

10 Ways to Cut Food Costs

Here are 10 ways to cut back without sacrificing nutrition:

- 1) Eat breakfast for dinner one night a week (pancakes and eggs are very cheap). Light candles and serve juice in fancy glasses to make it fun.
- 2) Eat vegetarian one night a week (rice and beans is a favorite with us). Another example is to eat greens and beans one night a week (You can use frozen collards, turnip greens etc. on sale to keep the cost down). When you do serve meat, decrease the portion size and increase the servings of vegetables in turn. It will slim your waistline and your grocery bill too.
- 3) Eat homemade soup one night a week. Make a big batch and freeze the leftovers in freezer bags for a quick meal later. Or have a soup swap with a friend and swap half of a large recipe. You can also make some bread to serve with it for cheap to turn it into a bigger meal.
- 4) Cook with your crock pot one night a week (utilizing inexpensive cuts of meat and poultry).
- 5) Have a weekly leftover night. You could opt for no new food prep & just strictly eat what's in the fridge or you could use that leftover ham to make a quiche, etc. You can easily use leftover meat in casseroles.
- 6) Eat from your freezer one night a week (you'd be surprised at how many meals are in there just waiting to be thrown together!)
- 7) Buy produce from local farmers markets or U-Pick fields. The food tastes better, has less pesticides and you can freeze produce to use later in the year when items are out of season.
- 8) Make your own ... Prepared and packaged foods are often very expensive. **Chicken Broth** from your leftover cooked chicken (throw the carcass, an onion, carrots and celery into a pot, cover with water, simmer for an hour or so). Make **Bread Crumbs** by saving the ends of your bread in the freezer until you have a good stack. Dry them in the oven on the lowest setting and then throw them in your food processor. Keep the bread crumbs in a freezer bag until you need them.
- 9) Pack sandwiches, some carrot sticks and waters for dinner the night your family is running all over the place (nixing the drive thru). No one will die from not having a "proper meal".
- 10) **ADVANCED IDEA:** Grow a vegetable or herb garden! (Or just start with one or two tomato plants in a pot.) It is great for family time together and helps cut food costs. Find someone who already has a garden and ask for tips. If you just can't pull off growing your own food, try the bartering system with someone who has a garden. Trade a free night of baby sitting for some of their extra vegetables.

The point is the thought process of cutting back, making do and using up what you have. You can live on less than you think, and that includes food. Try some of these suggestions.