

Healthy Eating on a Budget

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Meal Plan Tips to Save \$

- **Drink plenty of water**
 - ~ 1 - 2 ounces for every 4 pounds body weight
 - ~ Cheaper than sugar-free beverages
 - ~ Cost savings with tap water versus bottled water
- **Eat less**
 - ~ Smaller portions
- **Eat more whole grains**
 - ~ Look for “Whole Wheat Flour” as first ingredient; 2+ grams fiber per serving
- **Eat more fiber**
 - ~ Men: 38 grams a day (age 19-50) and 30 grams (over age 50)
 - ~ Women: 25 grams a day (age 19-50) and 21 grams (over age 50)
- **Eat breakfast daily; breakfast cereal recommendations**
 - ~ Fiber: at least 3 grams per serving
 - ~ Fat: less than 3 grams per serving
 - ~ Sodium: less than 240 mg per serving
 - ~ Sugar: less than 12 grams per serving
- **Choose high nutrition, low density foods (fruits, vegetables, broth based soups, lean proteins, whole grains)**
- **Slow Down**
 - ~ Takes brain 20 minutes to register fullness
 - ~ We consume more calories when we eat too fast

Stretching Your Food Budget

- Know your grocery store/supermarket
 - ~ Check advertising flyers for sales
 - ~ Use a shopping list (and stick with it)
 - ~ www.supermarketsavvy.com
- Clip coupons (only for things you buy)
 - ~ Sunday paper (*may save money to buy 2 papers...some papers are cheaper on Monday*)
 - ~ www.coupons.com ; www.couponsurfer.com ; www.couponmom.com ;
www.RedPlum.com ; www.smartsource.com ; www.krazycouponlady.com

Best Time to Buy Groceries

Month	Food Items
January	Diet foods
February	Oatmeal; steak and seafood (post Valentines Day)
March	Frozen foods
April	Eggs; ham; cheese; mustard; dinner rolls
May	Ground beef; hamburger/hotdog buns; condiments; salad dressing; chips; ice cream; popsicles; bottled water
June/July	Ice cream; popsicles; bottled water; iced tea bags
August	Cereal, granola bars, peanut butter, jam/jelly, lunch meat, cheese, yogurt, juice boxes, bottled water, ice cream
September	All of above + soups, salad dressing, canned fruits/vegetables, ground beef, hamburger/hot dog buns, condiments
October	Canned fruits/vegetables, dried fruits, soups, broth
November/ December	Turkey, ham, butter, cheese, baking supplies, dinner rolls, spices, nuts, dried fruits, oatmeal, soup, broth

Organic

- “Free-Range”, “Hormone Free”, “Natural” do not mean organic
 - ~ Look for **USDA Organic Seal**: means food grown, harvested and processed according to USDA standards; Restricted amounts and residues of pesticides, hormones and antibiotics; Can't be treated with sewage sludge, bioengineering or ionizing radiation
- **Organic Definitions**
 - ~ **“100% Organic”**: Products are completely organic or made of only organic ingredients (no synthetic ingredients)
 - **“Organic”**: Food has at least 95% organic ingredients
 - **“Made with Organic Ingredients”**: Food must contain at least 70% organic ingredients; Cannot use the organic seal, but can state “made with organic ingredients” on package
 - ~ Meat, poultry, eggs and dairy must come from animals that have never been treated with antibiotics or growth hormones
 - Benefit to buying organic animal products
 - No benefit to buying organic seafood
 - www.localharvest.org to find an organic co-op near you
- **Organic Savings**
 - www.OrganicGroceryDeals.com
 - www.wholefoodsmarket.com
 - www.organicvalley.coop
 - www.cascadianfarm.com/coupons
 - www.HorizonDairy.com
 - www.browncowfarm.com/ECoupons (yogurt)
- **Best to spend your organic dollars on produce**
 - ~ **Produce mostly likely to be contaminated with pesticides**: peaches, apples, bell peppers, celery, pears, nectarines
 - ~ **Organic worth buying only if price is similar**: Processed foods, Cauliflower, Sweet peas, Broccoli, Cabbage. *Be sure to wash well before eating*
 - ~ **Don't Need Organic (we discard the peel)**: Mangoes, Bananas, Kiwi, Pineapple

Stretching Your Food Budget

- **Eat less:** smaller portions
- **Keep it simple:** choose raw, whole foods (dried beans, peas and lentils, fruits, vegetables) versus processed or packaged versions
- **Plan ahead:** prepare your own food
- **Leftovers:** store opened containers of food upside down in the refrigerator
- **Stock and store**
 - ~ Pay attention to shelf life and “use by” or “expiration” dates
 - ~ Buy non-perishables in bulk
 - ~ Freeze perishable items
 - ~ Good Deals (if you use and have storage): cooking oils, cereal, canned goods, tuna, frozen vegetables and meats, low-fat evaporated milk (cream substitute)
 - ~ Not So Good Deals: **b**rown rice (store in fridge if kept long); nuts (go rancid quickly); mayo and condiments; spices
- **Meats**
 - ~ Eat red meat occasionally/use as an accessory to your meal/portion control
 - 3 oz lean meat = 165 calories
 - ~ **“Prime”:** most intramuscular fat content
 - ~ **“Select”:** less intramuscular fat content
 - Lean varieties tend to be tough and more \$
 - Buy in bulk and use less
 - Cook in slow cooker
 - Can use cheaper ground beef: brown beef, rinse off excess fat and freeze in 2 cup servings
- **Poultry**
 - ~ Boneless, skinless are more expensive
 - **Good buy: if costs less than 50% more than bone-in breasts**
 - Buy in bulk if you have space
 - Avoid pre-seasoned or marinated breasts
 - ~ A whole chicken is cheaper per pound: roast it and remove skin before eating
 - ~ Chicken thighs are cheaper: remove skin to limit fat
- **Beans/Meat Alternatives**
 - ~ Choose more meatless meals/meat alternatives: dried and canned beans or lentils, soy, egg whites, peanut butter
 - ~ Cheap: canned beans (higher in sodium)
 - ~ Cheaper: dried beans and prepare yourself (½ price of canned; far less sodium)
- **Fish**
 - ~ Tilapia and sole are less expensive
 - ~ To save money: choose frozen fillets or plain fillets (versus breaded, marinated): lower in fat, sodium and additives
 - ~ Choose canned tuna or canned salmon

- **Dairy**
 - ~ Use non-fat dry milk for recipes and fluid milk (1% or less) for drinking
 - ~ Buy blocks of cheese and grate yourself; low fat cheese not much more expensive
 - ~ Buy stronger flavored cheeses and use less
 - ~ Limit portion of low-fat dairy desserts

- **Grains (look for whole grain):**
 - ~ Plain rice (brown or wild) or whole grain pasta (versus rice mixes)
 - ~ Cereals: monitor serving size
 - ~ Whole grain breads/products (tortillas, pitas, pizza crust, crackers)
 - ~ Side dishes (quinoa, millet, buckwheat, bulgur)
 - ~ Snacks (popcorn)

- **Fruits/Vegetables**
 - ~ Grow your own and buy in season
 - ~ Save money on ripe produce
 - ~ Best to buy produce once or twice a week
 - ~ Buy bagged versions of whole fruits (versus individual)
 - ~ Choose canned and frozen
 - ~ Buy whole and cut up into smaller servings (pre-cut produce is expensive)
 - ~ Avoid buying packaged salad mixes (buy head of lettuce and wash, cut up yourself)

Cheapest Produce by Month (Always a good deal: **bananas, potatoes, celery**)

January: oranges, grapefruit, tangerines, lemons, tangelos, papaya, cabbage, leeks, broccoli, cauliflower

February: oranges, tangelos, grapefruit, lemons, papayas, broccoli, cauliflower

March: pineapple, mangoes, broccoli, lettuce

April: pineapple, mangoes, zucchini, rhubarb, artichoke, asparagus, spring peas, broccoli, lettuce

May: Cherries, pineapple, apricot, okra, zucchini, rhubarb, artichokes, asparagus, spring peas, broccoli, lettuce

June: watermelon, strawberries, cantaloupe, cherries, blueberries, peaches, nectarines, apricots, corn, lettuce

July/August: watermelon, strawberries, cantaloupe, blueberries, peaches, nectarines, apricots, kiwi, raspberries, plums, cucumbers, tomatoes, summer squash, corn, green beans, lettuce

September: grapes, pomegranates, persimmons, eggplant, pumpkin, tomatoes, spinach, lettuce

October: cranberries, apples, pomegranates, grapes, sweet potatoes, pumpkins, winter squash, broccoli, spinach, lettuce

November: cranberries, oranges, tangerines, pears, pomegranates, persimmons, pumpkin, winter squash, sweet potato, broccoli, spinach

December: pears, oranges, tangelos, grapefruit, tangerines, pomegranate, sweet potato, mushroom, broccoli, cauliflower

- **Beverages**
 - ~ Avoid purchasing pop, juice drinks and sports drinks (buy whole fruits)
 - ~ Avoid bottled water (stick with tap)
 - ~ For 100% juice: buy large containers and portion out single servings

- **Snacks**
 - ~ Cut down on the number of snacks you eat
 - ~ Avoid purchasing single serving snacks
 - ~ Buy snack size re-sealable bags and make your own single serving snacks

- **Recipe Savings**
 - ~ Replace up to ½ cup oil with no-sugar added applesauce
 - ~ Replace 1 egg with 1 Tablespoon soy flour (costs \$3....lasts for a long time)
 - ~ Skip the salt