



Eating on a budget.

The cost of living is increasing and saving money on food can be a big help. Eating on a budget doesn't have to mean boring or flavourless meals though. Here are some useful ideas for eating well while spending less.

Planning and shopping

- Plan out your main meals for the week. Try to include a variety of foods from each of the five food groups. Check out the 'Eating well to age well' factsheet for ideas.
- Look at catalogues or weekly specials at your local shops when writing your shopping list for inspiration.
 - Meat and chicken can be expensive. Plan meals with cheaper protein-rich foods like tinned fish, eggs, and canned or dried beans and lentils.
 - Frozen or tinned fruit and vegetables can often be cheaper than fresh and are just as nutritious.
- Ask your local independent grocer if they have a regular 'thrifty' or 'bargain' day.
- Check out the 'Pantry foods' factsheet for ideas on foods that will last a long time in the cupboard or freezer. Buy these items when they are on special and when your budget allows.
- Find the discount supermarkets or stores in your local area. If you have transport or access to these shops, plan to buy as many of your regular foods here as you can. Use the major supermarkets to top up the remainder of your shop.

Accessing food

- Supermarkets, grocers, and markets are all great places to buy food, but you can also often access affordable or free food from other places in your local area. Find out if there is a [neighbourhood house](#) or [community garden](#) near you (see useful links below).
- Many communities have local food swaps or excess produce meets – ask your [local council](#) about any regular formal or informal community groups which share excess produce in your area (see useful links below).



- Swap meals with a friend or neighbour for extra variety. Trade a portion of a meal you have cooked in exchange for a portion of a meal they have cooked. Soups, curries and casseroles make great ‘meal swap’ options and are a good way to get new recipe ideas and try new flavours.
- Use the [Ask Izzy](#) and [Find Help Tas](#) websites to find community food programs and emergency food relief in your local area (see useful links below).

Cooking food

- Check out our [recipe videos](#) for simple and affordable meals you can make at home.
- When making meals, cook an extra serve and freeze a portion for an easy meal another day.
- Add a can of legumes such as chickpeas or kidney beans to bulk out meals such as casseroles, pasta sauces or curries. Grated or diced vegetables such as zucchini, swede, sweet potato or carrot can also add bulk to meals and make them go further.

Reduce food waste

- Reducing food waste will help you to save money by making meals stretch further.
- Commonly wasted food items are:
 - Bread. Keep bread in the freezer and thaw slices when needed to avoid bread going stale.
 - Bananas. Overripe bananas are perfect for baking and smoothies. Add overripe mashed banana to muffins, pancakes or pikelets.
 - Lettuce. Keep lettuce in the vegetable crisper and use within a few days. If lettuce is beginning to wilt, try submerging leaves in ice water for 10 minutes to refresh them.
 - Meat. Check the use-by date of meat when you buy it and make sure you can either cook it before this date or freeze it when you get home.
 - Milk. Keep an eye on the use-by date of milk in your fridge. If milk is getting close to its use-by date, use it up by making a white sauce or custard, or adding to soup.
- Get creative with using all parts of your vegetables. Chopped broccoli stems make a great addition to stir fries and casseroles, and beetroot leaves can be used like spinach in salads or sandwiches.
- Check out the [Too Good To Waste](#) campaign and [Foodwise](#) for more information and ideas on making the most of your food and reducing household waste (see useful links below).

Useful links

- To find your nearest neighbourhood house visit www.nht.org.au/find-a-house or call (03) 6228 6515
- To find your nearest community garden visit www.communitygarden.org.au/find-a-garden or email tas@communitygarden.org.au



- To find your local council visit www.lgat.tas.gov.au/tasmanian-councils/find-your-local-council
- To access Ask Izzy visit www.askizzy.org.au
- To access Find Help Tas visit www.findhelptas.org.au
- To see the Too Good To Waste campaign visit www.eatwelltas.org.au/too-good-to-waste/
- To see the Foodwise campaign visit www.foodwise.com.au

Healthy Ageing Tasmania

 health.tas.gov.au/healthyageing

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Visit the Department of Health website (www.health.gov.au) for more information.

