



BUDGET CONSCIOUS TIPS



PLANNING



- Dedicate a time each week to plan your meals and weekly menu
- How many people are eating each meal per day
- How much protein per lb will you need?
- Amounts of other items called for in recipes?
- Check your pantry and fridge for existing products
- Be realistic: plan meals you KNOW you will make and eat

GROCERY SHOPPING



- Have your grocery list and don't deviate
- Fresh produce and fruit is great if you're going to prep it, or consume it. If there's a chance you may unintentionally waste it, opt for frozen options instead.
- Frozen & Canned options
- Store-brand v. name-brand
- Look at *cost per unit* v. *total cost*
- Choose grocery stores based on your needs:
 - Bulk (Costco/BJs/Sams Clubs)
 - Know your local market for savings: Large chains; Aldi's; Walmart; Food markets/Cultural Markets
- If eating meat: try a different cut. Chicken breasts v. thighs
- Try a new protein source such as tofu or tempeh (compare your local costs)

CONVENIENCE



- When purchasing convenience items, a tradeoff of time or money is considered
- When trying to budget, you may want to opt for the less-convenient items to save
- Examples:
 - Cut your own vegetables and fruit.
 - Make your own guacamole.
 - Skip pre-cooked options and cook your own.
- Bring your own food, pack a cooler for outings and events
- Skip bottled beverages

SIMPLE SWAPS



Organic to Conventional



365 by Whole Foods Market, Broccoli Florets Organic, 16 Ounce

★★★★★ ~ 5,923

\$4¹⁹ (\$0.26/Ounce)

SNAP EBT eligible

Climate Pledge Friendly

Add to Cart



365 by Whole Foods Market, Broccoli Florets, 16 Ounce

★★★★★ ~ 13,933

\$2⁷⁹ (\$0.17/Ounce)

SNAP EBT eligible

Add to Cart

Pre-Cooked to Cooking Your Own



Pre-Prepped to DIY



Pre-Made to Making Your Own



Skip Individual Servings Buy Bulk & Add Flavor



FOOD SAFETY



- To keep frozen foods safe, follow cooking methods specified on the package.
- The safest way to thaw frozen foods is in the refrigerator.
- When thawing meat in the refrigerator, make sure juices do not drip onto other foods
- Keep raw foods on the **BOTTOM** of the fridge.
- To thaw in a hurry, place the food in a leak-proof plastic bag and submerge it in cold water until thawed, replacing the cold water every half hour and cooking it immediately after thawing.
- Foods can also be thawed in the microwave and cooked immediately after thawing.
- [How to organize your fridge](#)

ALCOHOL



Alcohol spending calculator

Do you know how much money you're spending on alcohol each week, month, or year? Over time, costs can add up quickly! Use this calculator to figure out your average spending on alcohol per week, month, and year.

On average, how many days per week do you drink alcohol?	On a typical drinking day, how many drinks do you have?	What's the average price per drink?	Here's your average spending per...
<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="\$6.00"/>	Week: <input type="text" value="\$24.00"/> Month: <input type="text" value="\$104.00"/> Year: <input type="text" value="\$1,248.00"/>

<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="\$10"/>	Week: <input type="text" value="\$40.00"/> Month: <input type="text" value="\$173.00"/> Year: <input type="text" value="\$2,080.00"/>
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Enter your own info in at:

<https://www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/Tools/Calculators/Alcohol-Spending-Calculator.aspx>



DINING OUT & TAKE-OUT





- The average American household spends about \$3,000 a year dining out, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics
- **EVALUATE:** We're not saying never enjoy a night out, but when it comes to your budget, assess how often you dine out or get take out. If you dine out or get take-out 4 nights per week, try 3
- **SOCIAL:** Consider bringing food to a concert, the beach, or parks. Try a potluck with friends vs. dining out
- **OTHE TIPS FOR DINING OUT:**
 - Try lunch specials or happy hours
 - Make a meal from the appetizers or side dishes (compare costs)
 - Split entrees with friends
 - Request to have half of your meal boxed before it is served to save some to-go
 - Choose water
 - Look for discounts and grouppons

You and your family *can* eat healthy and spend less. Here are some examples of how healthy meals and snacks can save you calories and money.





Snack

A typical snack *might* look like this:

	Food Item	Cost	Number of Calories
	Snack-size bag of chips (3 ounces)	\$0.99	465 calories
	Regular soda (20 ounces)	\$1.25	250 calories
		Total cost = \$2.24	Total calories = 715

A healthy snack *might* look like this:

	Food Item	Cost	Number of Calories
	1 low-fat yogurt (6 ounces)	\$0.50	140 calories
	Glass of water	free	0 calories
		Total cost = \$0.50	Total calories = 140

Eating a healthy snack just once a week could save you more than \$90 and almost 30,000 calories in a year.

(Note: Costs where you live might be slightly more or less than these examples.)

Image Credit & Source: https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/wecan/downloads/tip_comparison.pdf

MORE RESOURCES

WEBSITES:

- Cooking Matters: <https://cookingmatters.org/>
- Budget Bytes: <https://www.budgetbytes.com/>
- Workweek: <https://workweeklunch.com/>

BOOKS:

- "Good & Cheap" by Leeanne Brown
- The More with Less Cookbook by Doris Longacre

SU BLOG:

- "How Stronger U Pays for Itself"
 - <https://strongeru.com/stronger-u-discount/>

PROGRAMS:

- Food & Nutrition Services:
 - <https://www.fns.usda.gov/programs>
 - <https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/nutrition-education/nutrition-education-materials/eat-right-when-moneys-tight>

HOME GARDENING:

- <https://www.nal.usda.gov/legacy/topics/home-gardening>

