

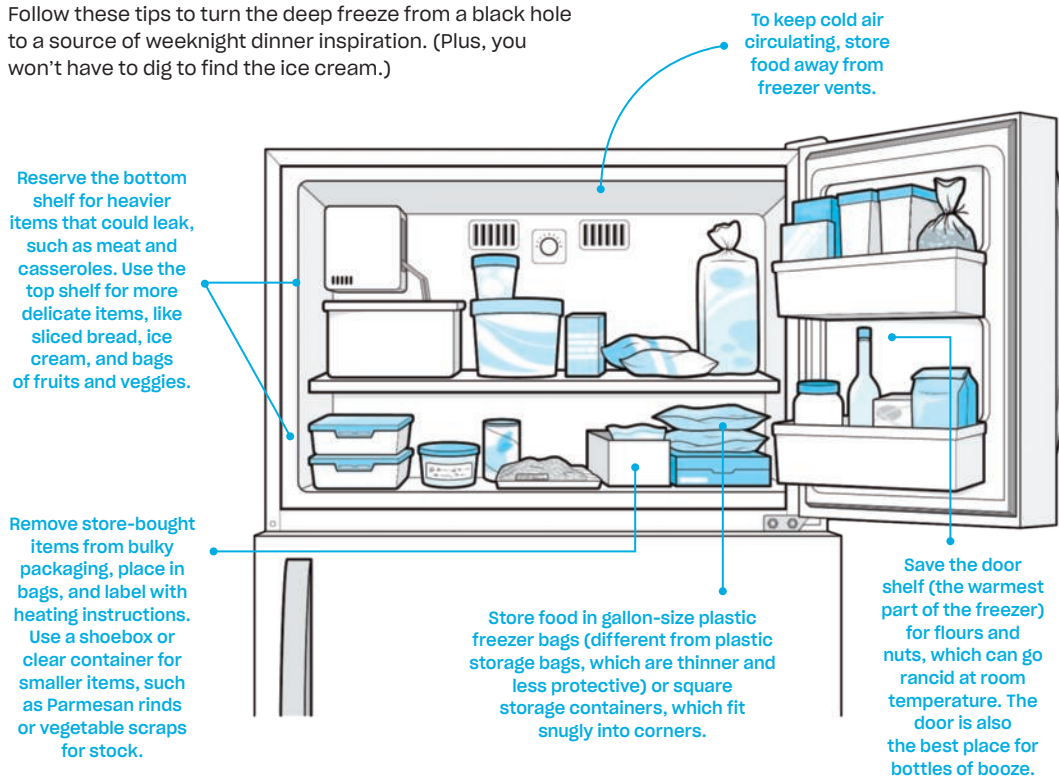
Things Cooks Know

STRATEGIES, TECHNIQUES, AND TIPS ABOUT FREEZING—FROM THE *REAL SIMPLE*

TEST KITCHEN TO YOURS By Grace Elkus

Making the Most of Your Freezer

Follow these tips to turn the deep freeze from a black hole to a source of weeknight dinner inspiration. (Plus, you won't have to dig to find the ice cream.)



Three Tricks for Labeling

1 A permanent marker or freezer tape (which won't come loose in the cold) is your best bet for clear, legible freezer labels. If using tape, dog-ear a small corner before sticking it on the container so it's easy to peel off later.

2 The ideal label should include the name of the dish, the date, heating instructions, and discard date. Arrange items so all labels are facing outward.

3 If you're big on meal prep, keep a freezer inventory checklist in the kitchen—or, better yet, on the freezer door. When you pull out dinner, cross it off.



1 Once they've cooled, pour into gallon-size plastic freezer bags, leaving a little extra room at the top (liquids expand as they freeze). Squeeze out any air and seal shut.



2 Label the bags, then place in a single layer on a baking sheet and freeze until solid. This will keep the bags from wrapping around the wire shelving.



3 Remove the tray and stack bags until ready to thaw. Or store them upright.

How to Freeze Soups to Maximize Storage Space