

---

# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## 6 Minute English

### How much food do you waste?



*This is not a word-for-word transcript*

---

**Dan**

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute English– the show that brings you an interesting topic, authentic listening practice and six new items of vocabulary. I'm Dan...

**Neil**

And I'm Neil. In this episode we'll be discussing food waste, just as soon as....

**Dan**

Neil, did you just throw the rest of that apple away?

**Neil**

Yeah. It was quite a big one and I couldn't finish it.

**Dan**

Neil, you know you shouldn't **waste** food.

**Neil**

**Waste** meaning to throw away without consuming or using. Ah, it's only an apple. It's not the end of the world, Dan.

**Dan**

Well, that's where you could be wrong, my friend. Let me prove it to you, with this week's question. How much of the world's food is wasted each year?

- a) a half
- b) a third
- c) a quarter

**Neil**

I'm not sure. I know it's a lot so I'm going to say a) a half

**Dan**

We'll find out if you're right or not at the end of this show. So, the actual figure is 1.3 billion tons of food, which is enough to feed a billion hungry people. Where do you think all this food waste comes from?

**Neil**

Well, restaurants, I imagine. I mean, they can't give one customer's **leftovers** to another! That would be unhygienic!

**Dan**

**Leftovers** are the remains of food which has not been eaten. And while you are right, restaurants are not the main contributor to food waste.

**Neil**

Supermarkets! I bet they throw out loads of food once it goes past its sell-by-date, or the date which it can be legally sold by.

**Dan**

Think closer to home.

**Neil**

It's us, isn't it?

**Dan**

Yes. In Europe an incredible 53% of food waste comes from households, which results in 88 million tonnes of food waste a year. And I bet you can't guess what we do with it?

**Neil**

I want to say recycle, but I can see from your face, Dan, that it's not.

**Dan**

No. Unfortunately it goes into landfills and decays.

**Neil**

A **landfill** is a place where rubbish is buried. I see, so the food rots and this causes greenhouse gasses which lead to global warming and climate change.

**Dan**

Exactly, and the end of the world. But, remarkably the European country of Denmark has managed to reduce its food waste by a very significant 25%

**Neil**

That's impressive, how did that happen?

**Dan**

They attribute it to a woman called Selina Juul.

**Neil**

I've heard about her. She became a **household name** in Denmark overnight!

**Dan**

**A household name** is one which everybody knows, and that's right.

**Neil**

I thought she was Russian?

**Dan**

She is. But, I'll let her explain.

**INSERT**

**Selina Juul**

I come from a country where there were food shortages, back then in Moscow, communism collapsed, we had the collapse of **infrastructure**, we were not sure we could get food on the table. And coming to Denmark, seeing this **abundance**, seeing these supermarkets filled with food. But then I was really shocked to see a lot of food getting wasted.

**Neil**

So Selina grew up in Moscow at a time when there wasn't enough food because of the collapse of **infrastructure**, meaning the basic systems and services of a society – such as food transportation.

**Dan**

Then when she moved to Denmark, she found an **abundance**, or more than enough, food, but she saw it being wasted.

**Neil**

So she decided to do something about it?

**Dan**

Yes. She started a Facebook page in 2008 called 'stop wasting food' and 9 years later the Danish government credits her for their reduction in food waste.

**Neil**

How did she do it?

**Dan**

Well, lots of ideas really. She convinced some supermarkets to stop selling their items in

bulk so that people buy only what they need. She's produced a **leftovers** cookbook and she's working with three governments to set up an education programme in schools.

**Neil**

Wow, she's a busy woman. So how about you educate me with the answer to this week's question.

**Dan**

Sure! I asked you how much of the world's food is wasted each year?

a) a half

b) a third

c) a quarter

**Neil**

And I said a) a half

**Dan**

And I'm terribly sorry, mate, but you're wrong. The answer is b) a third.

**Neil**

Well, it's not as bad as I thought it was, at least.

**Dan**

Shall we look at the vocabulary then?

**Neil**

Yes, let's. First we had **waste**. If you **waste** something, you throw it away or lose it without using it or consuming it. Common things we **waste** are food, time, money and energy. We also have some expressions with **waste** too. Can you think of one, Dan?

**Dan**

A **waste of space** is an expression which means a thing is completely without value. For example, I'm a complete waste of space in the kitchen. I can't cook at all. Next we had **leftovers**. **Leftovers** are the remains of food or a meal, which have not been eaten. What do you tend to do with your **leftovers**, Neil?

**Neil**

Oh I love **leftovers**! Sometimes I think they taste even better than the original meal!

**Dan**

I agree! Pizza's a great example!

**Neil**

Then we had **landfill**. A **landfill** is a place where rubbish is dropped and buried. In colloquial English we might say, a **dump**. Do you ever take your rubbish to the **dump**, Dan?

**Dan**

Not if I can help it. I prefer to recycle as much as possible. I only go to the **dump** if I have to get rid of a large appliance, such as a fridge. Then we had **a household name**. To be **a household name** is to be well-known by ordinary people of a particular place or culture. Can you think of a person who is **a household name** at the moment, Neil?

**Neil**

Oh, that's very easy. Donald Trump springs to mind! Everyone must know who he is. Then we had **infrastructure**. **Infrastructure** is the basic systems and services of a society – such as electricity supply, trains, and roads.

**Dan**

And finally we had **abundance**. If you have an **abundance** of something, you have more than you need. Do have anything in **abundance**, Neil?

**Neil**

Well, when it comes to my children I have to have an **abundance** of patience....well, most of the time. And, that's the end of today's 6 Minute English. Please join us again soon!

**Dan**

And we are on social media too - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. See you there.

**Both**

Bye!