

The Leftover Detective

25 minutes | Beginner | Pencil; fictional scenarios

RULE CARD

Refrigerate within 2 hours; within 1 hour above 90 F.
Fridge: 40 F or below. Use shallow leftover containers.

A / Cooked rice

Out of refrigeration: 30 minutes at 72 F
Circle: timing meets rule / discard

B / Cooked chicken

Out of refrigeration: 3 hours at 72 F
Circle: timing meets rule / discard

C / Yogurt

Out of refrigeration: 90 minutes at 95 F
Circle: timing meets rule / discard

ANALYZE > CHOOSE > TEST > REFLECT

Why is smelling or tasting not a safety test?

Assume other handling was safe. Never taste suspect food. With an adult, label safe leftovers with food name and date.

Explain it. Try it with permission. Teach someone else.

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10-12 | Strategists | Kitchen | Keep this page separate from the challenge

WHAT THIS BUILDS

Following a clear process and using practical information to make safer choices.

ANSWERS AND REASONING

A meets the timing rule. B and C: discard. B exceeds 2 hours; C exceeds 1 hour above 90 F. Harmful germs may not change smell or taste. Never taste suspect food to test it.

SUPPORT AND BOUNDARIES

Use paper cases, not questionable food. Timing compliance is only one part of safe handling. Consult FoodSafety.gov storage charts for food-specific storage duration.

REAL-WORLD MISSION

With an adult, label a safely stored leftover and locate the fridge thermometer. Adults handle uncertain foods.

GROWN-UP DISCOVERY

Hot leftovers can be refrigerated in shallow containers; do not wait hours for them to cool on the counter. Ask: What storage habit surprised you?

AFTER THE MISSION

One thing we noticed: _____

One thing we would try differently: _____

Child: I can explain it / I want another practice / I need help.