

Budget-friendly tips

1. Batch cook budget-friendly recipes

If you can, cook in bulk – it's one of the simplest and most efficient ways to save money in the kitchen. Whether you're cooking for yourself or the whole family, preparing and freezing multiple meals in advance will help you cut down on food waste and save time in the long run.



2. Freeze more

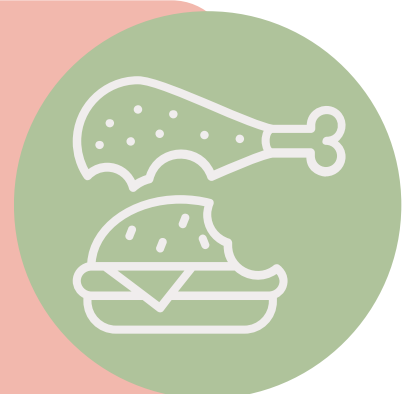
When you're wanting to save money and waste less, your freezer is your best friend. It can also help you save time, energy and stress if you learn how to make the most of it. Whether it's storing delicious batch-cook meals, ready to use whenever you need them, fruit and veggies that are on-the-turn for future soups/smoothies, or those essential bags of frozen veg (no broccolis slowly going off in the fridge), ready to pop into whatever recipe needs a veggie boost, the freezer is there for you!



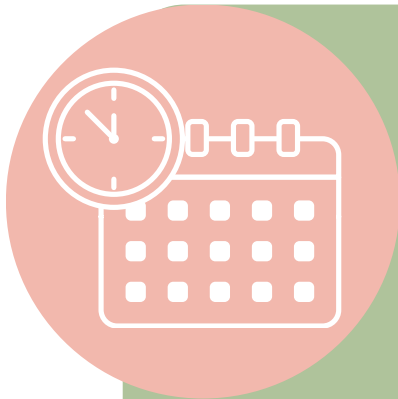
3. Love your leftovers

Getting into the habit of freezing the leftovers can be a lifesaver on busy weekdays for instant midweek meals.

You can learn how to store them properly and learn to reheat them so they taste great the next day.



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4. Look at best-before and use-by dates

A use-by date on food is about safety. This is the most important date to remember. Never eat food after the use-by date, even if it looks and smells ok, as it could make you very ill.

The best before date, sometimes shown as BBE (best before end), is about quality and not safety. After the best before date listed on a product, the food will be safe to eat but may not be at its best.

5. Cook with tinned food

Cooking with cans can seriously deliver on the flavour front, without breaking the bank. Look at simple ways to make popular tinned foods such as beans, tuna and tomatoes go that extra mile.



6. Big up legumes

Legumes (beans and pulses) are not only affordable, they're also super-versatile and a source of protein and fibre. Lentils, black beans, kidney beans, butter beans, chickpeas and even peanuts are all classed as legumes, and are available in jarred, tinned or dried form.



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7. Use your store cupboard to maximise flavour

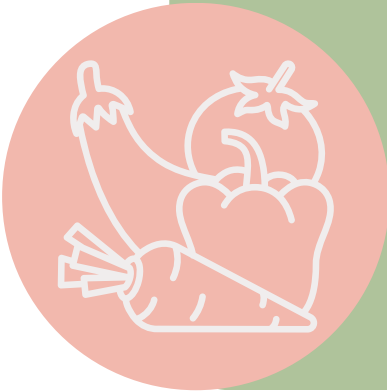
Give your meals a boost by investing in a couple of flavour bombs. From dried herbs and spices to jarred pastes and preserves, get the most out of your cooking with store-cupboard ingredients you'll use again and again.



8. Grow your own

One of life's simplest pleasures, growing your own fruit and veg is a great way to cut down on your food bill.

If you've got a garden, patio or sunny windowsill to work with, there's plenty of potential for home-grown food. Learn how to grow your own chillies and herbs, lettuce, tomatoes and rhubarb, or how to make cute cress heads with kids.



9. Get organised

Always check the fridge and store cupboard before you go shopping – not only will it stop you doubling up on things, but you can plan meals by buying the additional ingredients that will go with what you already have. Sounds simple, but it really does make a difference!



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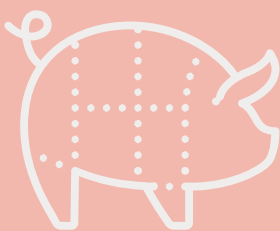
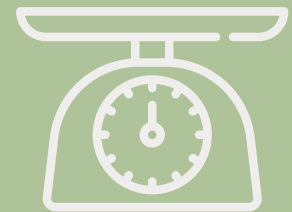
10. Make a weekly meal plan

First up, set yourself a realistic grocery shopping budget. Then plan your week's meals and create a shopping list based on that – this way, you'll only buy what you need. It also helps prevent those inevitable impulse buys that can add up.

You can also keep costs low by planning your meals around budget-friendly ingredients. If you need inspiration, there are plenty of budget-friendly recipes out there. Just search for "5-ingredient or less" recipes on the Internet. This means less spending, less planning and minimal food waste!

11. Shop smart

Kilo for kilo, buying a whole chicken and portioning it up is much cheaper than buying chicken breasts. A complete bird goes much further too; leftovers from a roast chicken can be used for a pasta bake, risotto or soup. Similarly, pick up a whole side of salmon when it goes on offer in the supermarket, then chop it up into fillets or chunks and freeze it. It's much cheaper than buying individual packs of fillets.



12. Cheaper cuts of meat

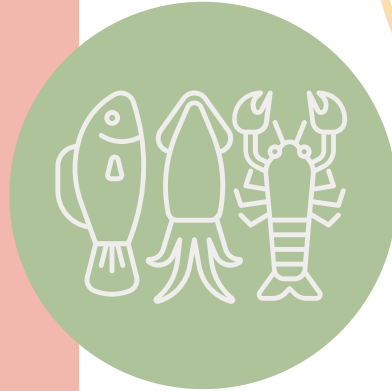
Meat can be pricey, but you can choose cheaper cuts that will offer you better value for money while still packing in plenty of flavour. The next time you're at the supermarket or butchers, opt for budget cuts like chicken wings, lamb shank and neck; and pork chump and cheek.

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13. Opt for different varieties of fish

Some types of fish are cheaper than others – so how about trying something new? Mussels and sardines are affordable and super-easy to cook with.

Have a go at making recipes like fish lasagna, creamy mussels spaghetti, or grilled sardine with potatoes.



14. Go big

If you regularly buy certain ingredients, buying in bulk is often better value and means you save money in the long run. For example, buying big bags of rice and pasta works out cheaper per kilo. You could buy bigger packs of dried chickpeas and beans instead of tins, and if you cook with lots of spices, buy bigger packs instead of the smaller jars.



15. Shop seasonally

Eating seasonally is a great way to keep your diet varied, and it can save you a bit of money too, as fruit and veg in season are often cheaper than those grown out of season. Check out online seasonal grown produce in your country to make the most of the beautiful fruit and veg available.



Weekly Meal Plan

	BREAKFAST	LUNCH	DINNER	SNACKS
MONDAY				
TUESDAY				
WEDNESDAY				
THURSDAY				
FRIDAY				
SATURDAY				
SUNDAY				



Sho

Pantry Essentials

Check List

Protein

- ☐ Fresh meat/poultry
- ☐ Processed meats
- ☐ Pre-cooked & chilled chicken, pork, beef, crab or prawns
- ☐ Frozen meat/poultry, i.e. chicken strips, nuggets, burgers...
- ☐ Fresh, smoked, frozen or tinned fish & other seafood
- ☐ Eggs
- ☐ Tinned or dried lentils, chickpeas, beans
- ☐ Baked beans
- ☐ Tofu, tempeh, seitan, Quorn

Grains

- ☐ Noodles
- ☐ Pasta
- ☐ Potato
- ☐ Rice
- ☐ Oats
- ☐ Couscous
- ☐ Bread, pitta
- ☐ Barley
- ☐ Bulgur
- ☐ Quinoa
- ☐ Freekeh
- ☐ Polenta
- ☐ Muesli or cereal
- ☐ Other grain

Fruits and veg

(Fresh, frozen or canned)

- ☐ Starchy vegetables such as: broccoli, cabbage, carrot or green beans
- ☐ Non-starchy vegetables such as Butternut squash, potatoes, parsnips or rutabaga
- ☐ Fruits

Fats and oils

- ☐ Oils
- ☐ Butter/Margarine/Ghee
- ☐ Avocado
- ☐ Nuts / Nut butter
- ☐ Coconut milk/cream/oil
- ☐ Dark chocolate
- ☐ Salad dressings, pesto...
- ☐ Olives

Other store-cupboard ingredients

- ☐ Spices
- ☐ Dried herbs
- ☐ Pickles, chutneys & preserves
- ☐ Curry pastes
- ☐ Miso paste
- ☐ Soy sauce
- ☐ Tahini
- ☐ Dried mushrooms
- ☐ Canned tomatoes
- ☐ Mustard, Worcestershire, Teriyaki, HP sauce, etc.