



# Healthy Grocery Shopping on a Budget

Tips for smart spending at the grocery store



# Grocery Store Science

🍎 Eating well does not need to cost a lot of money. Here are some ways to choose healthy foods and save along the way during your next grocery trip.

🧀 Most grocery stores have the same layout. Packaged foods are found in the middle aisles. Whole foods, such as fruit, vegetables, milk and meat are found around the outer areas of the store.

🐟 To fill a healthy shopping cart, shop along the outer areas and buy more whole foods. In the frozen section, read labels and choose items that contain more whole foods and less salt, sugar and fat.

🍪 Most people buy milk when they shop. It is kept along the back wall. This means you have to pass by many tempting products to get to the milk. Grocery store planners hope that you will buy a few other items along the way!

🥬 Be sure to keep a shopping list handy and only buy what you need.



# Smart shopping: Tips

Visit the “reduced” section at the back of the store. You will find day-old bread and ripe fruit at discount prices.



Use coupons.



Read store flyers to find the best deals.

Buy more when your favorite items are on sale. This works best for pantry items like pasta, or foods that you can freeze.

Skip the snack and soda pop aisle. These foods are not healthy or affordable.

Watch out for the word “special.” It may not mean that an item is on sale. It may just be shown on a large display. The price may be the same as usual.



Cut and chop foods yourself. For example, instead of buying a kilogram of pre-cut carrots for \$4, you can buy three kilograms of whole carrots for \$2.



# Best Buys in Each Aisle



## Vegetables and Fruit

To save money, choose items that are in-season. Locally grown foods often cost less than imported items. Frozen vegetables and fruit are also a great idea. They won't rot and they are pre-chopped for easy meals. Here are some best buys:

- Frozen vegetables
- Canned tomatoes
- Onions
- Squash
- Potatoes
- Cabbage
- Bags of whole carrots
- Fresh fruit in season
- Canned fruit
- Bananas
- Apples

## Grain Products

Look for plain items with no added salt or fat. Buy more when they are on sale. Here are some best buys:



- Large bag of rolled oats - instead of single oatmeal portions
- Pot barley
- Pasta
- Rice
- Bread – shop in the day-old section
- Store brand whole grain cereals

## Milk and Alternatives

Larger containers cost less per serving. Just be sure that you can finish the contents before it expires. Here are some best buys:

- Milk – skip the most costly ultra-filtered varieties
- Bricks of cheese - cost less than shredded or pre-packaged string cheese
- Buy large containers of yogurt – instead of multi-packs or smaller containers



## Meat and Alternatives

Less tender cuts of meat are more affordable. They taste great when cooked slowly in stews, soup or chili. See our Chili Recipe on page 7. Here are some best buys:

- Stewing meat
- Chuck steaks
- Whole chicken - pre-cut is more expensive
- Ground beef
- White fish - sole or tilapia
- Dried peas, beans and lentils
- Canned tuna - skipjack tuna costs less than albacore (bonus: it's lower in mercury too!)
- Peanut butter
- Tofu



## The Do's and Don'ts of Grocery Shopping



-  **DO** shop at discount grocery stores that offer reduced prices.
-  **DO** eat before you go shopping. If you shop when you are hungry, you may be tempted to buy more than you need.
-  **DO** check prices before buying bulk items. They are not always cheaper.
-  **DO** read food labels. Choose items with 15% Daily Value or more for fibre, vitamins and minerals.
-  **DO** buy frozen vegetables and fruits. They often cost less than fresh and they won't spoil in your fridge.
-  **DON'T** shop on pay day when you feel like you have more money to spend.
-  **DON'T** buy candy at the checkout line. It is costly and not healthy.
-  **DON'T** buy snack-sized items or single-serving products. Instead, buy a bigger package and divide it up yourself into smaller portions.
-  **DON'T** only buy groceries from the middle shelf. Scan the highest and lowest shelves. The most expensive brands are kept at your eye level. Great deals can be found if you shop the upper and lower shelves.



# Family Potato Pasta

Serves 4-6

## Ingredients

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 4 cups (1 L) Rotini pasta or your favourite pasta                       | 1 tsp each dried basil, oregano                           |
| 3 tbsp (45 mL) olive oil or vegetable oil                               | 1/2 tsp salt  |
| 2 cups (500 mL) diced potatoes, cooked until tender, about 8 minutes. * | 1 1/2 cups (375 mL) canned diced tomatoes or fresh tomato |
| 1 clove garlic, minced  | 1 cup (250 mL) canned white beans, drained and rinsed     |
|   | 1 cup (250 mL) frozen peas or broccoli florets            |

## Directions

1. In a large pot of boiling water, cook pasta until slightly tender, 8-9 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, heat a large skillet over medium high heat. Add 2 tbsp (30 mL) of the oil and fry potatoes until browned, turning over once or twice, about 5 minutes. Add garlic, basil and oregano, cooking and stirring for 30 seconds.
3. Stir in diced tomatoes, white beans, peas, remaining oil and salt; bring to boil. Set aside.
4. Drain pasta, reserving 1/2 cup (125 mL) of the cooking liquid and return to pot. Add tomato mixture, tossing to coat. Divide among bowls.

## Switch it up!

- \* You can replace 2 cups (500 mL) diced and cooked potatoes with 2 cups (500 mL) McCain® Breakfast Potatoes or Three Potato Medley or Potato and Broccoli Medley.

# Nutrition tips

Buying  
canned fruit?  
Choose items  
canned in water or  
light syrup.



Eat less meat.  
Try items that cost  
less but are still high  
in protein, such as eggs,  
peanut butter, lentils,  
**canned beans and  
tofu.**

Choose  
whole grains  
such as brown  
rice and whole  
wheat pasta.

Buy non-fat dry  
milk powder. Add  
water for fresh milk  
as needed.

## FEEDING FAMILIES

For more information about Feeding Families, visit [www.feedingfamilies.ca](http://www.feedingfamilies.ca).



Food Banks  
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Banques alimentaires  
Canada

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