MY ZERO WASTE KITCHEN

HOLISTIC LIVING · CLEAN COOKING

The Freezer Tracker & *Label Pack*

Know what's in there, eat the oldest first, and stop finding mystery bags from last spring.

The system
Four zones, one rule

Keep times
Sourced quality windows

Tracker
A printable inventory log

Zone labels
Eight cut-out labels

myzerowastekitchen.com

Free printable · 2026 edition

HOW IT WORKS

Four zones. Oldest first.

This pack goes with the **Zero-Waste Freezer Blueprint** on the blog. Set it up once in about an hour, then keep it running with a five-minute check each week.

01
Empty and sort

Pull everything out into a cooler. Group by type and set aside anything unlabeled or badly freezer-burned to use first.

02
Zone it

Give each zone a shelf or bin: Protein, Veg & Fruit, Broth & Sauces, Ready Meals. Stick the labels on page 4 to each one.

03
Pack flat, date everything

Freeze in thin, flat layers with the air pressed out. Write the item and the full date, year included, on every package.

04
Log it, then rotate weekly

Add each item to the tracker on page 3. Once a week, plan a meal or two around whatever has been in there longest.

How long things keep at 0°F

FOOD	APPROX. MONTHS
Fruits and vegetables	8 to 12
Poultry	6 to 9
Fish	3 to 6
Ground meat	3 to 4
Cured or processed meat	1 to 2

These are quality windows. NCHFP notes food kept longer should still be safe, just lower in quality. Use the shorter time for best results.

Safety basics

- [ ] Keep the freezer at 0°F (-18°C) or colder.
- [ ] Thaw in the fridge, in cold water changed every 30 minutes, or in the microwave. Never on the counter.
- [ ] Food thawed in the fridge can be refrozen. Cook cold-water or microwave-thawed food right away.
- [ ] Freezer burn is a quality problem, not a safety one. Trim it off.
- [ ] Glass jars: leave ½" headspace in a wide-mouth pint and 1" in a quart for liquids.

TAPE IT TO THE FREEZER DOOR

Freezer inventory

Zone: P protein · V veg & fruit · B broth & sauces · R ready meals

Used: tick it off when it's gone

ITEM	ZONE	DATE PACKED	QTY	USE BY	NOTES	USED

CUT ALONG THE DASHED LINES

Freezer zone labels

Protein

Poultry 6–9 mo · ground meat 3–4 mo · fish 3–6 mo

CHECKED _____

Veg & Fruit

8–12 months · blanch most vegetables first

CHECKED _____

Broth & Sauces

Cool first · leave headspace in jars

CHECKED _____

Ready Meals

Label with the reheating method

CHECKED _____

Protein

Thaw in the fridge on a plate

CHECKED _____

Veg & Fruit

Cook from frozen for soups and sautés

CHECKED _____

Broth & Sauces

Freeze flat or in portions

CHECKED _____

Eat This First

Oldest items and anything thawed

CHECKED _____

Tip: label packages on the short edge so you can read them in a drawer freezer.

A freezer is a pause button. *The tracker makes sure you press play.*

Read the blueprint

The Zero-Waste Freezer Blueprint on the blog explains the system and has meal-building formulas.

Freeze the glut

Our zucchini and winter squash guides show what freezes well and how to do it without plastic.

Get the Reset Kit

The free 7-Day Kitchen Reset Kit adds fridge labels, a waste audit and a use-it-up planner.

Sources

1. National Center for Home Food Preservation (University of Georgia), "How long can I store frozen foods?" nchfp.uga.edu
2. National Center for Home Food Preservation, "Headspace to allow." nchfp.uga.edu
3. Montana State University Extension, "Safe Thawing Practices." montana.edu/extension

General guidance, not medical or food-safety advice for your specific situation. Follow standard food-safety practice. © 2026 My Zero Waste Kitchen, a Dan Duda Ventures company.