

## How to make Christmas special - Stay Well, Warm and Reduce Waste!

### Staying Warm & Well this Winter

- 1. Wrap up warm** - Dress in layers and wear a hat, gloves and scarf. Clothes made from wool, cotton or fleecy fabrics are warmest.
- 2. Keep the cold out** - Close doors and block draughts. Buy thermal linings for curtains to keep the heat in.
- 3. Don't use alcohol to keep warm**— Avoid drinking alcohol before going, or when, outside. It makes you feel warm because blood vessels in the skin expand, but this draws heat away from your vital organs.
- 4. Check your heating**—Have your heating system serviced regularly to make sure it works well. If you are reliant on electric heating and have a vulnerable person in your household make sure you are registered for 'people in need'- contact your energy provider.
- 5. Maintain the temperature**—Keep your main living room at 18–21°C (64–70°F) and the rest of your house at 16°C (61°F) at least. If you can't heat all the rooms you use, heat the living room during the day and the bedroom just before you go to sleep. In bed, use either a hot water bottle or an electric blanket.
- 6. Have warming food and drinks regularly** — Such as porridge, soups and stews.
- 7. Stay active**— Keep as active as possible to boost your circulation. Move around at least once an hour and avoid sitting still for long periods. Even light exercise will help keep you warm.
- 8. Check what support you can get** - You might be entitled to claim Winter Fuel , Cold Weather Payments or an Affordable Warmth Grant, which could help with heating and insulation improvements. For more information contact Home Energy



Avoid buying over packaged items. Make your own gifts or give vouchers to avoid unwanted gifts. Try to repair items before throwing them away or pass them on to a local reuse group. Sell unwanted items or swap with friends.

Learn what 'can and can't' be put in your blue bin. If you're still not sure check out the guide on <https://www.highland.gov.uk/>

Try out some seasonal recipes ideas that we love!

### Spicy Potato Cakes



Great alternative to Onion Bhajis. Makes 24 small or 10 large - serve with a salad as a main course or with a turkey curry!

4 large potatoes or left over mash  
1 large onion (red or white) finely chopped  
1 tsp. chilli powder  
1 tsp. turmeric  
2 tsp. cooking oil  
4 spring onions finally chopped  
1 tsp. mixed herbs or Coriander (use more if using fresh herbs)  
1 large egg, beaten  
1 mug of frozen peas or left overs  
1 tsp. sugar  
salt and pepper for seasoning

Cook and mash the potatoes, season with salt and pepper then leave to cool. Add oil to a frying pan and cook onions until soft, combine chilli and turmeric, cook for further 5 mins. Stir in peas and spring onions then remove from heat. Add mixture to the cooled potatoes along with the egg, sugar and herbs, stir until fully combined. Form into patties and lay on a well-greased baking tray. Bake in the oven at 180 C until golden and crispy - serve hot. Delicious served with yoghurt and mint or mango chutney.

**In Scotland, a shocking 60 million meals go to waste every December.** Visit the Love Food Hate Waste website for hints on storing, portion sizes and great recipe ideas for using left overs as well as tips on savvy food shopping.  
<https://scotland.lovefoodhatewaste.com/>

### Bread Sauce

120g breadcrumbs – white or brown,  
1 large white onion  
20 cloves  
1 bay leaf  
1 pint of milk  
50g butter  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
A pinch of nutmeg (optional)

Peel the onion and slice it in half, then stud all over with the cloves.

Place the onion, bay leaf, peppercorns and milk into a saucepan and bring to the boil slowly, stirring occasionally so it doesn't burn. Remove from the heat and allow to cool for 15 minutes.

Remove the onion, bay leaf and peppercorns from the cooled milk, and stir in the breadcrumbs.

Return the pan to the heat and cook gently for 5-10 minutes, until the breadcrumbs have absorbed all the liquid. If the sauce is a little too thin for your liking, add more breadcrumbs to achieve your desired texture. Stir in the butter and season with salt, pepper & nutmeg to taste.

### Apple & Parsnip Soup

To a pan add a couple of peeled, chopped apples (the ones no one will touch as they have bruises) a couple of peeled, chopped parsnips, a couple of potatoes, water (about 500ml you can always add more) and a teaspoon of medium curry powder a stock cube, salt and pepper (adjust to taste). When the veg are very soft, blitz them until smooth, with a blender. You can add milk for a more creamy soup. Serve with plain yogurt and chopped herbs. Or freeze if not needed straight away!

