

Eating Healthy On A Budget

We all know that we need to eat better but isn't it frustrating that the healthier you try to eat the more money you seem to spend? It doesn't have to be that way. Here are just a few tips to help you feed your family nutritious meals without breaking your budget.

- 1) Plan your meals around the sales. Stores routinely rotate sales items every 6 weeks so plan accordingly and stock up. Is chicken breast on sale this week? Instead of buying 1 pack purchase several packs, separate into family size portions and freeze. If you routinely purchased only what was on sale (besides the perishables you need each week) you will soon have a well stocked freezer and pantry as well as a smaller grocery bill.
- 2) Avoid purchasing boxed foods. Most boxed foods are full of preservatives and trans fats so it is best to avoid them. Do you like the convenience of boxed foods? There are several good cookbooks and recipes online for making homemade mixes to keep on hand. Everything from homemade cookie mix to macaroni and cheese and more. Put these mixes in a pretty jar with the directions to prepare and it also makes a nice frugal gift!
- 3) Use coupons wisely. How many times have you gone to the store with a fist full of coupons only to come home spending more than you planned? The key to saving with coupons is to only purchase the items you would normally use anyway. You will also find that the store brand may still be the better bargain. An even better idea is to hold onto that coupon and wait for the item you want to go on sale.
- 4) Do a coupon exchange. Check with family and friends who get the Sunday paper and exchange coupons for ones you can use. That way you can really stock up when your favorite items are on sale and you have coupons.
- 5) Buy produce in season. It will taste much better and you will usually pay less. Also in the warmer months be sure to take advantage of farmers markets for low prices on produce. Buy items like peppers and onions when on sale, chop them and freeze them for quick recipes during the week. Zucchini can be shredded and frozen for zucchini bread and other recipes.
- 6) Make your grocery list and stick to it. Beware of those impulse buys!
- 7) Shop after dinner. You won't be tempted to pick up take out because you are too tired and hungry to cook when you get home.
- 8) Shop alone. Nothing blows a budget quicker than when your kids are with you! You will also get out of the store much quicker which will actually save you money.
- 9) When buying meat think of recipes where you can get more than one meal out of it. Meatsauce is still satisfying with half the amount of ground beef. Slice up other cuts of meat for stir fries or to put on top of a nice salad and you have a quick healthy meal.
- 10) Don't be loyal to just one store. Most grocery stores have certain items priced really low to get your business. If you have several grocery stores in your area try and take advantage of what deals each store has to offer.
- 11) Have breakfast for dinner once in a while. An omelette, toast and fresh fruit is very economical and very quick to cook on a busy night.

These are just a few tips to help you save money while eating better. I hope that you find some or all of them useful for your family!

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About the Author

Judy is a stay at home mom who is always looking for creative ways to cut expenses. You can visit her website at <http://www.eatingonabudget.com> .