



# Eating better on a budget

**Get the most for your budget!** There are many ways to save money on the foods that you eat. The three main steps are planning before you shop, purchasing the items at the best price, and preparing meals that stretch your food dollars.

## 1 Plan, plan, plan!

Before you head to the grocery store, plan your meals for the week. Include meals like stews, casseroles, or soups, which “stretch” expensive items into more portions. Check to see what foods you already have and make a list for what you need to buy.



## 2 Get the best price

Check the local newspaper, online, and at the store for sales and coupons. Ask about a loyalty card for extra savings at stores where you shop. Look for specials or sales on meat and seafood—often the most expensive items on your list.

## 3 Compare and contrast

Locate the “Unit Price” on the shelf directly below the product. Use it to compare different brands and different sizes of the same brand to determine which is the best buy.

## 4 Buy in bulk

It is almost always cheaper to buy foods in bulk. Smart choices are large containers of low-fat yogurt and large bags of frozen vegetables. Before you shop, remember to check if you have enough freezer space.



## 5 Buy in season

Buying fruits and vegetables in season can lower the cost and add to the freshness! If you are not going to use them all right away, buy some that still need time to ripen.

## 6 Convenience costs... go back to the basics

Convenience foods like frozen dinners, pre-cut fruits and vegetables, and take-out meals can often cost more than if you were to make them at home. Take the time to prepare your own—and save!

## 7 Easy on your wallet

Certain foods are typically low-cost options all year round. Try beans for a less expensive protein food. For vegetables, buy cabbage, sweet potatoes, or low-sodium canned tomatoes. As for fruits, apples and bananas are good choices.



## 8 Cook once...eat all week!

Prepare a large batch of favorite recipes on your day off (double or triple the recipe). Freeze in individual containers. Use them throughout the week and you won't have to spend money on take-out meals.

## 9 Get creative with leftovers

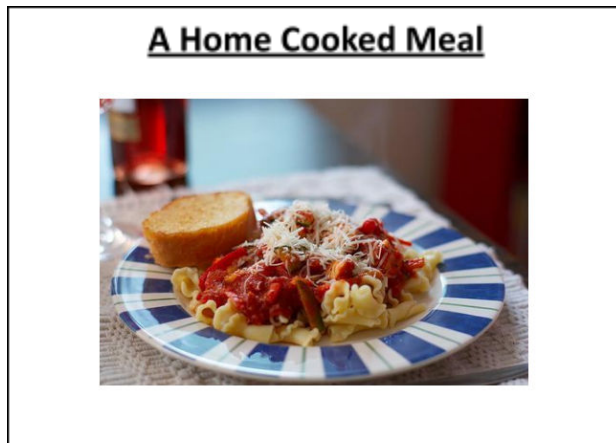
Spice up your leftovers—use them in new ways. For example, try leftover chicken in a stir-fry, over a garden salad, or in chili. Remember, throwing away food is throwing away your money!

## 10 Eating out

Restaurants can be expensive. Save money by getting the early bird special, going out for lunch instead of dinner, or looking for “2 for 1” deals. Ask for water instead of ordering other beverages, which add to the bill.

## Smart Food Shopping

The cost of food will depend on your living situation, eating habits, and efforts to save money. Eating out is often expensive. On a limited budget, you should be careful you are not overspending on what should be an occasional luxury. Compare the price of a fast food meal with that of a home cooked one using the example below.



### **Home Cooked (for 4 people)**

Box of Pasta (Hannaford Brand): \$1.18  
 Tomato Sauce (Hannaford Brand): \$1.25  
 Ground Beef (1lb): \$4.79  
 Liter of Soda (Hannaford Brand): \$0.94

**Total: \$6.86**

### **Fast Food (for 1 person)**

Whopper Meal: \$6.49  
 Tax (6.25%): \$0.40

**Total: \$6.89**

Note: Since the above home cooked meal provides approximately 4 servings, your total would be **\$1.72 per meal**. If you ate fast food 3 times a week for an entire month, you would spend approximately **\$83**.

## The Cost of Being Loyal

Item	Name Brand	Generic	Cost	Savings
Mott's Apple Juice	X		\$4.59	
Market Basket Apple Juice		X	\$2.19	<b>\$2.40</b>

**SAVINGS:** One Week - \$2.40                      One Month - \$9.60                      One Year - \$124.80

If you buy 2 bottles of generic brand Apple Juice a week you would save \$249.60 over the course of one year.

Item	Name Brand	Generic	Cost	Savings
Rold Gold Pretzels	X		\$2.99	
Market Basket Pretzels		X	\$1.29	<b>\$1.70</b>

**SAVINGS:** One Week - \$1.70                      One Month - \$6.80                      One Year - \$88.40

If you purchased 2 bags of generic brand pretzels a week you would save \$176.80 over the course of one year.