

## Five Easy Ways to Save Money on Food Bills

Everybody loves their food, and even in tough economic times like these, nobody wants to miss out on their favorite dishes. While it can be challenging to save money while still eating food that you love, a few simple ideas can make a real difference to how far you can stretch your budget. Saving money on food can be achieved through a combination of applying a traditional do it yourself (DIY) attitude to food growing and preparation, while also taking advantage of the new global food marketplace.

### 1. Do It Yourself Breakfast.

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day, and there are many ways to save money at the breakfast table while also coming up with some healthy and tasty treats.

- Instant oatmeal can be easily made by blending normal budget oats and adding boiling water.
- Deluxe muesli that sells for high prices in supermarkets can be made easily at home, by buying the individual grain and dried fruit components, toasting some of them, and combining them together yourself.
- Fresh fruit makes a fantastic breakfast, and if you buy fruit that is local and in season, it can be purchased very cheaply indeed.
- Many people enjoy yogurt for breakfast, and it is very easy to make your own and add fruit to taste. You can make it yourself from scratch or buy a yogurt making kit - either way is much cheaper and healthier than buying pre-packaged yogurt products.
- Healthy and yummy shakes and smoothies can be made by mixing fruit, ice, and even some of your new freshly made yogurt.

### 2. Don't Forget Your Leftovers.

Many people throw away their leftovers without a second thought, however, they can often be eaten again the next day. If you are a little creative, you can even rework your leftovers and make brand new dishes from them.

- Add another course to make an old dish seem new again. The leftovers from last night will seem much more interesting with a freshly made soup or a nice chocolate cake to sit them next to.
- Rework your leftovers by adding rice, bread, or pasta to meals that did not originally contain them. While this will make your leftovers go much further, it is important to mix the right things together. Leftover stews work well with bread or rice, leftover vegetables go well with rice or pasta and a new sauce, and leftover meats can be made into a delicious curry or stir fry.
- Turn your leftovers into sandwiches for the next day. Before you try it, you will never know just how delicious the dinner from last night can be as a deluxe sandwich. Meats and vegetables can be combined with a sauce or some cheese to make a fantastic sandwich experience.
- A chicken once bought can be used at least twice - the meat in a main meal, and the bones as the stock in a soup or curry dish.

### 3. Saving While Your Snacking.

People spend a lot of money on junk snack food, whether for themselves or for their kids. There are however, many other options available for healthy and delicious snacks that will not break the bank.

- Crackers and other savoury biscuits can be covered with all sorts of toppings, are generally cheaper than chips, and will satisfy you and your kids much more than a lot of processed snack food.
- Popcorn is dirt cheap and kids love it. Popcorn can be seasoned with salt or icing sugar for two very different tasty treats.
- Prepared vegetables can be dipped in cream cheese, hummus, and even peanut butter, and combined with cheese and nuts for a healthy and tasty snack.
- Fresh fruit cannot be beaten as a snack food, and once again, buying local and in season is the key to keeping the prices down.

#### **4. Bulk Cooking Instead of Fast Food.**

By cooking meals in bulk and freezing them at home, you can eat good quality cheap food even when you are pushed for time in the kitchen. While fresh food is always the best, bulk cooking is a healthy alternative for those times when you would otherwise end up at the local fast food outlet.

- Whatever you are cooking, just cook more of it. By doubling or tripling your dinner output and freezing it for later, you are much less likely to waste money on fast food.
- Don't forget to vary your meals. While bulk cooking is a great way to save money, you will not be very popular with your family if you serve up the same meal a few nights in a row.
- Bulk food meals can often be combined with fresh bread, a new soup, or a freshly made dessert, making them a little different each time and giving them a fresh appeal.

#### **5. Grow (and Make) Your Own.**

There is no better way to get cheaper and better quality produce than to grow it yourself. If you do not have a large yard, or even if you are living in an apartment - there are still ways to become more self sufficient in your kitchen.

- Grow your own sprouts. Sprouting is a very healthy and easy activity that anyone can do extremely cheaply on their kitchen windowsill.
- Pot some herbs. Growing herbs is another activity you can do which requires hardly any space at all, with many people successfully growing their favourite varieties on their balconies or in their home kitchens.
- Make your own bread. Bread makers can be purchased quite cheaply these days, and while they are very easy to use, they are not absolutely necessary. With a good recipe book and a working oven, anyone is capable of producing delicious bread at a very low cost.
- Start a garden - now. With even a tiny amount of outdoor space, you can start a vegetable garden and produce the freshest and most inexpensive produce possible.

As you can see from these five easy to implement money saving solutions, you can definitely beat the recession when it comes to food. With a little time and energy, there are a number of things you can do that will make a big difference to your food budget. Each of these ideas can save you quite a lot of money over time, and using a combination of all five, you can be living cheaper and healthier than you ever have before.