereal, packaged	340 g
Description of Discarded Food or Beverage	Weight of Food Discarded (in grams)					
Granola Cereal, packaged	340 g					
<p>Waste from an <u>OPENED</u> packaged food. Ideally, remove the food from the package and weigh it on the scale. However, <u>if this is difficult</u>, the weight can be estimated. For example, indicate “mustard, ½ bottle” in the description and 170 g in the weight.</p>		<table><tr><th>Description of Discarded Food or Beverage</th><th>Weight of Food Discarded (in grams)</th></tr><tr><td>Mustard, ½ bottle</td><td>170 g</td></tr></table>	Description of Discarded Food or Beverage	Weight of Food Discarded (in grams)	Mustard, ½ bottle	170 g
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Mustard, ½ bottle	170 g					
<p>Waste from packaged food, <u>NO WEIGHT</u> on the label. Ideally, remove the food from the package and weigh it on the scale. However, <u>if this is difficult</u>, indicate the amount and the alternative unit of measure. For example, indicate “tartar sauce, ¾ bottle” in the description and 266 mL (or 9 fl oz) in the “weight.”</p>		<table><tr><th>Description of Discarded Food or Beverage</th><th>Weight of Food Discarded (in grams)</th></tr><tr><td>Tartar Sauce, ¾ bottle</td><td>266 mL</td></tr></table>	Description of Discarded Food or Beverage	Weight of Food Discarded (in grams)	Tartar Sauce, ¾ bottle	266 mL
Description of Discarded Food or Beverage	Weight of Food Discarded (in grams)					
Tartar Sauce, ¾ bottle	266 mL					

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

What to record

Q: Do I record food I plan to donate to a food pantry or give to a friend?

A: *While that is a great way to decrease food waste, you should not record these foods because they can be eaten by someone else.*

Q: Do I record food we didn't eat because it was burnt during cooking or dropped on the floor during preparation or serving?

A: *Yes – record this. Check "other" and explain the reason for discarding in the comments.*

Q: What if I'm throwing away only part of an opened package of food?

A: *Ideally, remove the food from the package and weigh it on the scale. If it is difficult to remove from the package, estimate the weight in grams based on the weight on the package and how much is uneaten. Refer to the instructions for "Special Situations" for more details.*

Q: Should I be logging food waste from other family members living with me or guests' food?

A: *Yes – record all food that is discarded in your home. You may need a system with your family members to set food waste aside until you have time to record it. If you had guests, add that information to the comments.*

Q: Do I record "trim," like the end of carrots, potato peelings, apple cores, banana peelings, fat cut off of meat, etc.?

A: *Yes – record any "trim" from foods you are not eating and decided to discard. Even things like coffee grounds and tea bags.*

Q: I am not putting my food waste in the trash can. Instead, I put it down the garbage disposal or in my compost bucket/pile. Do I count that?

A: *Yes - record anything you are throwing out, no matter where you are discarding it.*

Where to record

Q: What if something has gone bad on a day when I am only recording my daily waste? For example, on Day 3 of recording my Daily Food Waste, my milk smells bad and I decide to get rid of it. Does that go on the Daily Food Waste Log, or should I keep it for the Last Kitchen Check?

A: *Record this on your Daily Food Waste Log based on the day you discard it. You can check "other" if it wasn't for a specific meal and provide an explanation.*

Beverages, fluids, and bottled condiments

Q: Do I need to record beverages or fluids that I discard?

A: *Yes – record beverages and fluids you discard at home. Place an empty container on the scale, tare to zero the scale, and pour the beverage/fluid into the container to get the weight. Reminder – you do NOT need to record water.*

Q: For the beverages and fluids I discard, do I record the weight in grams, or should I measure the amount in cups, fluid ounces (fl oz), or milliliters (ml)?

A: *Record the weight in grams.*

Q: Do I need to record water, cooking liquid, or liquids from canned vegetables or fruits?

A: *No – you don't need to record these liquids.*

Q: What about condiments in bottles, like mustard or ketchup?

A: *For bottled condiments you are throwing out, ideally place an empty container on the scale, tare to zero the scale, and pour the condiment into the container to get the weight. However, if it is difficult to remove from the package, estimate the weight in grams based on the package label. Refer to the instructions for "Special Situations" for more details.*

Restaurant foods, packed lunches, and food eaten away from home

Q: I have food waste from food I purchased from a restaurant and brought it home (or had it delivered). I didn't eat it, and I'm throwing it away. Do I record this?

A: *Yes – record all food thrown out at home.*

Q: Should I be logging foods that I eat outside the home?

A: *No – only record food that you discard at home.*

Q: I packed a sandwich for my kid's school lunch (or my work lunch). They didn't eat it all and brought home ½ of it, and I threw it away. Should I record this?

A: *Yes – record any food that was discarded at home.*

Q: I packed my lunch and didn't eat it all. I threw the extra food away at work. Should I record this?

A: *No – only record food that you discard at home.*

Determining weight

Q: If I am measuring food already portioned on a plate or in a bowl, do I still have to zero the scale?

A: *Yes. However, it needs to be removed from the original plate/bowl. Specifically, tare the empty scale to zero; then remove the food from the plate or bowl and place it directly on the scale to get the weight. Alternatively, put an empty container on the scale, tare the scale to zero, remove the food from the plate or bowl, place it in the empty container on the scale, and weigh the food.*

Q: I have an open bottle of a condiment that I am throwing away. I plan to estimate the weight based on the package label because it is hard to get it all out of the bottle to weigh it on the scale. However, the label only has FL OZ (fluid ounces) and mL (milliliters), not grams. What should I do?

A: *Indicate in "other" (or "comments") that the unit of measure was FL OZ or mL.*

Other

Q: Do I need to record my daily waste on consecutive days, or can I skip a day?

A: *It is okay if you need to skip a day, but try to get everything recorded within 8 days – that includes the First Kitchen Check, 4 days of the Daily Food Waste Log, and the Last Kitchen Check.*

Q: I finished the 4th day of my Daily Food Waste. Do I have to do my Last Kitchen Check on the same day, or can I do it the next day?

A: *If possible, complete the Last Kitchen Check the same day (i.e., after completing the Day 4 Daily Food Waste Log); however, the next day is fine.*

Q: We didn't have any food waste. Do I need to record anything?

A: *Yes. Please enter information into the logs to let us know if you didn't have any food waste for either Kitchen Check or any of the days for your Daily Food Waste.*

Q: I had waste for breakfast and lunch that I entered into the app but none for dinner. Do I need to say no waste for dinner?

A: Yes, even if you had no waste, please go back into the app to indicate you have no more waste to record for the day. This is how the research team knows your day has been completed.

Q: I had some food waste yesterday that I forgot to include on yesterday's Daily Food Waste Log. What should I do?

A: You can record this on the current day's Daily Food Waste Log. Just add a note in the "comments" to indicate it was for a prior day. For example, "This food waste was from yesterday, not today."