

Thrifty Meal Planning

How to spend \$100 for your family of four for a month

By Kolbi Ward

What if you have to REALLY cut back? This is what I would do. Notice that I don't cut out all the meat, or all the snacks, even cookies! Just because things aren't going your way doesn't mean you should have to do without all the good stuff. As a matter of fact, if things aren't going well, you might need more cookies! There is no reason to feel deprived the whole month (or months), you can still eat delicious food, the only difference is that it might not be as varied as when you have more money. That being said, remember, changing up the spices can make two dishes with the same ingredients seem way different! Whole chicken is by far the most economical meat, especially considering the stock you can easily make that will make the bean dishes feel more "meaty". Ideally, you have been slowly building up your pantry and freezer so that you could absorb a grocery budget cut without much changing at least for a month or so.

Could you spend less? Yes, but if you are in a situation where you have less than \$100 to use for groceries for your family for more than a month or two, then you could, and should seek assistance, that's what it is for.

Thrifty Meals

Name of Dish	Number of Meals Recipe Makes	Times to Make in the Month
Lentil loaf	2	1
Spaghetti	2	1
Chicken and dumplings	2	1
Chicken pot pie (9x13 pan)	2	2
Chili	2	1
Tomato and bean pasta	2	1
Chicken alfredo pasta	2	1
Potato salsa chicken	1	2
Frittata	1	1
Diced potato with chk alfredo	2	1
Baked potato with chili	1	1
Scrambled eggs and pancakes	1	1
Vegetable bean pasta	2	1
Chicken and veg pasta	2	1
White bean curry	2	1
White bean chili	2	1
Beans and Rice	2	1

Thrifty snack list

Name of Snack	HM or SB or Both	Number of Recipes Made or Packages Purchased
Tuna Salad	HM	2
Chips – tortilla	Both	3
Pretzels	SB	1
Granola	HM	3
Peanut butter	SB	1
Peanuts	SB	2
Bean dip	HM	2
Cookies	HM	2
Bread	Both	2
Bananas	SB	20
Oatmeal Packets	HM	2
Pumpkin muffins	HM	2
Raisins	SB	1
Frozen vegetables	SB	1
Saltines	Both	3

Grocery List with Approximate Prices

4.00	flour (10 lb)
1.50	baking powder
0.05	salt
3.00	shortening
2.50	milk
3.00	eggs (2 dz)
4.58	old fash oats (2)
1.50	brown sugar
5.00	olive oil
1.35	bouillon cubes
1.79	sugar
15.00	whole chicken (3/4-5 lb)
1.50	tomato sauce (2)
0.50	tomato paste
2.40	can diced tomatoes (4/14 oz)
2.00	can crushed tomatoes (2/28 oz)
1.00	carrots (2 lb)
0.79	celery (1 stalk)
1.40	onions (2 lb)
1.75	potatoes (5 lb)
2.50	bananas (20)
1.00	green bell pepper (2)
1.00	garlic
3.00	sand bread (2)
1.50	loaf bread

1.80	can chili beans (3)
0.79	can pumpkin
1.20	can tuna (2)
0.79	refried beans
2.99	frozen mix veg (32 oz)
5.00	CA blend veg (60 oz)
1.00	frozen corn
1.00	frozen peas
1.88	rice (2 lb)
1.00	lentils (1 lb)
4.00	pasta (4 lb)
1.00	spaghetti (1 lb)
6.50	dried beans (6 lb)
2.00	peanuts
1.89	peanut butter
1.19	tortilla chips
1.69	raisins
1.49	jar alfredo sauce
2.00	crackers (2 boxes)
102.82	TOTAL

Basic Meal Planning

How to spend \$200 for your family of four for a month

By Kolbi Ward

Main dishes - in no particular order and without sides listed

Snack list (some homemade, some store bought)

Name of Dish	Number of Meals Recipe Makes	Times to Make in the Month
Meatball subs	1	1
Lentil loaf	2	1
Spaghetti	2	1
Steak and potatoes	1	1
Chicken and dumplings	2	1
Chicken pot pie (9x13 pan)	2	2
Chili	2	1
Tomato and bean pasta	2	1
Chicken alfredo	2	1
Potato salsa chicken	1	2
Frittata	1	1
Salmon nuggets	1	1
Salmon	1	1
Fried shrimp	1	1
Vegetable bean pasta	2	1
Chicken and veg pasta	2	1
Chicken curry	2	1
White bean chicken chili	2	1
Jambalaya	2	1

Name of Snack	HM or SB or Both	Number of Recipes Made or Packages Purchased
Hummus	Both	1 SB or 2 HM
Tuna Salad	HM	2
Chips – pita, tortilla	Both	3
Pretzels	SB	1
Granola	HM	3
Peanut butter	SB	1
Trail mix	HM	2
Cereal	SB	2
Bean dip	HM	2
Cookies	HM	2
Bread/biscuits	Both	3
Fruit	Fresh & dried	100
Oatmeal Packets	HM	2
Pumpkin muffins	HM	2
Yogurt	SB	1
Frozen vegetables	SB	1
Frozen fruit	SB	1
Crackers	Both	6

Grocery list with approximate prices

2.00	flour
1.50	baking powder
0.05	salt
3.00	shortening
2.50	milk
3.00	eggs (2 dz)
4.58	old fash oats (2)
1.00	sour cream
8.00	olive oil
1.35	bouillon cubes
1.79	yogurt
1.50	brown sugar
1.79	sugar
2.50	honey
2.00	seasonings
4.69	steak (12 oz)
3.50	ground beef (1 lb)
7.99	salmon (8 filets)
4.99	med. shrimp (1 lb)
3.00	andouille sausage
12.00	whole chicken (2/4-5 lb)
4.00	chick thighs(6 thighs)
1.50	loaf bread
2.19	hoagies
1.50	sand bread
2.99	frozen mix veg (32 oz)
5.00	frozen CA blend veg
4.00	frozen juice (2)
2.49	frozen strawberries
1.00	frozen corn
1.00	frozen peas
5.00	pasta (5 lb)
1.00	spaghetti (1 lb)
1.88	rice (5 cups)
1.00	lentils (1 lb)
1.89	pretzels

4.00	cashews
4.00	peanuts
1.89	peanut butter
3.99	hummus
3.78	raisins
2.00	mixed dried berries
1.19	tortilla chips
1.99	pita chips
10.00	coffee
1.99	shredded wheat
1.69	cheerios
1.99	straw preserves
1.49	jar alfredo sauce
7.00	crackers (5 boxes)
1.00	carrots (2 lb)
0.79	celery (1 stalk)
1.40	onions (2 lb)
1.75	potatoes (5 lb)
2.59	mini bell peppers
0.50	green bell pepper
8.00	apples (20)
4.99	mandarin oranges (1 box)
3.00	bananas (20)
0.89	cilantro
1.99	spring greens
1.00	garlic
2.36	can beans (4)
1.80	can chili beans (3)
0.79	can pumpkin
1.20	can tuna (2)
0.79	refried beans
0.50	can black olives
0.50	tomato paste
2.40	can diced tomatoes (4/14 oz)
2.00	can crushed tomatoes (2/28 oz)
1.50	tomato sauce (2)
197.91	TOTAL

