

# 3 Easy Ways to Save On Food



## Fewer shopping trips can help save on fuel and food costs

Consumers these days are feeling a crunch with rising gas and food costs. The Department of Agriculture predicts a 4% to 5% increase in food prices this year, nearly twice the rate for 2005. The largest increases are forecast for fats and oils, estimated to rise 8% to 9%, and cereals and bakery products, projected to jump 7.5% to 8.5%. Gas is already edging closer to \$4 per gallon. Here are 3 tips to help!

### 1. Shop less frequently

One way to save time and help lower costs is to shop less frequently. Fewer trips means less money spent on impulse decisions and less money spent on fuel and transportation costs to the store. This also saves you time.

### 2. Stock up on low cost frozen and pantry items especially when they are on sale

Foods for the pantry and freezer have a much longer shelf life than refrigerated items. Frozen foods, canned goods and bulk pantry items also tend to be bulky and take more time to gather since you have to push the cart all over the store so it is more efficient to buy more of them rather than little bits each week if you can swing it. By stocking up a lot on freezer and pantry items at a discount store and when you see them on sale you can save a lot. This makes weekly shopping easier - you can dash in to the local market for a few fresh produce and dairy items.

Right now, with food costs rising, it makes sense to stockpile foods - buying now gets you today's prices.

And if you stock up on MyPyramid foods you are more likely to prepare and eat healthful meals at home instead of eating out. Foods prepared at home are often healthier and lower in calories than restaurant foods and you spend less for gas if you stay home as well.

### 3. Choose less processed foods

By purchasing items that are less processed you spend less money and get items that are healthier. For example, by choosing whole potatoes versus potato chips or frozen French fries, you save a lot of money per ounce. You also save fat, sodium and calories as well! Compare the price per ounce for these potato products:

• baking potatoes	0.06
• <i>frozen French fries</i>	0.13
• <i>frozen mashed potatoes</i>	0.13
• <i>instant mashed potatoes</i>	0.21
• <i>potato chips</i>	0.32

The processed items (in italics) are at least double the price of the plain potatoes.

Here is a list of what to buy for the freezer and pantry based on MyPyramid:

#### **Pantry**

Canned beans  
Canned tomatoes and veggies  
Canned tuna  
Fat-free dry milk powder  
Jams  
Lentils  
Oatmeal  
Pasta and whole grain pasta  
Pasta sauce  
Peanut butter  
Rice and brown rice  
Soups

#### **Freezer:**

Bread (whole grain)  
Chicken  
Egg whites or nonfat egg substitute in cartons  
Fish and seafood (not breaded)  
Fruits  
Lean meat  
Seafood  
Turkey  
Vegetables