Use What You Have

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Before shopping, check the refrigerator, then connect usable ingredients with pantry and freezer staples. Choose meals for your household and add only the missing items to your list.

Week of / household

Refrigerator use-first list

Food / ingredient	Amount	Opened / prepared date	Planned use

Build three meals

Meal	Use from home	Buy only what is missing

A use-first plan is not a safety assessment. Check product instructions and reliable storage guidance; do not rely on smell or appearance alone. FoodSafety.gov storage chart: https://www.foodsafety.gov/food-safety-charts/cold-food-storage-charts

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Kitchen reset and preparation plan

Make the next cooking session easier with a short check of food, equipment, and preparation tasks.

☐ Check refrigerator contents and product storage instructions.

☐ Choose meals that share ingredients you already have.

☐ Check pantry and freezer stock before adding groceries.

☐ Plan when to thaw, prepare, and cook using safe guidance.

☐ Set aside containers and labels for portions you intend to store.

Task / ingredient	When	Needed for	Done

Small shopping list

Food-safety reference: https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep-food-safe/4-steps-to-food-safety

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