



Cooking Matters

at Home



Step-by-Step Pasta Dinner

Pinching pennies? Make it a pasta night!

Pasta is a budget-friendly whole grain. Choose ingredients from the chart below to make a meal for four. Then, follow the step-by-step directions and review the chef's notes.

Pasta (½ pound)	+	Protein	+	Veggies (2 cups total, any combo)	+	Sauce (1–2 cups)	+	Seasonings (Optional, to taste)
Whole grain pasta		Lean ground beef, turkey, or chicken, cooked and drained (1 pound)		Spinach, chard, or kale		Marinara		Dried basil
Brown rice pasta		Extra-firm tofu, drained and crumbled (14-ounce package)		Broccoli		Peanut Sauce		Dried oregano
		Beans, rinsed and drained (1 can or 2 cups cooked)		Carrots		Canned diced or crushed tomatoes		Garlic powder or minced fresh garlic
		Frozen peas or edamame (soy beans), thawed and drained (2 cups)		Sugar snap or snow peas		Quick Cheese Sauce		
		Chicken or turkey sausage, cooked and sliced (1 pound)		Zucchini or yellow squash		Simple White Sauce		

Directions

1. Cook pasta according to package directions. In a colander, drain pasta.
2. Cook protein as needed. If using, add optional fresh garlic during the last minute of cooking time.
3. Cook veggies by steaming, grilling, roasting, sauteing, or adding to boiling pasta water during the last few minutes of cooking.
4. In a large pot over medium heat, heat sauce. If using, add optional spices now. Add protein and veggies to heat through. Toss with hot cooked pasta and serve.

Chef's Notes

- New to whole grain pasta? Start with a whole grain blend. Once you are used to the taste, switch to 100% whole wheat pasta.
- Use ground meat that is 90% lean or leaner. Drain excess fat from meat after cooking.



Continued >

Try these combos!

Asian Noodles

Whole grain spaghetti + tofu + sugar snap peas + carrots + peanut sauce

Summer Pasta Primavera

Whole grain pasta + diced tomatoes + cannellini beans + zucchini + garlic

Spaghetti and Meat Sauce

Whole grain pasta + lean ground beef + broccoli + marinara sauce + dried basil + dried oregano + garlic



Sauce Recipes

Simple White Sauce

1. In a small bowl, use a fork to whisk together 2 Tablespoons cornstarch and 1 cup nonfat or low-fat milk until smooth.
2. In a large saucepan over medium heat, add milk mixture. Cook until thickened, stirring constantly, about 5 minutes.
3. Stir in 2 teaspoons mustard. Season with dried or fresh herbs as you like, such as basil, parsley, or dill. Start with $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon and add to your taste.
4. Remove from heat. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve hot.

Quick Cheese Sauce

1. Grate 2 ounces low-fat cheddar cheese.
2. Follow instructions for Simple White Sauce above. In step 3, stir in cheese along with the mustard and seasonings, until melted.



Soups Made Simple

Soup makes an easy lunch or dinner. Leftovers can be frozen for another day.

Use the chart below to choose ingredients from each column. Follow the chef's tips and step-by-step directions below to make your soup.

Protein 1 pound (diced meat)	+	Vegetables 2 cups, chopped	+	Liquid 4 cups	+	Whole Grains 1½ cups, cooked
Beef (shoulder, round or brisket)		Onions		Water		Brown rice
Chicken/Turkey (leg or thigh; boneless, skinless)		Greens (spinach, kale, collards, chard, etc.)		Low-sodium stock/broth		Whole wheat pasta
Pork (shoulder/butt)		Celery				Barley
Beans or lentils (cooked, or drained and rinsed from a can)		Zucchini				Quinoa
		Tomatoes				
		Carrots				
		Mushrooms				
		Broccoli				

If using meat as your protein:

1. Heat 1 Tablespoon vegetable oil in a soup pot over medium-high heat. Sauté meat until lightly browned, about 5 minutes.
2. Add the vegetables. Reduce heat to medium and sauté for 5 minutes. If using canned or thawed frozen vegetables, skip this step and add vegetables during step 4.
3. Add liquid and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 25-30 minutes or until meat is cooked through. Stir occasionally to keep ingredients from sticking to the bottom of the pot.
4. Add cooked grains during the last 5-7 minutes of cooking time, to warm through.

If using beans or lentils as your protein:

- Skip step 1 above. Follow the remaining steps, adding beans to the liquid in step 3. Shorten the total cooking time to 15 minutes.

Chef's Notes:

- **Vegetables:** Softer vegetables like spinach or zucchini will cook faster. Add during the last 5-7 minutes of cooking time.
- **Whole Grains:** Cook grains according to package instructions ahead of time. Refrigerate and add to soups you make that week.
- **Seasonings:** In addition to salt and pepper, try adding herbs and spices such as dried thyme, parsley, or ground cumin. Or, kick up the flavor by adding some minced garlic, hot peppers, ginger, or citrus zest. When using fresh herbs, add them at the end of cooking to keep the flavor fresh.

Casseroles: An Easy, Make-Ahead Meal

Use the guide below to choose your ingredients. To cook, season with salt and pepper or other spices, to taste. Bake at 350°F for 40-60 minutes or until top is brown and bubbly.

Protein 1 cup, fully cooked	+	Vegetables 1½-2 cups, chopped	+	Sauce (choose one)	+	Whole Grains 1½ cups, cooked	+	Toppings ½ cup
Beef (lean cuts), cubed or ground		Greens (kale, spinach, chard)		Low-fat or nonfat cream soup, such as mushroom, celery, or tomato (10 ounce can) + ¼ cup nonfat milk		Brown rice		Grated low-fat cheese
Chicken or turkey (boneless; skin removed), cubed or ground		Mixed vegetables (such as carrots, peas and corn)		Diced tomatoes (14.5oz can, drained — approx. 1 cup) + ½ cup reduced-fat sour cream (optional)		Whole wheat pasta		Bread crumbs
Ham, diced		Zucchini				Barley		Crushed corn flakes
Beans or lentils		Mushrooms				Quinoa		Crushed tortilla chips
Canned tuna or salmon		Broccoli				Cubed whole wheat bread (1 cup)		

Casserole Ideas:

- **Chicken, Rice & Broccoli:** 1 cup diced, cooked chicken + 1½ cups chopped, blanched broccoli + 1½ cups cooked brown rice + 1 can cream of mushroom soup + ¼ cup nonfat milk + ½ cup shredded low-fat cheese on top.
- **Smoked Turkey & Spinach:** 1 cup diced, smoked turkey + 1½ cups chopped spinach + ½ cup chopped mushrooms + 1½ cups cooked barley + 1 can cream of celery soup + ¼ cup nonfat milk + ½ cup shredded low-fat cheese on top.
- **Mexican Black Beans & Rice:** 1 cup black beans + 1½ cups chopped spinach + ½ cup corn + 1½ cups cooked brown rice + 1 cup diced tomatoes + ½ cup low-fat sour cream + ½ teaspoon ground cumin + ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper + ½ cup shredded low-fat cheese on top.

Chef's Tips:

- **Vegetables:** Cook firmer veggies like carrots or broccoli, and heartier greens like kale or collards, for 3-4 minutes in boiling water. Drain well before adding to casserole. If using canned or thawed frozen vegetables, drain them well. You don't need to cook them before adding.
- **Whole Grains:** Cook grains according to package instructions ahead of time. Refrigerate and add to casseroles you make that week.
- **Toppings:** Toppings like bread crumbs, corn flakes, or tortilla chips may brown quickly. Cover the casserole loosely with foil while cooking. Remove the foil for the last 5-10 minutes.

Delicious Dips & Spreads

Pair your favorite fruits, veggies, and whole grains with easy-to-make dips.

Bean Dip

- Using a blender, mix 1 (15½-ounce) can beans (cannellini, chickpeas, black beans, etc.) rinsed and drained, 1 minced garlic clove, ¼ cup water, 1 Tablespoon canola oil, ½ teaspoon salt, ½ teaspoon ground black pepper.
- For extra kick, add ¼ cup salsa. For a thicker dip, add ¼ cup low-fat yogurt. For a different flavor, add ¼ cup of your favorite rinsed and minced fresh herbs.
- Serve with cut-up fresh veggies, with whole wheat pita wedges or crackers, or as a sandwich spread.

Honey Mustard Dip

Chef Bob Casey, Boston, Mass.

- Mix ½ cup plain nonfat yogurt, 1 Tablespoon mustard, and 1 Tablespoon honey.
- Serve with Baked Flaked Chicken or soft whole grain pretzels.

Vegetable Dip

Chef Alicia McCabe, Boston, Mass.

- Mix ½ cup nonfat plain yogurt, ½ cup reduced-fat mayonnaise, and 1 Tablespoon Mrs. Dash seasoning (or use ½ teaspoon each of dried chives and parsley, ¼ teaspoon each of garlic and onion powder, and ⅛ teaspoon each of salt and pepper). Use low-fat sour cream in place of mayonnaise if you like.
- Serve with cut-up fresh veggies. Or, use as a topping for quesadillas, tacos, or chili.

If you do not have a blender, use a fork to mash more solid ingredients. Then, blend with other ingredients using a mixing spoon.

Pumpkin Dip

- Using a blender, mix 1 (15-ounce) can pumpkin puree, 1 cup low-fat cream cheese (softened), ¼ cup powdered sugar, 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon, and ⅛ teaspoon ground nutmeg.
- Serve with whole wheat graham crackers or apple wedges. Or, use as a spread on whole wheat toast or bread.

Ricotta Fruit Dip

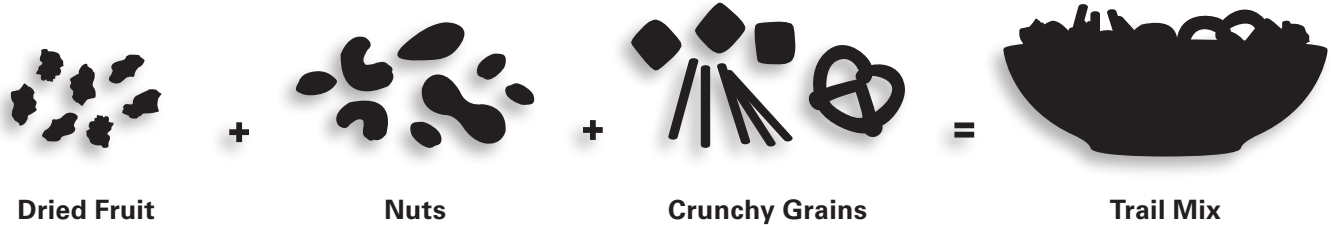
- Mix 8 ounces low-fat ricotta cheese, ½ cup nonfat vanilla yogurt, 3 Tablespoons of your favorite fruit preserves or jam, and ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon.
- Serve with cut-up fresh fruit or whole wheat crackers. Or, use as a spread on whole wheat toast, bread, or pancakes.

Fruit Yogurt Dip

- Using a blender, mix 1 cup low-fat cream cheese (softened), ½ cup nonfat vanilla yogurt, ½ cup fruit puree — such as crushed pineapple, berries, or mashed banana — 1 teaspoon honey, and ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon.
- Serve with cut-up fresh fruits. Try apples, bananas, grapes, or strawberries.

Make Your Own Trail Mix

Make your own trail mix for a healthy snack packed with flavor!



Add one ingredient from each column to make 6 servings (½ cup each).

Dried Fruit (½ cup)	+	Nuts (½ cup)	+	Crunchy Grains (1 cup)	+	Other (1 cup total; no more than ½ cup chocolate or marshmallows)
Cranberries		Unsalted roasted peanuts		Low-fat granola		White or dark chocolate, carob, or butterscotch chips
Banana chips		Unsalted cashews		Crispy whole grain cereal		Yogurt-covered chips or raisins
Mango slices		Unsalted raw sunflower seeds		Low-sodium or unsalted pretzels		Low-sodium or unsalted pretzels
Raisins		Unsalted roasted almonds		Sesame sticks		Chocolate-coated nuts or dried fruit
Crystallized ginger		Soy nuts				Shredded unsweetened coconut
Pineapple		Chopped walnuts				Mini-marshmallows
Apple						
Papaya						

Chef's Tips:

- Make a batch in advance. Store in an air-tight container in a cool, dry place.
- Trail mix can be high in calories. Keep portion sizes small.
- Pack single servings into small zip-top bags. Take for a healthy snack on the go!

Make Your Own Baby Food

Homemade baby food is great for baby and the whole family!

- Helps cut down on family food costs
- Helps baby get used to foods the family eats
- Gives baby the nutrients he needs without added chemicals or fillers

As your baby matures, slowly start letting her try healthy foods from the family table. Set aside some food for baby before adding sugar, salt, or heavy spices for the rest of the family.

How to make it:

First, wash hands and work spaces thoroughly. Then, follow the chart below.

To make...	Prep	Cook	Blend
Fresh Fruits and Veggies	Wash, peel, and remove any core or seeds.	Cook food until tender. Boil in a small amount of water. Or, try steaming or baking.	Use a blender, fork, or food grinder to mash the food until it is smooth. Add liquid, such as water, 100% juice, formula, or breast milk, to thin as needed.
Canned or Frozen Produce	Be sure it has no added salt, sugar, fat, or spices.		
Meat, Poultry, or Fish	Remove bones, skin, and fatty parts.		

Keep it safe:

- Let food cool so it does not burn your baby's mouth and throat. Taste-test the temperature before serving.
- Give your baby one new food at a time. Wait at least 2-3 days before starting a new food. Watch for any allergic reactions. Do not serve any mixed-ingredient foods until you have served each ingredient on its own.
- Refrigerate baby food that is not eaten right away. Use meat, poultry, fish, or egg yolks within 1 day. Use all other baby food within 1-2 days. Or, store in the freezer up to 1 month. Freeze in clean ice cube trays. Store frozen cubes in a bag labeled with the date the food was frozen.
- Re-heat stored baby food to at least 165°F. Let cool to a safe temperature before serving.
 - **On the stove:** Place a small heat-safe dish in a small pot. Add about an inch of water. Bring water to a simmer. When food is warm, remove from pot. Stir and test for temperature.
 - **In the microwave:** Stir well and turn dish often to prevent hot spots. Stir, let sit a few minutes, and test for temperature.

Knife Basics

Follow these tips to buy, use, and care for your knives.



Shopping Tips

- Hold a few in your hand before buying if you can. Handles have different shapes. Some may feel more comfortable than others.
- You don't need to purchase a 10-knife block set. Most kitchen tasks can be done with just one or two knives. Here are a few tips:
 - Chef's knife (8–10-inch blade). Almost all kitchen jobs can be done with just this knife. If you can only buy one, go with this one.
 - Paring knife (3–4-inch blade). Good for tasks where you may need to be more precise, like peeling and coring.
 - Serrated knife (8–10-inch blade, small “teeth”). This knife is long like a chef's knife but the blade edge is jagged, rather than smooth. Good for slicing bread and cutting soft-skinned produce like tomatoes.

Safety Tips

- Never put a knife in a sink full of water. You or someone else may forget it's there. This can lead to cuts when you grab things to clean.
- Don't try to catch a falling knife. If you drop it, take a quick step back so it doesn't nick your toes or bounce back on you.
- To pass a knife, hand it off by the handle. Or, set it down on the counter and let the other person pick it up.
- Always walk with the blade of your knife pointed towards the floor. This helps avoid knocking someone who comes into your path.
- When you are not using your knife, place it at the top of your cutting board. Keep the blade facing away from you.
- Keep knives sharp. A dull knife requires more force, which can lead to slipping. To sharpen knives, check the cost at a local hardware or kitchenware store, or price out sharpeners at discount stores. Do not try to sharpen serrated knives — it could ruin the teeth.



Using Knives Safely

Our recipes call for a lot of slicing, dicing, chopping, and mincing. Use these tips to cut like a pro:

- **Watch your fingers.** Tuck your fingers toward your palm on the hand that is holding the food.
- **Lead down with the tip.** Angle the tip of the knife toward the cutting board.
- **Slice.** Cut through the food with a slicing or sawing motion. Don't just push down.
- **Create a flat surface.** When working with round foods like onions or potatoes, cut them in half first. Lay the flat side down, then keep cutting.

Cooking Terms

Recipes are easier to follow when you know these common cooking terms.



Bake	To cook food in an oven with dry heat.
Boil	To cook food quickly in heated liquid. The liquid moves rapidly, and large bubbles keep breaking the surface. Often used for vegetables and pasta.
Broil	To cook food directly under the heat source of a gas or electric oven. Often used for fish and tender cuts of meat.
Brown	To cook quickly over high heat, usually on top of the stove, so the surface of the food turns brown and the inside stays moist.
Chop	To cut into pieces, which can vary in size.
Dice	To cut into small, even cubes, usually about ¼ inch per side.
Grill	To cook food directly on the heat source of a gas, charcoal, or wood grill. Often used for fish, tender cuts of meat, and vegetables.
Knead	To mix and work the ingredients that make up dough into smooth, elastic form. Can be done with hands or a heavy-duty mixer.
Mince	To cut food into even smaller pieces than diced.
Mix	To beat or stir two or more foods together until they are combined.
Poach	To cook food gently in large amounts of heated liquid. The liquid moves slightly, but no bubbles break the surface. Often used for eggs, fish, and fruit.
Roast	To cook by dry heat, usually in an oven.
Sauté (Pan fry)	To cook food in a small amount of fat or oil on top of a stove. Heat the fat until hot (but not smoking), add the food, and cook to stated time or tenderness.
Simmer	To cook food slowly in heated liquid. Small bubbles should break the surface. Often used for meats and stews that benefit from slow cooking.
Slice	To cut into wide, thin pieces.
Steam	To cook food quickly in a covered pot by the moist heat made from a small amount of heated liquid. The food is held above the liquid by a basket or rack. Often used for vegetables and fish.
Whisk	To beat ingredients with a fork or a “whisk.” This adds air and increases the volume. The mixture appears light and fluffy.

Kids in the Kitchen

Help kids develop a love of healthy foods.
Teach them to create healthy meals.

Kids aged 2 and younger can:

- Play with plastic measuring cups, spoons, containers, or a bowl of water .
- Learn to say names and colors of foods being used
- Smell foods and, depending on the food, taste small amounts



Let 3-year-olds try to:

- Rinse and scrub fresh produce
- Tear, snap, or break foods
- Use a cookie cutter to cut shapes in dough
- Pluck fruits or leaves from stems
- Dip foods into dips
- Arrange foods on a plate
- Help stir ingredients together in a bowl



Let 4-year-olds try to:

- Measure ingredients
- Cut with a plastic or dull butter knife
- Squeeze juice from fruits
- Shake ingredients in small containers, such as jars or zip-top bags

Let 5-year-olds try to:

- Help grate cheeses and vegetables
- Crack and beat eggs
- Peel oranges



Continued >

Kids in the Kitchen continued >

Let 6-8-year-olds help:

- Read the recipe
- Crack eggs
- Measure small amounts of ingredients
- Use an egg beater
- Rinse, scrub, and peel onions, carrots, cucumbers, and other produce
- Grate cheese and vegetables
- Decorate cookies
- Spread soft frostings and spreads
- Roll out and shape dough
- Cut soft foods with a plastic or dull butter knife

Let 9-13-year-olds start to:

- Follow recipes and make simple meals by themselves
- Use electrical tools like blenders and mixers
- Open cans
- Drain cooked pasta in a colander
- Remove trays from the oven with adult supervision

Kids can also help:

- Set and clear the table
- Clean up
- Get out ingredients and equipment and put them away

- **Start simple.** Make recipes with just a few steps until you learn what each child can do.
- **Let your experience be your guide.** Adjust the tasks you assign based on your child's skills.
- **Supervise.** Make sure kids know the rules of kitchen safety from the start.



Chill Out

Use these tips for freezing, thawing, and refrigerating foods.

Freeze foods safely. Freeze foods for later in the month. Pull them out when you don't have time to cook.

1. Cool all foods safely in the fridge first. This speeds up freezing and helps retain the natural color, flavor, and texture of food.
2. Freeze food in portions you will use at one time.
3. Seal the food to keep moisture out. Use plastic wrap, freezer bags, or plastic containers.
4. Label your package. Write the type of food and date it was made.
5. Keep freezer at 0°F or lower so food stays safe.

Thaw foods safely. Never thaw foods on the counter at room temperature.

- **Refrigerator.** Place food on the lowest shelf until it is no longer frozen. It will then keep for 2 to 5 days.
- **Cold water.** Submerge the food, packed in an airtight container or a leak-proof bag, in cold water. Change the water every 30 minutes to keep thawing. Cook foods defrosted in cold water right after thawing.
- **Microwave.** Cook microwave-defrosted foods right after thawing. Some parts of the food may have started to cook while defrosting.

Store foods safely. Keep food from spoiling or becoming unsafe to eat. Use within the time listed or freeze right away. The timelines below are for best quality.



Product	Refrigerator (40°F)	Freezer (0°F)
Fresh eggs, in shell	3 to 5 weeks	Do not freeze
Hot dogs and luncheon meats, unopened	2 weeks	1 to 2 months
Hot dogs and luncheon meats, opened	3 to 7 days	1 to 2 months
Ground meat and stew meat	1 to 2 days	3 to 4 months
Beef, lamb, veal, and pork chops	3 to 5 days	4 to 6 months
Cooked meat and poultry and casseroles	3 to 4 days	2 to 4 months
Cooked meat and poultry pieces in sauce	1 to 2 days	2 to 4 months
Whole poultry or poultry pieces	1 to 2 days	9 to 12 months
Pizza, leftover	3 to 4 days	1 to 2 months
Cheese, hard or grated	6 to 12 weeks	6 to 12 months
Milk	1 week	3 months
Yogurt	1 to 2 weeks	1 to 2 months

STRETCHING YOUR INGREDIENTS

PLAN TO USE FOODS AND INGREDIENTS IN MORE THAN ONE MEAL TO SAVE MONEY AND AVOID WASTING FOOD.



Breads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make bread pudding, French toast, stuffing, or croutons.
Rice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make rice pudding. Or, add to soup and casseroles.
Pasta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make pasta salad or casseroles.
Fruits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine for a fruit salad. • Use in muffins, quick breads, and pancakes. • Bake into cobblers, crisps, or squares. • Top hot or cold cereals with slices of fruit or berries. • Freeze to use in smoothies.
Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toss with cold pasta and light dressing for pasta salad. • Use in soups or stews. • Combine for a mixed vegetable salad.
Milk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use in baked goods such as muffins or quick breads.
Yogurt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use plain yogurt in place of sour cream in recipes. • Use to make veggie or fruit dip.
Cheese	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use as a topping for vegetables, salads, soups, or casseroles. • Use in quiche or toss with pasta. • Keep frozen until needed.
Meat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slice for sandwiches. • Use in meat sauces, stuffed peppers, chili, or soups. • Use in stir-fry with leftover veggies. • Use to make a chef salad.
Chicken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slice for sandwiches or make chicken salad. • Use in a soup, casserole, or stir-fry. • Use the bones to make stock. • Shred and use to top a veggie salad.
Eggs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make egg salad sandwiches. • Add to salads. • Make a fritatta.
Beans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reheat, mash, and spread on tortillas with other toppings. • Toss in salads. • Use in chili, soups, casseroles, and stews. • Make bean dip to eat with crackers or veggies.

STOCKING YOUR PANTRY

KEEP THESE INGREDIENTS ON HAND TO CREATE QUICK AND NUTRITIOUS MEALS.

Baking Products.

Have flour, sugar, baking soda, and baking powder on hand. They are basic ingredients for many fresh baked goods.

Canned Beans and Fish.

Add beans like kidney, black, pinto, or lima to salads and soups. Or, serve as side dishes or add to a main dish. Use canned tuna and salmon to add protein to salads, casseroles, and pasta.

Canned Fruits and Vegetables.

Canned produce like pineapple, applesauce, corn, and green beans make quick and easy side dishes or snacks on their own. Or, use as an ingredient to stretch main dishes.

Canned or Powdered Milk.

Canned low-fat evaporated and dry powdered milk keep longer than fresh. Prepare them according to the package directions. Use in recipes instead of fresh milk.

Canned Tomato Products.

Keep canned tomato sauce and whole, diced, or puréed tomatoes on hand. They are basic ingredients in a wide range of recipes.

Cereals.

Stock up on whole grain cereals when they're on sale. Enjoy with fruit and milk. Or, use to make trail mixes, baked goods, or crispy coatings for meat, poultry, and fish.

Dried Fruit and Nuts.

Use as a snack on their own or in homemade trail mix. Add to cereals, baked goods, and yogurt for a snack or breakfast.

Dried Herbs.

Buy the dried herbs and spices you use often. Use to add flavor in place of extra salt.

Oil. Canola and olive oils are nutritious choices when cooking or making dressings. Cooking spray keeps food from sticking to the pan.

Pasta and Rice. Buy whole wheat pasta and brown rice on sale or in bulk or family-size packages. Store in airtight containers after opening to keep fresh and prevent pests.

Vinegar. Keep apple cider, red wine, rice, or balsamic vinegars on hand for homemade salad dressings and marinades.



SUB IT IN

TEMPTED TO SKIP OVER A RECIPE BECAUSE OF ONE INGREDIENT? JUST USE SOMETHING ELSE!

Your recipe may call for a food that is too pricey, hard to find, or that you simply don't care for. Try subbing in another. Substitutions may be different for raw or cooked foods, so figure out how it's used in your recipe. Then try the tips in the charts below.

Instead of...	If using raw, sub in...	If using cooked, sub in...
FRUIT		
Berries (blueberries, blackberries, strawberries, and raspberries)	Cherries, bananas, grapes, stone fruit	Cherries, grapes, stone fruit
Grapes	Cherries, berries, bananas	Cherries, berries
Stone fruit (peaches, plums, nectarines, and apricots)	Bananas, berries	Grapes, apples, pears
VEGGIES		
Broccoli	Cauliflower	Cauliflower, spinach, dark leafy greens
Carrots	Beets, celery root, summer squash, celery	Root vegetables, summer squash, celery
Dark leafy greens (kale, chard, collards, turnip, beet, and mustard greens)	Spinach, lettuce, cabbage	Spinach, broccoli, cabbage
Eggplant	—	Zucchini, yellow squash, sweet peppers
Mushrooms	Summer squash	Snow peas, sugar snap peas, summer squash
Potatoes	—	Sweet potato, root vegetables, carrots
Root vegetables (turnips, beets, rutabaga, celery root)	Sweet potatoes, carrots	Sweet potatoes, winter squash, carrots, parsnips
Spinach	Lettuce	Dark leafy greens, broccoli, cabbage
Summer squash (zucchini, yellow squash)	Sweet peppers, carrots	Eggplant, sweet peppers
Sweet potatoes	Cabbage, root vegetables, carrots	Root vegetables, carrots, winter squash, parsnips
Winter squash	—	Sweet potatoes, root vegetables, parsnips, carrots



YOU CAN ALSO SUBSTITUTE FOODS WITHIN A CATEGORY. FOR INSTANCE, REPLACE KALE WITH COLLARDS OR ANY OTHER DARK LEAFY GREEN.

The following substitutions will work whether using raw or cooked foods.

Instead of...	Try this instead!
FRUIT	
Apples	Stone fruit, pears
Bananas	Berries
Grapefruit	Oranges
Lemons	Limes, oranges, grapefruit
Limes	Lemons, oranges, grapefruit
Oranges	Grapefruit
Pears	Stone fruit, apples
VEGGIES	
Celery	Carrots, celery root
Edamame (soy beans)	Peas, cooked beans
Green Onions	Onions, sweet peppers
Hot peppers	Sweet peppers, crushed red chili peppers (to taste)
Onions	Sweet peppers, green onions
Sweet peppers	Tomatoes
Tomatoes	Sweet peppers

FREEZING FRUITS AND VEGGIES

BUY FRUITS AND VEGGIES IN BULK WHEN THEY ARE IN SEASON AND THE PRICE IS GOOD. FREEZE THE EXTRAS TO USE ANOTHER TIME.



To freeze fruits and veggies, follow these simple steps:

1. Rinse produce. Pat dry.
2. Prep as directed in the chart on page 17.
3. If freezing vegetables, blanch (briefly cook in boiling water) for the amount of time shown in the chart. Using a slotted spoon, transfer boiled veggies to a bowl of ice water right away. Drain well and pat dry.
4. Place produce in a single layer on a baking sheet and freeze.
5. Transfer frozen produce to a large freezer-safe bag or other airtight container.



MOST PRODUCE MAINTAINS ITS QUALITY WHEN FROZEN UP TO ABOUT 6 MONTHS (FOR FRUITS) OR 12 MONTHS (FOR VEGGIES).

BLANCHING SLOWS THE LOSS OF FLAVOR, COLOR, TEXTURE, AND NUTRIENTS DURING FREEZING. VEGGIES FROZEN WITHOUT BLANCHING ARE SAFE TO EAT, BUT THEY MAY NOT MAINTAIN THEIR QUALITY FOR AS LONG.

IF YOU'RE PRESSED FOR TIME, HEARTY VEGGIES CAN BE FROZEN WITHOUT BLANCHING, BUT YOU MAY WANT TO USE THEM UP MORE QUICKLY THAN BLANCHED FROZEN VEGGIES. TRY BROCCOLI, CARROTS, CORN, OR SUMMER OR WINTER SQUASH.

Fruit or Vegetable	Prep Steps	Blanching Time
Bell peppers	Cut out stem and remove seeds. Cut into ½-inch pieces.	2-3 minutes
Blackberries, blueberries, and raspberries	Remove any stems.	Not needed
Broccoli and cauliflower	Cut into 1- to 1½-inch florets	3 minutes
Carrots	Peel and cut into 1/4-inch slices	2 minutes
Cherries	Remove stems and pit.	Not needed
Cooking greens (e.g., spinach, collards, kale, Swiss chard)	Remove any tough stems and ribs. Chop.	2-3 minutes
Corn	Remove husks and cut corn off the cob.	2 minutes
Green beans	Trim stem ends.	3 minutes
Mangoes	Cut off skin. Cut fruit off of pit. Cut into 1-inch pieces.	Not needed
Nectarines, peaches, and plums	Remove pit and cut into sixths.	Not needed
Peas	For edible pods, remove tough stems. If using shelling peas, remove from pod.	1-2 minutes
Strawberries	Remove stem and hull. Cut large berries in half.	Not needed
Summer squash	Cut into ½-inch slices.	2-3 minutes
Tomatoes	Remove core.	Not needed
Winter squash	Cut in half. Remove seeds and stringy membrane.	Instead of blanching, place cut-side down on a baking sheet coated with non-stick cooking spray. Bake at 400°F until tender, 35-50 minutes. Let cool. Scoop squash into a bowl, removing skin. Mash with a fork. Cool completely before freezing.

COMPARE PRICES

USE UNIT PRICES TO FIND THE BEST BUY.

DID YOU KNOW?
 GAS PRICES ARE ACTUALLY UNIT PRICES! GAS IS LISTED AS PRICE PER GALLON. UNIT PRICES FOR FOOD ARE OFTEN LISTED AS PRICE PER OUNCE OR PRICE PER POUND.

Look for the unit price right on the shelf tag. It will be listed separately from the retail price (the price you pay).

Unit price
 The price per unit (e.g., price per pound, price per ounce).

40 oz. Brand B Peanut Butter

UNIT PRICE	RETAIL PRICE
\$0.10 per oz.	\$3.99

Retail price
 Your total cost for the item.

If your store does not list the unit price, you can find it yourself. You just need two numbers: the retail price and the number of units the food is sold in (like pounds or ounces).

Number of units

15 oz. Brand A Peanut Butter

You Pay **\$1.99**

Retail price

To find the unit price, divide the retail price by the number of units. In this example:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Unit price} &= \frac{\text{Retail price}}{\text{Number of units}} \\ &= \frac{\$1.99}{15 \text{ oz.}} = \$0.13 \text{ per ounce} \end{aligned}$$



Sometimes the units of the foods you wish to compare are different. In this case, you'll need to find a common unit before you find the unit price.

WHEN COMPARING UNIT PRICES,
IT HELPS TO KNOW THAT

1 POUND = 16 OUNCES

Units in pounds

Food A: 5 lbs. Whole Carrots

UNIT PRICE	RETAIL PRICE
per oz.	\$3.49



Units in ounces

Food B: 10 oz. Shredded Carrots

UNIT PRICE	RETAIL PRICE
per oz.	\$1.99



In this example, Food A can also be written as 80 ounces of carrots. Now find the unit price of each food. Circle the one with the lowest unit price! Check your answer below.

**5 POUNDS
X 16 OUNCES PER POUND
= 80 OUNCES**

$$\text{Unit price of Food A} = \frac{\$}{80 \text{ oz.}} = \$\underline{\quad}.\underline{\quad} \text{ per ounce}$$

$$\text{Unit price of Food B} = \frac{\$}{10 \text{ oz.}} = \$\underline{\quad}.\underline{\quad} \text{ per ounce}$$

USE UNIT PRICES TO COMPARE:

- The same food in different form (like whole carrots and baby carrots)
- Foods in a similar category or food group (like a pound of zucchini and a pound of asparagus)
- Foods in different size containers (like a half-gallon and whole gallon of milk)
- Different brands of the same food (like name-brand or store-brand cereal)

Answers: Food A = \$0.04 per ounce, Food B = \$0.20 per ounce

BEAN BASICS

DRIED BEANS ARE PACKED WITH NUTRIENTS, LOW COST, AND EASY TO PREPARE.

1. Clean

- Before soaking, sort through dried beans, peas, or lentils.
- Throw out any that are discolored or shriveled.

2. Soak

To soak quickly:

- Fill a pot with water. Add beans. Bring to a boil.
- Boil beans for 5 minutes. Turn the heat off. Cover, and let sit for one hour.
- Drain the soaking water. Rinse the beans.

To soak overnight:

- Fill a bowl with 3 cups cold water per 1 cup beans.
- Soak beans for 8 to 12 hours at room temperature.
- Drain the soaking water. Rinse the beans.



3. Cook

- Add enough water to cover dry beans, peas, or lentils by two inches.
- Simmer the beans for 30 minutes to 2 hours, until cooked. You may need to add water to keep beans from drying out.
- Beans, peas, and lentils are done when they are easy to break open with a fork.

4. Store

- Use right away. Or, store in refrigerator or freezer.
- When you are ready to use frozen beans, defrost and prepare like canned beans.

Bean Cooking Times

Use 1 cup of dried beans to make about 3 cups cooked.	Use this much water.*	Cook for this amount of time.
Black beans	3 cups	About 2 hours
Blackeyed peas, cowpeas	2½ cups	½ hour
Great northern beans	2½ cups	1 to 1½ hours
Kidney beans	3 cups	About 2 hours
Lentils (do not soak)	2½ cups	½ hour
Lima beans	2½ cups	45 minutes to 1 hour
Navy or pea beans	3 cups	1½ to 2 hours
Pink or pinto beans	3 cups	2 hours

*At high altitudes (above 3,500 feet), dried beans take more time to rehydrate and cook.

SNACKS IN A SNAP

LET KIDS HELP YOU
MAKE TASTY SNACKS
THAT WILL POWER
THEM THROUGH
THE DAY.

Avocado Crunch

Let children mash 1 ripe avocado in a bowl. Add juice from half a lemon, 2 teaspoons of sunflower seeds, and a pinch of salt. Spread over Cucumber Sammies (right). Or, serve with vegetable slices or whole wheat crackers.



Baked Apples

Core apples. Place in a microwave-safe dish. Each child can fill their apple with about ½ teaspoon of butter, brown sugar, and cinnamon. Add a few raisins, if desired. Cook for about 6 minutes in the microwave. Let cool. Serve with toasted whole wheat pita wedges dusted with cinnamon.



Banana Crunch

Ask for help mashing one large, very ripe banana in a bowl. Add ¼ to ½ cup of granola, a dash of cinnamon, and mix. Spread onto thin wafers or graham crackers.

Cucumber Sammies

Cut cucumbers into ½-inch slices. Help children top with egg salad, tuna salad, Avocado Crunch (left), or turkey and cheese. Cover with another cucumber slice.

* Omit honey if serving to children under 12 months of age.

Roasted Vegetables

Preheat oven to 375°F. Wash and cut several types of root veggies (beets, carrots, parsnips, sweet potatoes, turnips, etc.) lengthwise, into “fingers.” Toss in a large bowl with 2 Tablespoons of olive or canola oil, ½ teaspoon of salt, and ½ teaspoon of pepper. Place in a single layer on a baking sheet. Roast for 35-45 minutes, until tender. Serve over brown rice.



Kabobs

Cube different cheeses and slice a mixture of fruits. Invite children to make snack kabobs on coffee stirrer “skewers” or pretzel sticks.

Seasonal Fruit Salad

Let children help you wash and peel fruits that are in season. Cut into bite-size pieces. Combine in a large bowl. Squeeze the juice from half a lime over the fruit. Drizzle with a Tablespoon of honey* if you like. Serve family-style with graham crackers.



Smoothie

Have children help add ingredients to a blender. Use 6 ounces low-fat milk, ½ cup of frozen fruit, and 1 Tablespoon of honey* if you like. Let little fingers press buttons to blend well. Pour and serve with whole oat granola bars.



*Honey should NOT be given to children under 12 months old.

Family Fitness Fun

Get the whole family moving and having fun together.

Exercise is great for kids:

- Helps build strong bones and muscles
- Improves sleeping patterns
- Helps prevent weight gain and disease later in life
- Allows kids to let out their energy and have fun!

Choose activities that everyone can do:

- Take a family walk after dinner, even if it's just around the block with young kids.
- Play active games together, such as Tag, Duck-Duck-Goose, Hide and Seek, and Ring Around the Rosy.
- Make learning time more active:
 - Play Follow the Leader while calling out parts of the body.
 - Teach children active learning songs like “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes.”
 - Act out simple lessons and have your child follow you. Show how the sun rises, a rabbit hops, or a train chugs down the track.
- Build a snowman together in the winter.
- Turn some music on and have a family dance contest.
- Blow bubbles and run around trying to pop them.
- Try an exercise TV show or DVD, and have the kids join you.

