



Now Serving: Tasty, Healthful Meals on a Budget

Week 1: Meal Planning Tips, Menus and Recipes

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Planning menus, buying food and fixing meals your family likes can be challenging tasks. Staying within your food budget can add to the challenge.

This is the first in a series of publications to help you eat well but spend less at the grocery store. It includes sample menus that you can adapt to meet your family's tastes.

Mark with an "X" any statements that are true of you.

- I/we eat in restaurants several times a week.
- I rarely plan menus for the week.
- I make larger servings than my family needs, but I rarely make use of leftovers.
- I buy lots of snack foods, such as chips, dip, cookies, candy and/or pop.
- I sometimes throw away food because it spoils before I can use it.

Think about the statements you marked. If you marked any of the boxes, you might be spending unnecessary money. Do you have ways to trim some expenses?

Meal Planning is Important

Meal planning helps relieve the stress of not knowing what to cook at the last minute. By planning meals with a variety of foods, your family is more likely to get all the nutrients needed each day. Planning your menus helps you make use of the foods that are in season and/or on sale, too.

You also can use your leftovers (or "planned overs") as part of a meal the next day. Meal planning takes a little time up front, but in the end, it can save you time. When you have planned menus, you are less likely to "run to the store" to pick up needed items.

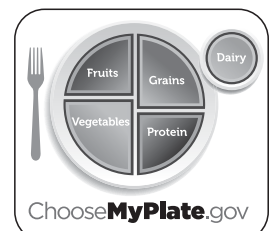
Try this meal-planning activity:

- Pick up a copy of the weekly sale ads for a local grocery store. Refer to the ads as you continue the activity.
- Divide a piece of paper into three columns using a ruler/pencil or fold it in thirds.
- In one column, list seven or more of your family's favorite main dish items.
- In the second column, list several vegetables and fruits your family consistently enjoys.

Continued on page 2

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Meal-planning activity continued from page 1

- In the third column, list the types of grains (breads, rice, beans, pastas) your family enjoys. Include whole-grain options, such as whole-wheat bread and pasta.
- Look at the items in your columns and list seven menus on the back of the piece of paper. For example, for a dinner menu, include a main dish, vegetable, fruit, bread and milk.
- Consider what you already have at home, then create a grocery shopping list.

MyPlate Portion Equivalents

The MyPlate food plan uses cups and ounces instead of “servings” and calls them “equivalents.” These are some of the equivalents for the food groups:

Grain Group	1 slice of bread 1 cup ready-to-eat cereal ½ c. cooked rice, pasta or cooked cereal	1 ounce
Vegetable Group	1 cup raw or cooked vegetables or vegetable juice, 2 cups raw leafy greens	1 cup
Fruit Group	1 cup 100% fruit juice, 1 cup fruit, ½ cup dried fruit	1 cup
Dairy Group	1 cup milk or yogurt, 1½ ounces natural cheese, 2 ounces processed cheese	1 cup
Protein Foods Group	1 egg; 1 ounce meat, poultry or fish; ¼ cup cooked dry beans; 1 tablespoon peanut butter; ½ ounce nuts or seeds	1 ounce

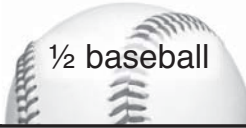


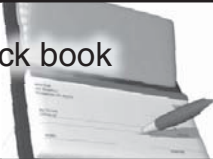



What's Your MyPlate Plan?

You can find the latest nutrition recommendations at www.choosemyplate.gov.

Each person has different needs based on gender, age and level of physical activity. Learn what each of your family members needs at his or her particular calorie levels by visiting the website or contacting your local Extension agent for “MyPlate Plan” handouts for different age groups. The MyPlate Plans are available online at www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/myplate.html.

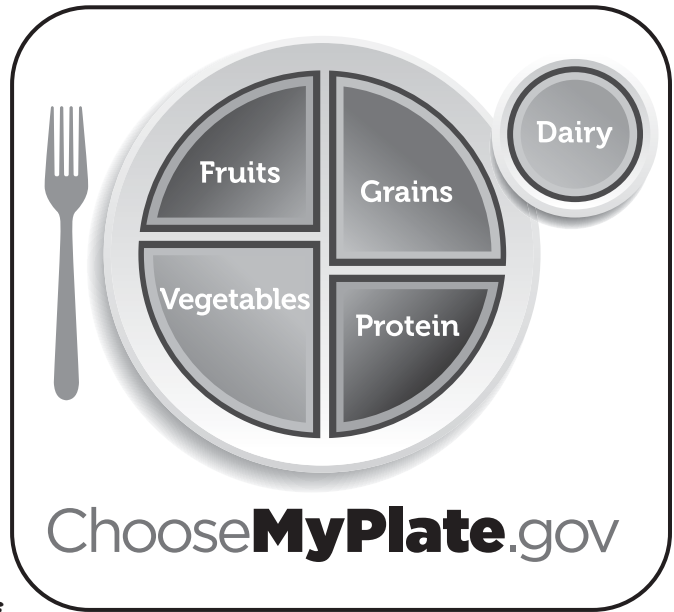
Size up your portions with these visual clues.

As shown, one-half of a baseball is the same size as ½ cup mashed potatoes.

Visual Clue	Portion size
 ½ baseball	½ cup of mashed potatoes
 large egg OR golf ball	¼ cup of dried cranberries
 pingpong ball	2 tablespoons of peanut butter
 check book	3 ounces of fish
 card deck	3 ounces of meat or poultry
 6 dice	1½ ounces of natural cheese (cheddar, Swiss)
 thumb tip	1 teaspoon of margarine or butter

Example:

MyPlate Plan and three-day menu plan for a **30-year-old female who gets less than 30 minutes of physical activity per day***



MyPlate Plan*

- Grains..... 6 ounces
- Vegetables..... 2.5 cups
- Fruit 2 cups
- Dairy 3 cups
- Protein Foods 5.5 ounces

Three-day Menu Plan for a 30-year-old Female*

	Meal 1	Meal 2	Meal 3	Snack
Day 1	2 slices whole-wheat bread (toasted) 1 Tbsp. peanut butter 1 medium banana 1 c. nonfat milk	1 serving Egg and Cheese Puff* ½ c. assorted fruit 1 c. nonfat milk	1 serving Calico Beans* 1 c. lettuce salad with 1 Tbsp. dressing 1 corn muffin ½ c. canned pear halves 1 c. nonfat milk	1 c. vegetables and 2 Tbsp. Ranch Dip*
Day 2	1 c. cereal with milk 1 slice whole-wheat toast 1 tsp. jam 1 c. orange juice	2 slices whole-wheat bread 2 Tbsp. peanut butter 1 Tbsp. jelly 1 c. carrot and celery sticks 1 c. nonfat milk	1 serving Stir Fry Dinner* 1 c. rice 1 c. tossed salad 1 c. pineapple chunks and apple slices 1 c. nonfat milk	1 c. Jello-Yogurt Fluff*
Day 3	1 c. oatmeal 2 Tbsp. raisins ½ English muffin 1 c. nonfat milk	1 serving Tuna Melt Macaroni Casserole* 1 c. lettuce salad ½ c. apple slices 1 c. nonfat milk	1½ c. Ham and Cabbage Soup* 8 saltine crackers 1 wheat bun 1 c. orange slices 1 c. nonfat milk	½ c. canned diced peaches

* indicates recipe is included

Food Safety Tip: Don't Forget to Wash, Wash, Wash

- **Wash your hands.** Proper hand washing can prevent sickness. Use warm water and soap and scrub for at least 20 seconds.
- **Wash your fruits and vegetables.** Wash all fruits and vegetables with cool running water before you eat them because they may contain dirt and bacteria from the ground and handling.
- **Wash your cutting boards and knives.** Avoid cross-contamination and use clean utensils and cutting boards when peeling or cutting up produce.

Week 1

Weekly Meal Planner (* indicates recipe is included)

	Meal 1	Meal 2	Meal 3	Snack
Day 1	Whole-wheat toast with peanut butter Banana Nonfat milk	Egg and Cheese Puff* Fruit cup Nonfat milk	Calico Beans* Carrot sticks Corn muffin Canned pears Nonfat milk	Ranch Dip with Vegetables*
Day 2	Cereal with milk Whole-wheat toast with jam Orange juice	Peanut butter and jelly sandwich Carrot and celery sticks Nonfat milk	Stir Fry Dinner* Rice Tossed salad Pineapple chunks and apple slices Nonfat milk	Jello-Yogurt Fluff*
Day 3	Oatmeal with raisins English muffin Nonfat milk	Tuna Melt Macaroni Casserole* Lettuce salad Apple slices Nonfat milk	Ham and Cabbage Soup with Potatoes* Bread/crackers Orange slices Nonfat milk	Canned peaches
Day 4	Grapefruit Cereal with milk Wheat English muffin Apple juice	Turkey sandwich Carrot sticks Canned pears Nonfat milk	Quick Taco-Mac* Three-bean Salad* Nonfat milk	Raisin Bread Pudding*
Day 5	Cereal with milk Bran Muffin* Apple juice	Pizza Buns* Lettuce salad Banana Nonfat Milk	Red Beans and Rice Burritos (with salsa)* Broccoli spears Nonfat milk	Fruit and yogurt
Day 6	French toast with "lite" syrup Orange slices Nonfat milk	Chicken noodle soup Bread/crackers Ranch Dip with Vegetables* Nonfat milk	Broiled hamburger on bun Three-bean Salad* (planned-over) Nonfat milk	Banana
Day 7	Grapefruit Bran Muffin* Nonfat milk	Peanut butter and raisin sandwich Celery sticks Orange Nonfat milk	Beef Stew* Wheat bun Canned peaches Nonfat milk	Cereal snack mix

Menus adapted from publications by Cynthia Gardner, former NDSU Student Dietitian, and Suzanne Fundingsland, former Nutrition Specialist, NDSU

Week 1

Recipes

Key to Abbreviations

tsp. = teaspoon
Tbsp. = tablespoon
c. = cup
oz. = ounce
pkg. = package
g = grams
mg = milligrams
lb. = pound

Jello-Yogurt Fluff

1 pkg. Jello (four-serving size)
2 c. orange juice
2 (6-8 oz.) cartons yogurt,
any flavor
Cut-up fruit (if desired)*

Equipment you will need

- measuring cup
- sauce pan
- medium bowl
- mixing spoon
- mixer (electric or hand)

Heat 1 cup orange juice in saucepan until it is very hot. Add Jello and stir until it is dissolved. Mix in other cup of orange juice. Chill Jello in the refrigerator until it is like syrup (one to two hours) Pour into bowl. Add yogurt. Beat with a mixer until Jello is fluffy. Add cut fruit if desired. Return Jello-Yogurt Fluff to refrigerator until it sets. Spoon into dishes to serve.

Serves eight. Per serving: 70 calories, 16 g carbohydrate, 0 g fat, 0 g fiber and 60 mg sodium

* Do not use fresh pineapple or kiwi. The Jello won't set.



Calico Beans

½ lb. ground beef
1 large onion, chopped
1 (15 oz.) can vegetarian
beans or pork and beans
1 (15 oz.) can kidney beans
1 (15 oz.) can lima beans

(You can use all the lima beans or save half to use in the pork and cabbage soup)

¼ c. brown sugar
⅓ c. ketchup
2 Tbsp. vinegar
½ tsp. pepper
(Add mustard if desired.)

Cook the ground beef and chopped onion in a large pan. Drain off the fat. Add the other foods and mix. Cook on the stove on low heat for one hour. (Or you can bake in the oven at 350 degrees for one hour).

Serves six. Per serving: 290 calories, 51 g carbohydrate, 2.5 g fat, 10 g fiber and 720 mg sodium

Equipment you will need

- knife
- can opener
- measuring cup
- measuring spoons
- cooking pan
- mixing spoon

Four-week Bran Muffins

4 eggs
1 c. soft or melted margarine
4 c. buttermilk (or sour milk*)
1½ c. sugar
5 tsp. baking soda
1½ tsp. salt
1 (15 oz.) package raisin bran cereal
(or 9 c. bran flakes with raisins)
5 c. flour

Equipment you will need

- measuring cups
- measuring spoons
- mixing bowl
- mixing spoon
- plastic wrap or cover
- muffin pan

To make the mix

Break eggs into a large bowl and beat well. Beat in margarine, buttermilk and sugar until well-mixed. Add baking soda and salt. Stir well. Mix in raisin bran. Add flour and stir just until mixed. The batter will be thick. Cover and store in the refrigerator. The batter will keep about four weeks if the refrigerator is at 40 degrees.

To bake the muffins

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Grease muffin pan or use paper baking cups. Take batter out of refrigerator. Fill each muffin cup two-thirds full. Bake in oven at 400 degrees about 15 to 20 minutes, until brown. Return leftover batter to refrigerator.

*To make sour milk, mix 2 tablespoons lemon juice or vinegar with 2 cups skim milk.

Makes six dozen muffins. Per serving (one muffin): 70 calories, 14 g carbohydrate, 0.5 g fat, 1 g fiber and 190 mg sodium



Three Bean Salad

1½ c. celery, sliced thin
½ c. onion, sliced thin
1 (16 oz.) can cut green beans,
drained
1 (16 oz.) can wax beans, drained
1 (16 oz.) can kidney beans, drained
½ c. vinegar
½ c. vegetable oil
¼ c. water
¼ c. sugar

Equipment you will need

- sharp knife
- can opener
- measuring cup
- mixing bowl
- mixing spoon
- plastic wrap or cover

Wash and slice celery and onion. In a large bowl, mix celery, onion and the three kinds of beans. Mix vinegar, oil, water and sugar. Add liquid to bean mix and stir until the bean mixture is coated. Cover and keep in the refrigerator overnight to mix the flavors. Store leftovers in the refrigerator.

Serves 10 to 12. Per serving: 190 calories, 18 g carbohydrate, 11 g fat, 6 g fiber and 280 mg sodium

Note: Use fresh cooked beans or dry cooked beans in place of the canned beans. Or try garbanzo beans or chickpeas in place of one of the suggested beans.

Bread Pudding

1½ c. bread (about 2 slices)
⅓ c. raisins
1 large egg
2 Tbsp. sugar
¾ tsp. cinnamon
¼ tsp. vanilla
1¼ c. low-fat milk

Equipment you will need

- measuring cup
- measuring spoons
- knife
- fork or egg beater
- mixing spoon
- mixing bowl
- baking dish

Cut or tear bread into 1-inch pieces. Mix bread and raisins in a 1-quart baking dish. In another bowl, beat the eggs with a fork or beater. Add milk, sugar, cinnamon and vanilla to the eggs. Mix well. Pour the mixture over the bread. Bake at 350 degrees for about 40 minutes. (You can tell if it is done if you stick a knife in the center and it comes out clean.) Serve warm or cold.

Serves four. Per serving: 130 calories, 24 g carbohydrate, 2 g fat, 2 g fiber and 105 mg sodium



Pizza Buns

½ lb. ground beef
4 buns, sliced in half
butter or margarine
1 small can or jar of pizza sauce
shredded or sliced cheese
(mozzarella or parmesan cheese works well)

Equipment you will need

- frying pan
- mixing spoon or fork
- measuring spoon
- knife
- cheese grater
- baking sheet or pan

Brown meat. Drain the fat off the cooked meat. Lightly butter each half of buns. Spread each half of the bun with 1 tablespoon pizza sauce and top with cooked meat. Grate cheese and put some on top if desired. (Add mushrooms, onion, green pepper or other toppings for variety.) Bake in oven at 375 degrees until hot and cheese is melted (about 15 minutes).

Serves four. Per serving: 280 calories, 27 g carbohydrate, 10 g fat, 3 g fiber and 560 mg sodium



Quick Taco-Mac

1 lb. ground turkey or ground beef
1 packet taco seasoning
1 (14.5 oz.) can whole tomatoes, undrained
1 c. water
1 box macaroni and cheese

Equipment you will need

- large, covered saucepan
- stirring spoon
- can opener
- measuring spoons
- sharp knife
- cutting board

In medium skillet, brown ground meat until crumbly. Drain fat. If using whole canned tomatoes, cut or break up the tomatoes. Stir in rest of ingredients, including the cheese packet from the macaroni and cheese. Bring to a boil; reduce heat, cover and simmer 20 minutes. Sprinkle with cheddar cheese, if desired.

Serves six. Per serving: 247 calories, 30 g carbohydrate, 4 g fat, 1 g fiber and 866 mg sodium

Red Beans and Rice Burritos

2 c. cooked rice
1 small onion, chopped
2 c. cooked kidney beans
(or one 15-oz. can, drained)
8 flour tortillas, about 10-inch size
½ c. salsa
canned chopped jalapeno peppers (if desired)
grated cheese

Equipment you will need

- can opener
- measuring cup
- knife
- mixing bowl
- mixing spoon
- baking pan

Mix rice, chopped onion and beans. Put each tortilla on a flat surface. Put about ½ cup of the rice mixture in the middle of each tortilla. Fold the sides of the tortillas to hold the rice and beans. Put folded and filled tortillas (burritos), seam side down, in a baking pan. Bake in the oven at 300 degrees for 15 minutes (or heat the burritos in a microwave in a glass baking dish). Pour salsa over burritos. Add jalapeno peppers (if you like) and cheese. Serve hot.

Serves four. Per serving: 520 calories, 85 g carbohydrate, 11 g fat, 13 g fiber and 760 mg sodium



Ranch Dip with Vegetables

1 c. cottage cheese
1 Tbsp. onion, chopped very fine
¼ tsp. salt
¼-½ tsp. garlic powder
2 tsp. parsley flakes

Equipment you will need

- measuring cup
- sharp knife
- cutting board
- measuring spoons
- small mixing bowl
- fork, mixer or blender (to make cottage cheese smooth)
- vegetable peeler
- cut vegetables

Put cottage cheese in bowl or blender. Beat with fork or mixer, or in blender, until cottage cheese is smooth. Add other ingredients and mix. Add some milk if you need to make the dip thinner. Store dip in the refrigerator for one to two hours to let flavors blend. Wash and cut vegetables to serve with dip. Use carrots, celery, cucumber, zucchini, broccoli, turnips, cauliflower, green pepper.

For a change:

Use ½ teaspoon chicken or beef bouillon crystals for the ¼ teaspoon salt. Use 1 teaspoon dry minced onions for the chopped fresh onion.

Serves eight. Per serving: 20 calories, 1 g carbohydrate, 0 g fat, 0 g fiber and 190 mg sodium

Stir-fry Dinner

- 2 large stalks of celery
- 1 medium onion
- ½ small head of cabbage
- 1 Tbsp. oil
- 2 Tbsp. cornstarch
- 1½ c. broth, bouillon or juice from meat
- 3 Tbsp. soy sauce
- ½ can of pork (or 1 lb. or 2 c. leftover pork, beef or chicken pieces)

Equipment you will need

- knife
- measuring spoons
- measuring cup
- frying pan and lid
- mixing spoon
- jar or container with a tight lid
- cutting board

Wash celery and cut in short, thin strips. Slice onion thin. Chop or shred the cabbage. Heat the oil in a frying pan. Add celery and onion. Cook until they are a bit brown. Mix cornstarch, broth and soy sauce by shaking them in a small jar or container with a lid. Pour the cornstarch mix into the pan with the onions and celery and cook until the sauce is clear and thick. Stir in the cabbage and meat. Cover the pan and cook for five to 10 minutes. Be sure the meat is thoroughly heated. Cover the pan and cook until the meat is cooked to 165 degrees.

Serves four. Per serving: 360 calories, 14 g carbohydrate, 19 g fat, 3 g fiber and 1,300 mg sodium



Creamed Tuna on Toast

- 2 Tbsp margarine, melted
- 3 Tbsp flour
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. pepper
- 2 c. low-fat milk
- 1 carrot, sliced
- 1 stalk of celery, sliced
- 2 c. water
- 1 c. peas
- 1 (7 oz.) can tuna (in water), drained
- 8 slices wheat bread for toast

Equipment you will need

- knife
- vegetable peeler
- measuring spoons
- measuring cup
- can opener
- saucepan with lid
- mixing spoon
- bowl
- toaster
- cutting board

Wash and slice carrot and celery. Cook them in a saucepan with 2 cups water until soft. Drain and set aside in a small bowl. In the same saucepan, melt margarine. Add the flour, salt and pepper and stir until it looks like paste. Add the milk and stir while it cooks until the sauce gets thicker. Do not boil it. Add the carrots, celery, peas and tuna. Stir and cook until the mixture is hot. Make toast and serve the creamed tuna over it. You also can serve it over biscuits or noodles.

Serves four. Per serving: 290 calories, 40 g carbohydrate, 2.5 g fat, 6 g fiber and 750 mg sodium

Egg and Cheese Puff

- margarine
- 8 slices day-old bread
- ⅔ c. grated cheese
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 2 c. low-fat milk
- 1 tsp. mustard
- ¼ tsp. pepper

Equipment you will need

- knife
- cheese grater
- measuring cup
- measuring spoons
- baking dish
- mixing bowl
- mixing spoon
- foil

Grease a 2-quart baking dish with a small amount of margarine. Tear or cut bread into small pieces or cubes. Grate cheese and mix with the bread in the baking dish. With a fork, beat the eggs in a bowl. Add milk, mustard and pepper. Stir. Pour egg and milk mixture over bread. Cover with foil and keep in the refrigerator over night (or for several hours). Bake in oven at 350 degrees for 60 to 70 minutes.

Serves four. Per serving: 330 calories, 29 g carbohydrate, 14 g fat, 4 g fiber and 470 mg sodium



Beef Stew

- 1 lb. beef cubes
- 2 Tbsp. flour
- Salt and pepper
- 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- water
- 2 carrots, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 onion, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes

Equipment you will need

- cutting board
- sharp knife
- vegetable peeler
- heavy pan with tight lid
- stirring spoon
- measuring spoons
- plastic or paper bag

Measure flour into plastic or paper bag. Add salt and pepper. Shake. Add beef cubes to bag and shake until beef is well coated. Heat oil in heavy pan. Add beef cubes and brown. Add 1 cup water. Cover with tight-fitting lid and cook at low heat one hour. Peel and cube carrots, potatoes and onion. Add to beef. Cover with lid again. Cook one more hour at low heat.

Serves four. Per serving: 410 calories, 41 g carbohydrate, 15 g fat, 5 g fiber and 125 mg sodium



Ham and Cabbage Soup

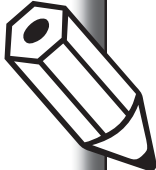
- 2 c. roast pork, ham or beef, cut into small pieces
- 3 c. water (or juice from meat if you have it)
- ½ small head of cabbage, chopped or shredded
- 2 stalks of celery, sliced
- 1 or 2 carrots, sliced
- 1 or 2 potatoes, cut up
- ½ large onion, chopped
- ½ green pepper, chopped
- ½ tsp. pepper
- 1 Tbsp. parsley flakes, if desired

Equipment you will need

- sharp knife
- vegetable peeler
- measuring cup
- measuring spoons
- cooking pot with lid
- mixing spoon
- cutting board

Mix all foods in a large pot or saucepan. Bring to a boil and stir a few times. Cover the pot and turn down the heat. Cook on low heat for about 30 minutes, until ingredients are tender.

Serves four. Per serving: 100 calories, 24 g carbohydrate, 0 g fat, 5 g fiber and 60 mg sodium

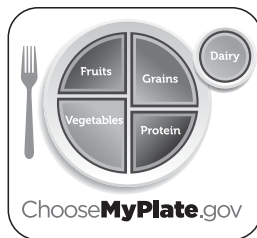


A "Grocery List" of cost-savings ideas

Check the following if you use the tip or plan to use it.

- | Currently use | Plan to use | Not applicable | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Spend about 30 minutes planning your weekly menus. Use the sale ads and write a shopping list. Keep the list in a handy spot. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Avoid shopping when you're hungry or tired. Almost everything looks tasty when you're hungry. If you're tired, you may be likely to grab convenience foods, which cost more and often are less nutritious. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Avoid using a credit card for food purchases unless you intend to pay off the balance each month. You may end up adding credit card interest rates onto the food cost. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Shop in one or two stores. Consider your gas, too. If you drive to several stores for special deals, it may not be a "deal." |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Be familiar with the store layout. Only go down the aisles that include items on your list. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | For quick shopping trips, shop the perimeter of the store. Most staples, such as milk, fresh produce and bread, are around the perimeter. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Compare store brands with national brands and choose the one with the lower price. Most store brands are similar in quality to name brands, but lower in price. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Clip coupons, but only for the things you need. Some stores double the value of coupons to a certain point. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Compare price using "unit prices." The unit pricing on the front edge of shelving helps you know quickly whether the regular-priced super-sized package is a better deal than the sale-priced regular-sized package. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Check your receipt and change. Although mistakes are not intentional, they can happen. Look carefully at your receipt to be sure you received the sale price. |

This material was funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Supplemental Food Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with a low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact your county social services office.



My Goal

Date _____

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