

The two-minute close-down

The inspector has gone home. The bacteria haven't.

☐ **Food put away**

Divide big batches into shallow portions. Cool and refrigerate perishable leftovers within two hours; rice ideally within one hour. Don't leave the whole pot out overnight.

☐ **Leftovers labelled**

Write the food name and cooked/opened date and time. Plan to eat general leftovers within 48 hours or freeze promptly; cooked rice within 24 hours.

☐ **Fridge checked**

Use a thermometer: 0–5°C for the fridge. Homemade garlic-in-oil needs 4°C or below and a maximum of four days, or freeze it.

☐ **Raw food contained**

Keep raw meat and fish covered in leakproof containers on the bottom shelf, below ready-to-eat food.

☐ **Boards, knives and handles cleaned**

Clean equipment after raw-food preparation and sanitise or disinfect appropriately. Include taps, handles and any touched surfaces.

☐ **Cloths dealt with; hands washed**

Replace or appropriately launder used cloths. Don't carry raw-meat contamination to other surfaces. Wash hands with soap and water.

☐ **Chemicals put away**

Store away from food, in labelled original containers. Follow food-contact suitability, dilution, contact time and rinsing instructions. Never mix cleaning products.

☐ **Tomorrow sorted**

Use or freeze food in time. Reheat leftovers only once until steaming hot throughout. If storage history is uncertain, a sniff or taste is not a safety check.

Date: _____

Fridge reading: _____ °C

Savor · Cook in Color.

Home-kitchen guidance · Checked 21 October 2026

UK FSA baseline; garlic-in-oil advice from US NCHFP. Follow product labels and shorter food-specific limits. Correct storage matters; a date alone cannot establish safety.

Sources: FSA: rice · FSA: leftovers · FSA: chilling · NCHFP: garlic oil

Full guide & sources: getsavor.recipes/blog/food-safety-lessons-from-a-chef/

A lid is not a label.

Eight cut-out labels. Write the date. Spare yourself the guessing.

Print on plain paper at 100% / actual size, cut out and attach securely to the outside of a container. Not sized for pre-cut adhesive label stock.

SAVOR	LEFTOVERS / KEEP CHILLED
Food: _____	
Cooked/opened date & time: _____	
Use or freeze by date & time: _____	
Frozen date / notes: _____	

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Choose the date from the food's own guidance. General cooked leftovers: 48 hours. Cooked rice: 24 hours. Homemade garlic-in-oil: no more than four days at 4°C or below. These limits assume proper preparation, prompt cooling and safe storage; they do not extend a product use-by date.

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Give leftovers a plan.

A fridge reference for actual food, not wishful thinking.

0–5°C

Check with a fridge thermometer.

The numbered dial is a setting, not a temperature reading. Keep air circulating; don't pack shelves tightly.

<p>Above raw food</p> <p>Covered cooked food, leftovers and ready-to-eat foods. Follow product storage instructions.</p>
<p>Bottom shelf</p> <p>Raw meat and fish in covered, leakproof containers. Keep juices away from everything ready to eat.</p>

Cool it. Label it. Use it.

<p>General leftovers</p> <p>Split large batches into shallow portions. Cool and refrigerate within two hours. Eat within 48 hours or freeze promptly.</p>	<p>Cooked rice</p> <p>Cool quickly, ideally within one hour. Refrigerate and use within 24 hours. Don't leave it cooling in the pan.</p>
<p>Homemade garlic-in-oil</p> <p>Keep at 4°C / 40°F or below for no more than four days, or freeze. Commercial products: follow the label.</p>	<p>Reheating</p> <p>Reheat only once, until steaming hot throughout. Stir to eliminate cold spots. Reheating cannot fix unsafe storage.</p>

Smell cannot establish safety. Follow use-by dates and known storage history. Don't taste food to test it. Freezing does not rescue food already stored unsafely.

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