

# COOKING ON A BUDGET



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# ARE THERE WAYS TO SAVE MONEY IN THE KITCHEN?

We're all facing daily challenges with the increase in food and fuel prices. It can often be a struggle to think of ways to make tasty, nutritious and affordable meals for you and your family.

This is not a one-size-fits-all guide; some things will be more relevant than others. We want to help you and your family find creative ways that might eek that little bit extra out of your food and fuel budget.

## FUELLING YOUR KITCHEN

### FRIDGE & FREEZER

Open and close your fridge & freezer doors as little as possible to use less fuel.

Fill up your freezer to make it more efficient.

Only put cooled food in your fridge to not overwork it.

Have meals stored in the freezer, defrost in the fridge overnight and reheat in the microwave.

It's best to avoid disconnecting your fridge and freezer to save money, as this can make food unsafe to eat.





## HOB

Using a lid on pans keeps in the heat, speeds up cooking time and reduces kitchen condensation.

Use the right-sized pan on the right-sized hob. Small pans on big rings waste heat and big pans on small rings can damage both the pan and hob.

A stackable steamer can reduce the number of rings you need.

## KETTLE

Use the right amount of water you need or store boiled water in a flask to use later.

Boiling water in the kettle to use on the hob can be cheaper than boiling cold water on the hob.

Using a kettle and a heatproof ziplock bag you can make an omelette or heat soup.



## OVEN

Try and maximise oven use by planning ahead and filling space. When roasting veg, baking or when you make your main meal, batch cooking can help you save energy.



# ALTERNATIVE COOKING METHODS

Some kitchen gadgets can be expensive to buy, so the cost savings of using them might not work out.



**Microwaves cook things really well and are very cheap to run.**

Great for: Vegetables, fish, pasta, rice, bacon, eggs



**An Air Fryer is cheaper to run than an oven and offers a healthier way to fry food.**

Great for: Chips, meats, vegetables



**Slow Cookers are cheap to run and use less electricity than a conventional light bulb**

Great for: Slow stews & casseroles, curries, cheaper cuts of meat



**Pressure cookers reduce cooking time and maximise nutrition in foods.**

Great for: Speedy stews & casseroles, cheaper cuts of meat, rice, beans & pulses

## Stocking your kitchen

Check out your local affordable food project to help stock up on food items. By doing this, you're helping stop good-quality food from going to waste.

Having store cupboard essentials such as curry powder, chilli powder, cumin, coriander, paprika and stock cubes is a handy way to boost some flavour into your dishes.





## Shop Smart

Supermarkets reduce prices on products close to their sell-by date. This can be a great way to pick up bargains. Before you buy a bargain, think about how you will use and store them.

Remember, the **best before** dates are about food quality and eating should be safe after this date. **Use-by** dates are for food **safety** and should be followed.

Be wary of multibuy offers. Although tempting, they often make you spend more and might go to waste. Don't buy on impulse. Keep to your list. Buying your groceries online is a great way to save money and stay on budget.

## Eat well for less swaps



Chicken thighs for  
chicken breasts



Lentils or beans for  
beef mince



Homemade pasta  
sauce for jars of sauce



Porridge oats  
for cereal



Frozen vegetables  
for fresh



Cook from scratch  
for ready meals



Canned fish in  
water for fresh fish



Supermarkets own brands  
for big brands



## MENU PLANNING

Planning your meals can be a handy way to maximise your time and fuel use. You could spend one day as your cooking day to batch cook and fill your freezer or prepare for the week.

**Checkout these websites for inspiration:**

[cookingonabootstrap.com](http://cookingonabootstrap.com)

[fyf20quid.co.uk](http://fyf20quid.co.uk)

[bbcgoodfood.com](http://bbcgoodfood.com)



## FOR THE SAVVY SHOPPER

Download apps such as **Too Good To Go** and **Olio**



Club together with neighbours to buy wholesale items in bulk.

Websites such as **Approved Food** offer bulk purchases close to the best-before date, but be wary of the tempting offers on unhealthy snacks and drinks of poor nutritional value.

[approvedfood.co.uk](http://approvedfood.co.uk)

## SAVE WASTE & SAVE MONEY

Any good food in the bin is money going down the drain.

Work leftovers into your next meals or planning your portions can help you get the amounts right. Using your hands is an easy way to guess. Just adjust the hand for the person eating.





## GROW YOUR OWN

The benefits of growing your own fruit and veg are great, from boosting your diet to improving your mental well-being. A great way to start might be growing herbs on your windowsill or volunteering at a local community project.



## FOOD BENEFITS

Claim your Healthy Start Card with £4.25 per week and vitamin drops if you receive a qualifying benefit and are 10 weeks pregnant or have parental responsibility up to 4 years old.





The Blaenau Gwent Food Partnership  
is starting a good food movement.

To find out more, visit their website  
<https://bgfoodpartnership.co.uk/>



**Visit our offices or write to us at:**

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