

MAKE YOUR OWN WAXED COTTON FOOD WRAPS

This idea offers an alternative to plastic food wrap and can be made from scrap cotton and any unscented wax (paraffin, beeswax, old candles). The cloth protects food, keeping it fresh while allowing it to breathe, which can help the food last longer. The cloth is flexible and can be shaped to cover bowls/containers, to wrap food and make packets for snacks like nuts and cut fruit. Just use the warmth of your hands to manipulate the cloth and keep it in place.

YOU WILL NEED:

- ✓ wax – wax pellets, an old unscented candle, or natural beeswax if you have it. Experiment with soya or candelilla wax for a vegan alternative.
- ✓ cheese grater (not needed if you're using pellets)
- ✓ 100% cotton fabric in various sizes
- ✓ pinking shears (or scissors)
- ✓ greaseproof paper
- ✓ an iron
- ✓ tongs

METHOD:

1. If you're using a candle or raw wax, grate it into a bowl.
2. Cut your fabric to the size required. Using pinking shears gives a neat edge, but it's fine to use normal scissors because the material won't fray once waxed.
3. Place the fabric on a piece of greaseproof paper and sprinkle wax pellets or grated wax over the top.
4. Place another piece of greaseproof paper over the top of this.
5. Switch on the iron – we used the cotton setting. It needs to be hot enough to melt the wax but not so hot that it scorches the paper.
6. Iron over the paper, melting the wax beneath into the fabric.
7. Peel back the top layer of paper, pick up the fabric with the tongs and hold it in the air to dry – this happens very quickly!
8. If there are any missed patches, repeat the process, sprinkling wax over the bits that need it.

CARE INSTRUCTIONS

Wash gently in cool water with an eco-friendly soap and leave to air-dry. Don't use the wrap to store meat or fish. The wraps can be used in a fridge or freezer, but they aren't suitable for warm/hot food or temperatures. Waxed cloth can last anywhere from a few months to a year, depending on use and care, but can be renewed by re-waxing. At the end of its life, it can be added to the compost heap.