How to Make Reusable Food Wrap

Things you'll need:

Cotton material
Scissors or pinking shears
Greaseproof paper
Grater
Beeswax
Iron
Old towel/table cloth
Sewing machine (to make sandwich/freezer bags)

Step 1

Cut several squares, circles or bag shapes from your material. When choosing patterns and colours bear in mind that the fabric will turn yellowish from the beeswax. Think of the different sizes and shapes you might use– some large enough to cover large pans or plates, and others to wrap small food items or jam jars. If you're making a bag, sew around to make it a bag shape.

Step 2

Place your old towel on the table or worksurface you want to use. Tear off two equally-sized sheets of greaseproof paper, both bigger than your largest pre-cut fabric. Lay one piece of paper on your towel, and if it curls at the edges, tape it down.

Step 3

Place your first piece of fabric on top of the paper. Grate the beeswax (preferably with an old grater as it can be difficult to clean off!), the amount you need will depend on the size of wrap you are working on, but in general it doesn't take too much. Bags will need more, to make sure it soaks all the way through, especially at the seams where you have sewn it together. Sprinkle it evenly over your fabric, making sure to cover all the way to edges.

Step 4

Place the second sheet of greaseproof paper over the top. With your iron on a medium heat, gently iron over the top of the greaseproof paper, going back and forth a few times. Depending on the thickness of the paper, you should be able to see once all the wax is melted. **BE GENTLE** with the iron and watch where the wax goes, if there is too much it may spray out of the sides of your paper, burning you or damaging your worksurface. You may also want to make a mark on the

underside of your top sheet of greaseproof paper – the side that comes into contact with the wax. This will prevent you from ironing on the waxy side later and getting gunk on your iron.

Step 5

Remove the top sheet of greaseproof paper and inspect your cloth square. Areas that did not get enough beeswax will be lighter in colour. Simply sprinkle a small amount of wax on those areas, cover with the paper, and iron again. If you're making a bag, it might be necessary to turn it over and repeat on the other side, again you will be able to tell from the colour if there are patches where it didn't soak through. Pay extra attention to the seams where there are more layers of fabric. If your cloth has too much wax on it, you can put another piece of fabric on top, place greaseproof paper over both of them, and iron gently. The top piece of fabric will soak up some of the wax. **Make sure the whole piece of fabric is covered, the better coverage you have the longer your food will last, and if you're using as a freezer bag it should prevent freezer burn.**

Step 6

Carefully remove the fabric as soon as it is cool enough to touch, and if you're making a bag try and open it as quickly as you can to make sure the inside doesn't seal shut with the drying wax. After just a few minutes your fabric will be completely cool. Give it a wash with cool soapy water to remove any loose wax, and it's ready to use! Use the heat from your hands to mould it around whichever bowl, dish or jar you're storing food in.

Caring for your reusable food wrap & other considerations
- After use, hand wash your food wrap with cool water and mild soap. Beeswax I naturally anti-bacterial so you don't need to use hot water to wash it, or the wax might melt. Allow to air dry on a dish rack. Smooth flat with your hands and store.
- You can add more wax (as described in Step 4) once your food wrap is looking worn out and is no longer keeping its shape.
- This food wrap is not completely waterproof or airtight. It does a wonderful job covering casseroles and baked goodies, or wrapping items such as cheese, veggies, sandwiches and many other food items. It is not meant for extremely wet or juicy foods, as there may be some leakage in these cases. It works best for short term food storage, for packing lunches, or for freezing semi-solid foods. Because it's somewhat breathable, your food may not retain moisture if used for long term storage.

What's the point of making your own?
- Reusable food wrap is a more sustainable option, preventing toxic plastics from having to be produced. Less cling film and plastic bags being produced means less will end up in a landfill/incinerator.
- It can be washed and reused many times, creating less waste.
- It's healthier for you to wrap your food in this beeswax fabric rather than having plastic wrapped around your food, potentially leaking toxins into your food.
- You'll save money if you use reusable food wrap instead of purchasing the single-use plastic equivalents.
- It may encourage people to think about other easy ways to reduce their household waste!