

The shopper who budgets food money like the average family in the United States could get a good diet at a lower cost by using a larger share of each dollar for:

- milk and milk products
 - vegetables and fruit
 - cereals and bakery products
- and less of each dollar for:
- foods in the meat group, and
 - other foods such as fats, oils, sugar, sweets, coffee, tea, and soft drinks.

Stretching food dollars in today's well-stocked markets is a challenge to most shoppers, regardless of income. You should spend enough to give your family nutritious meals they enjoy eating. But many combinations of foods—at various levels of cost—can provide the nutrients for a well-balanced diet.

FOR FURTHER READING:

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Communication, *Your Money's Worth in Foods*, G183, Washington, D.C. 20250.

_____. *Family Food Budgeting . . . for Good Meals and Good Nutrition*, G94, Washington, D.C. 20250.

_____. *Money-Saving Main Dishes*, G43, Washington, D.C. 20250.

How Much Food Should You Buy

WISE SHOPPERS buy only the amounts of food needed to feed their families. You too can learn to be a wise shopper.

This guide will help you know how many servings you can expect from a package of food and how many of those packages you will require. It will also help you compare costs of food in various forms—fresh, frozen, or canned.

The serving size for various foods defined in this guide may differ from that you customarily use. Therefore, you may first have to make adjustments to suit your family needs.

More of your food dollar is spent on

meat, poultry, and fish than on other foods. You can make that dollar go further if you know how many servings you can expect from your meat purchase.

The guide shows the number of servings obtained from various meat cuts with average amounts of fat and/or bone, cooked at moderate temperatures.

A serving of meat, poultry, or fish in this guide is the cooked lean meat that you eat—and does not include the drippings, bone, or fat you trimmed off and left on your plate. Neither does a serving of poultry or fish contain skin.

Boneless cuts of meat may be better buys than the same cuts with bone when both cost per pound and yield are compared. Roasts with bone yield $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 serving less cooked meat per pound than boneless roasts. Two pounds of beef rib roast with bone are required to obtain the same four 3-ounce servings of cooked lean as $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds of boneless rib roast.

Certain chicken parts may be a better buy than whole chickens when cost of the amounts needed is compared. For instance, for four 3-ounce servings of cooked meat, chicken wings are a better buy if three pounds cost less than a $2\frac{1}{4}$ -pound whole chicken. Chicken breasts will probably cost more for the same amount of cooked meat.

How many people will a pound of fresh vegetable or fruit serve? It varies with loss in preparation and how much the volume decreases in cooking. Keep preparation losses at a minimum by using good quality produce. The less you have to throw away the more you have to eat. The servings per pound given in this guide are based on good quality produce.

A serving of vegetable or fruit for the average person is considered in this guide to be about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup. One cup of salad greens is specified as a serving because the dressing you add to the greens will reduce the volume considerably.

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Description of food as purchased	Size of market unit	Size of serving or measure of food as used	Servings or measures per market unit	Amount-to-buy factor per serving
MEAT				
Fresh or frozen:	Pound	3 ounces cooked lean	2 to 2½	.40
Roasts, boneless				
Pork shoulder, beef rib roasts		1 cup cooked diced lean	1⅓ to 1½	.66
Fresh pork (leg, loin, and Boston butt), cured pork shoulder, cook-before-eating ham	Pound	3 ounces cooked lean	2½ to 2¾	.35
		1 cup cooked diced lean	1⅔	.60
Beef (rump, round, shoulder, sirloin), veal chuck, lamb leg and shoulder, fully cooked ham, cured Boston butt	Pound	3 ounces cooked lean	3 to 3½	.32
		1 cup cooked diced lean	1¾ to 2	.53
Beef chuck, veal leg	Pound	3 ounces cooked lean	3¾	.29
		1 cup cooked diced lean	2⅓	.49
Other cuts				
Short ribs, spareribs, lamb or pork loin chops, steaks (T-bone, porterhouse, club)	Pound	3 ounces cooked lean	2 to 2½	.51
Veal loin chops, beef or pork cubes (stew meat)	Pound	3 ounces cooked lean	2½	.40
Steaks (round, flank)	Pound	3 ounces cooked lean	3 to 3½	.34
Beef or calf liver, lamb or veal cubes (stew meat), ground meat, steaks (cubed, minute), veal cutlets	Pound	3 ounces cooked lean	3½ to 4	.30
Canned:				
Corned beef	12 ounces	3 ounces heated lean	4	.25
Ham	Pound	3 ounces heated lean	3½	.28
		1 cup heated diced lean	2	.49
POULTRY				
Fresh or frozen:				
Chicken				
Backs	Pound	3 ounces cooked meat only	1 to 1¼	.89
Wings	Pound	3 ounces cooked meat only	1¼ to 1½	.74
Drumsticks, thighs, whole	Pound	3 ounces cooked meat only	1¾ to 2	.53
		1 cup cooked diced meat	1¼	.81

Description of food as purchased	Size of market unit	Size of serving or measure of food as used	Servings or measures per market unit	Amount-to-buy factor per serving
POULTRY				
Breasts	Pound	3 ounces cooked meat only	2½	.39
Turkey				
Backs	Pound	3 ounces cooked meat only	1½ to 1¾	.61
Drumsticks, wings, whole	Pound	3 ounces cooked meat only	2 to 2¼	.51
		1 cup cooked diced meat	1⅓	.75
Necks, thighs	Pound	3 ounces cooked meat only	2¼ to 2½	.41
Breasts	Pound	3 ounces cooked meat only	2¾	.37
Boneless roasts	Pound	3 ounces cooked meat	3¾	.27
		1 cup cooked diced meat	2⅓	.43
Canned:				
Chicken or turkey, boned	6 ounces	3 ounces	2	.50
SEAFOOD				
Fresh or frozen:				
Whole fish (dressed)	Pound	3 ounces cooked flesh	1½	.69
Oysters (shucked)	Pound	3 ounces cooked oysters	2 to 2½	.47
Breaded fish (sticks, portions), clams	Pound	3 ounces cooked seafood	2½ to 3	.39
Shrimp in shell	Pound	3 ounces cooked without shell	2½ to 3	.39
Scallops, fish (unbreaded portions, fillets, cakes)	Pound	3 ounces cooked seafood	3¼ to 3½	.30
Canned:				
Mackerel	15 ounces	3 ounces, drained	4 to 4¼	.24
Salmon	16 ounces	3 ounces, drained	4¼ to 4½	.23
Tuna	6 to 7 ounces	3 ounces, drained	2	.50
VEGETABLES				
Fresh:				
Vegetables served raw				
Lettuce (head or leaf), cabbage	Head	1 cup shredded or pieces	5 to 6	.19
Carrots, celery, onions	Pound	1 cup chopped	2½	.36
Tomatoes	Pound	½ cup sliced	5½	.20
Vegetables served cooked				
Asparagus, beets, broccoli, cauliflower, onions, summer squash	Pound	½ cup cooked cut-up	3 to 3½	.30

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VEGETABLES				
Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, green beans, potatoes	Pound	½ cup cooked whole or cut up	4½ to 5	.22
Potatoes for mashing	Pound	½ cup cooked mashed	3½	.29
Collards, kale, spinach	Pound	½ cup cooked pieces	4 to 5	.23
Canned:				
Bean sprouts, beets, carrots, whole kernel corn, beans (green, kidney, lima), okra, peas, potatoes	15 to 16 ounces	½ cup heated, drained	3½	.29
Asparagus, greens	14 to 15 ounces	½ cup heated, drained	2¾	.37
Tomatoes	28 ounces	½ cup heated	6¾	.15
Frozen:				
Asparagus, kale, okra, spinach	10 ounces	½ cup cooked, drained	2½	.41
Broccoli, brussels sprouts, carrots, cauliflower, whole kernel corn, beans (green, lima), peas, summer squash	9 to 10 ounces	½ cup cooked, drained	2¾ to 3¼	.33
French fried potatoes	9 to 10 ounces	½ cup cooked	2¾ to 3¼	.33
FRUIT				
Fresh:				
Apples, apricots, plums	Pound	½ cup slices, halves, or whole	5 to 5½	.19
Berries (black-, blue-, straw-, red raspberries)	Pint	½ cup	4½ to 5	.21
Cherries	Pound	½ cup	5 to 5½	.19
Melons (honeydew, Cantaloupe)	Melon (medium)	½ cup cubes	4¼ to 4¾	.21
Oranges, grapefruit	Pound	½ cup sections	2¼	.45
Peaches, pears	Pound	½ cup slices or cubes	3½ to 4	.27
Canned:				
Apricots, fruit cocktail, fruits for salad, grapefruit sections, peach (slices, halves), pear halves, purple plums	16 ounces	½ cup fruit and juice	3½ to 3¾	.28
		1 cup fruit	1¼	.78
	29 to 30 ounces	½ cup fruit and juice	6½ to 7	.15
		1 cup fruit	2 to 2¼	.53
Berries (black-, blue-,	15 to 16	½ cup fruit	3½	.28

Description of food as purchased	Size of market unit	Size of serving or measure of food as used	Servings or measures per market unit	Amount-to-buy factor per serving
Canned:				
boysen-, red raspberries)	ounces	and juice 1 cup fruit	$\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{4}$	1.12
Pineapple (chunks, crushed)	20 ounces	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup fruit and juice 1 cup fruit	$4\frac{1}{2}$.23
Juice	32 fluid ounces	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$1\frac{3}{4}$ 8	.56 .12
	46 fluid ounces	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$11\frac{1}{2}$.09
Frozen:				
Fruit, sweetened	10 ounces	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup fruit and juice	$2\frac{1}{4}$.43
	12 ounces	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup fruit and juice	3	.34
	16 ounces	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup fruit and juice	$3\frac{3}{4}$.27
Juice concentrate	6 fluid ounces	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup, reconstituted	6	.17
MISCELLANEOUS				
Beans, dry	Pound	1 cup uncooked $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked	$2\frac{1}{4}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ $22\frac{1}{2}$.04
Bread (white, wheat)				
Regular sliced	Pound	1 slice	15	
Thin sliced	Pound	1 slice	18	
Cereals, ready-to-eat				
Flakes	12 ounces	1 cup	11	
Puffed	6 ounces	1 cup	$13\frac{1}{2}$	
Cheese	Pound	1 cup shredded	4	
Flour, wheat				
All-purpose	5 pounds	1 cup	18	
Cake	32 ounces	1 cup sifted	$9\frac{1}{4}$	
Macaroni	Pound	1 cup uncooked $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked	$3\frac{3}{4}$ 17	.06
Milk, evaporated	13 fluid ounces	1 cup, undiluted	$1\frac{3}{4}$	
Noodles	Pound	1 cup uncooked $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked	$10\frac{1}{4}$ $14\frac{3}{4}$.07
Nuts (almonds, cashews, pecans, walnuts), shelled	Pound	1 cup chopped	$3\frac{1}{2}$	
Oats, rolled	18 ounces	1 cup uncooked 1 cup cooked	$7\frac{1}{4}$ 13	.08
Rice	Pound	1 cup uncooked $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked	$2\frac{1}{4}$ $17\frac{1}{4}$.06
Shortening, hydrogenated	48 ounces	1 cup	7	
Soups, condensed	$10\frac{1}{2}$ ounces	1 cup, reconstituted	$2\frac{1}{2}$.40
Spaghetti	Pound	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked	14	.07
Sugar				
Brown	Pound	1 cup packed	$2\frac{1}{4}$	
Confectioner's	Pound	1 cup sifted	$4\frac{3}{4}$	
Granulated	5 pounds	1 cup	$11\frac{1}{4}$	

Cooking also decreases the volume of some vegetables. A pound of fresh spinach looks like plenty for a crowd, yet will yield only four to five $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings when cooked.

Do you need the same amount of potatoes for serving mashed as parsley-buttered pieces? No, mashed potatoes require almost $1\frac{1}{4}$ pounds for four $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings while parsley-buttered potatoes require less than a pound.

Canned and frozen vegetables and fruits have little preparation loss. Liquid from canned vegetables not included in the serving can be used in gravies and soups. Cooking may cause a small decrease in volume of frozen vegetables.

Canned fruit may be served with juice or used without juice as a salad ingredient. Amounts for both measures are given in the guide. Frozen fruit is most often used with its juice.

Many dry foods, like beans and cereals, increase in volume when cooked. For instance, one cup of raw rice will yield over three cups after cooking.

Will you need to buy more sugar for that batch of jelly? The guide shows the number of cups of sugar in the five-pound bag in your cupboard.

Use the amount-to-buy factor shown in the guide to determine how much to buy for your family and to compare cost per serving of different forms of food.

To determine how much to buy, first decide how many servings you need. Remember your teenage son may eat two servings of the size shown in the guide, while your small daughter may only eat one-half a serving. Multiply the number of servings needed by the factor for the food to be served. For five $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings of mashed potatoes, multiply 5 by 0.29 (factor) and get 1.45 or about $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds of fresh potatoes.

Is fresh or frozen spinach a better buy for cooking? To compare, multiply the cost of each form by the factor. Frozen spinach, at 25 cents per package, costs about 10 cents for a $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving and fresh spinach, at 50 cents a pound, costs about 12 cents. In this case, frozen spinach would be a better



Buying fresh produce.

buy. Season of the year will affect cost and new comparisons should be made as cost of food changes.

Using this guide, you can now plan your food purchases to more closely match your food needs, thus making better use of your food dollars by eliminating costly leftovers and food waste.

FOR FURTHER READING:

Dawson, Elsie H., Gladys L. Gilpin, and Lois H. Fulton. *Food Buying: A Guide for Calculating Amounts to Buy and Comparing Costs*, Home Economics Research Report No. 37. For sale by Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 20402.