



Eating on a Budget

TIPS FOR COOKING:

- Cooking with whole ingredients will almost always be cheaper than buying pre prepared foods and it goes a lot farther. One handmade dish can feed you for several meals but prepared foods almost always are gone in one sitting. But you have to find the time to cook so,
- Set aside a small time each week to do a big cook. Make food in large batches. You could even do this with friends or housemates to save on ingredient costs.
- Store the food you make in meal sized containers (old yogurt, sour cream container, pasta jars, etc.) so that you can take them each day when you go to school or work. That way you're less tempted to buy fast food or go to a restaurant on the run. Most things can be frozen so you don't have to worry about how long you've had them and they're easy to grab quickly. There are microwaves in the cafeterias around campus and you can grab their utensils and condiments if you need them.
- As much as possible try to always carry a small bit of food with you, like apples or trail mix. You won't get really hungry while you're out and be forced to head home early or eat out.
- Experiment with making things yourself that are often premade such as salad dressing, pizza, lasagna, and cleaning supplies.
- Take advantage of cheaper staple foods and use them to make a batch of food go farther. Some of these are potatoes, carrots, apples, pasta, rice, other grains, bananas, and beans. These foods are usually the most versatile too. If you usually like baked potatoes, then try making other kinds like hash browns, potato pancakes, scalloped potatoes, and mashed.
- Buy local and buy seasonal. Almost always local seasonal food is cheaper than imported grocery store produce. Check out the farmer's market. I would buy apples or strawberries in the summer and make a lot of things with them that can be frozen or preserved for later months. Buy things while they're cheap and plentiful and freeze them ready to use. For example, in the summer buy peppers or zucchini in bulk, cut and bag it and freeze it to throw in pastas and chilli later.

-Get involved with local programs. Garden Fresh Box provides really cheap and excellent produce to students and is available for pick up monthly at the Food Bank . Most organic farms have shares available that you can buy alone or split with others. When you buy produce in bulk you can get great deals and you usually pay at once instead of always worrying about having money for groceries each week.

-Use grocery store flyers. You'd be surprised at how many good sales there are. A lot of stores have regular \$1 sales too.

-Know where the good discount food is. Market Fresh downtown and No Frills on Harvard Road always have great produce that is marked down because it's ripe, but if you can use it right away it is fantastic. And they often have more expensive things like tomatoes and avocados discounted.

-There is so much advertising for personal care products but rarely are there No Name brands any less effective and they are hugely less expensive. There really isn't a difference in things like toothpaste, deodorant, tampons, pads and lotion so save that coin.

-Lug a mug with you if you are a coffee or tea drinker. You'd be surprised how many opportunities there are on campus for free hot drinks. Carry your own tea bags or hot chocolate and use the hot water and condiments in the Bullring.

Here are some websites that are also full of more tips for eating on a budget and they have great recipes and other links:

[http://www.betterbudgeting.com/frugalrecipelist.htm!](http://www.betterbudgeting.com/frugalrecipelist.htm)