

# Stretch Your Food \$\$\$

## Saving money starts at home.

**Buy seasonal produce.** Fresh fruits and vegetables are generally less expensive when they are being grown locally.

**Plan the use of leftovers.** Thrown away food is money lost.

**Make a shopping list.** Keep an ongoing list and jot down items as your supply gets low.

Look over the recipes you plan to use. Be sure you have the necessary ingredients. Check to see what you have on hand. Organize your list according to the store layout. This will save you time and reduce the temptation to buy foods that are not on your list.

**Check newspaper and social media ads for special sales.** Compare advertised prices among stores to find where you can save the most on your entire shopping list.

**Clip coupons.** You can save money if the item is one you would normally buy and if the item is less expensive than similar brands.

## Shopping tips

- 1. Eat before you shop.** Everything looks good when you're hungry.
- 2. Shop alone when possible.** When family members tag along, you tend to buy more.
- 3. Stick to the shopping list.** Sale items are always tempting, but don't buy them unless you need them.
- 4. Look at the top and bottom shelves when shopping.** Store brands and best buys are often placed away from eye level.
- 5. Limit pre-packaged or pre-prepped foods.** You pay more for the convenience.
- 6. Compare national brand and store brand products.** Read the labels carefully to be sure nutritional content is comparable.

**Be a savvy shopper:** Most coupons offered by stores or manufacturers are for more expensive, highly processed foods. Don't use a coupon to buy a food that your family doesn't need or that costs more than a store brand.

7. **Ask for a rain check.** If a specially priced item is sold out, a rain check allows you to purchase the item at the sale price later.
8. **Buy only amounts you can store and use.** Buying in bulk may be less expensive per serving, but it only saves you money if you can use the product before it spoils.



## Compare unit prices

This is the per-unit measure (the number of cents per ounce or per gram), and is usually posted on the shelf below the product. The unit price helps you compare and shop for the best deal.

**Take the total cost of the item and divide it by the weight of the item (in ounces).**

| UNIT PRICE                 | RETAIL PRICE  |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| <b>\$0.70</b><br>PER POUND | <b>\$3.49</b> |
| Whole Carrots (5 lb.)      |               |

| UNIT PRICE                 | RETAIL PRICE  |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| <b>\$1.99</b><br>PER POUND | <b>\$1.99</b> |
| Baby Carrots (1 lb.)       |               |

### Compare two cans of tomatoes:

29-ounce can for \$1.49 vs. 15-ounce can for \$0.79

(Total cost) \_\_\_\_\_ / (Total oz.) \_\_\_\_\_ = (Unit price) \_\_\_\_\_

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### Compare two different brands of beans:

Store brand 15-ounce can for \$0.69 vs. National brand 15-ounce can for \$0.89

(Total cost) \_\_\_\_\_ / (Total oz.) \_\_\_\_\_ = (Unit price) \_\_\_\_\_

(Total cost) \_\_\_\_\_ / (Total oz.) \_\_\_\_\_ = (Unit price) \_\_\_\_\_

### Compare two different forms of cheese:

16-ounce block of cheese for \$3.49 vs. 16-ounce bag shredded cheese for \$4.99

(Total cost) \_\_\_\_\_ / (Total oz.) \_\_\_\_\_ = (Unit price) \_\_\_\_\_

(Total cost) \_\_\_\_\_ / (Total oz.) \_\_\_\_\_ = (Unit price) \_\_\_\_\_

Funded in part by the USDA SNAP. For more information, call MU Extension's Show Me Nutrition line at 1-888-515-0016. Need help stretching your food dollars? Contact your local resource center or go online to [mydss.mo.gov/food-assistance](http://mydss.mo.gov/food-assistance)