



Eating out of a college student's wallet

Living in your own apartment? Buying your own food? Making your own meals? Buying food can drain your funds if you aren't sure how to find the best deals while still satisfying your belly and eating healthy. Read on for some helpful hints on how to eat well, be happy at meals and stay within a budget.

- Contact the supermarket you frequent and request a circular of their sales sent to your door. This will help you to identify the best day to go grocery shopping for the foods you like that are on sale. This does involve planning ahead, but it also involves saving some cash!
- DO NOT GROCERY SHOP HUNGRY!** You'll fill your basket with food that you crave just because your stomach is crying out for anything. You'll probably over-buy too and this diminishes funds.
- Ask yourself periodically when shopping, "Do I really need this?" If you're not focused on a shopping list you can end up spending extra money.
- Plan ahead! Having food handy in the refrigerator and freezer will reduce the risk of calling out for pizza in a mad hunger frenzy. Think of your schedule for the week and what you'd like to eat. This gives you a menu and a shopping list too. Stick to it.
- Look at the store brands. Some supermarket brands are just as good and less expensive than name brand company products.
- Unit prices (price per pound, for example) allow you to compare product prices on an equal basis especially when package sizes can be quite different between brands. Smaller package size prices can be deceptive since they're usually more per unit than a larger size of the same product. If you want the most for your money and you usually buy a particular product, you're better off buying the larger size and saving money in the long run.
- Get yourself some scissors and cut out some coupons. It keeps getting cheaper and cheaper if a product is on sale and you have a coupon too!
- One day-old baked goods are good and less money so check them out as an option to save money.
- Frozen, cut vegetables are less expensive than fresh, they're already washed and pre-cut, you can portion out what you need at a meal and they take only a couple minutes to heat up. When it comes to eating more vegetables, you couldn't ask for more of a convenience!
- Eat your leftovers! You put foil on it and put it back in the fridge for a reason- to eat later. So do this. Make a pot of American Chop Suey and have it for a meal for lunch or dinner over the next few days. Put some portions in plastic bags for the freezer for a meal in the future. It will save you a buck.
- Most refrigerators come with a freezer, so use it! Freezing cooked chicken legs and tomato sauces can save time and money. If you find a deal on your favorite cut of meat, buy a little extra and freeze it or freeze portions of a yummy dish for a rainy day, or any day! When thawing food your counter top doesn't count; put food in the refrigerator to thaw a day or two before you'd like to eat it or use a microwave to thaw and cook at the same time.

Smart Eating Plan

To avoid taking the time each week to buy food, prepare meals and clean up, purchase one of UNH Dining's [meal plan](#) options. You're sure to find a plan that suits your individual needs. See commuter meal plan options at www.unh.edu/dining. Also a [Cat's Cache](#) debit account, by itself or with a meal plan, is a great campus convenience.

For more information or to speak with the dietitian, call 603-862-2583 or email at rochelle.litalien@unh.edu.

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