

Healthy Eating on a Budget

There is a common belief that it's not possible to eat healthfully while on a budget. However, with a bit of planning, it is possible to eat a healthy diet without overspending. Shopping for items on sale and using coupons are two great ways to help make healthy food affordable. Try these tips and see how much you can save while still making healthy choices!

Breads, Cereals, Rice & Pasta

- Look for bargains on day-old whole grain bread.
- Buy regular rice, oatmeal, and grits instead of the instant and flavored types which are higher in sodium and more expensive.
- Try whole-grain bread and brown rice to



Dairy

- Nonfat dry milk is the least expensive way to buy milk. When using it as a beverage, mix it several hours ahead and refrigerate so it can get cold before drinking.
- Buy fresh milk in large containers: gallon or ½ gallon sizes. These generally cost less than quarts.
- Buy fat-free or low fat dairy products to cut the amount of saturated fat in your meals.



Meat, Poultry, Fish & Dry Beans

- When eating meat or seafood, prepare casseroles, stews or stir-fry dishes so that smaller quantities of meat are used.
- Prepare a vegetarian meal with beans, tofu, or eggs for one at least one meal each week.
- Stretch ground meat with oatmeal, bread crumbs or tomato sauce.
- Buy meat according to the cost per serving, not cost per pound. Roasts, chops and meats with bones and extra fat will yield fewer servings per pound than boneless meats.
- Use canned tuna or salmon to add healthy omega-3 fats to your diet.



Vegetables & Fruits

- Look for large bags of frozen vegetables and fruit. They may be bargains and you can cook just the amount you need, close the bag tightly, and put the rest back in the freezer.
- Buy fresh vegetables and fruits in season, when they generally cost less.
- Choose low-sodium canned vegetables and canned fruit that is packed in water or its own juice. Avoid canned fruits that are packed in syrups.



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Use this checklist to get the most out of your food dollars.

	I Already Do	I Will Do	Doesn't Apply
1. Plan your food shopping before you go to the store.			
2. Decide on a food budget and stick to it.			
3. Shop only once a week and buy only the amount of food that you can use.			
4. Check store circulars for discounts and specials.			
5. Clip and use coupons on foods you usually buy.			
6. Always shop with a list in your hand.			
7. Do not shop when you are hungry or tired.			
8. Buy store brands.			
9. Figure the cost per serving and check unit pricing.			
10. Buy produce that is in season.			
11. Serve meatless meals at least once per week.			
12. Buy in bulk – you can divide meat into servings and freeze what you won't use right away.			

UNIT PRICE

The unit price tells shoppers the price per weight of an item. When products are offered in different sizes, it is often hard to figure out which item is the best value. Unit price makes it possible to compare different sized products! The figures below show you where to find the unit price label in your grocery store and how to interpret it.

