

COOKING 101

~Essential basics of cooking on a budget~



Introduction

So you want to start cooking but you don't know where to start? Well you've come to the right place! This book was intended for those that want to understand the bare basics of cooking, especially when on a budget. We will go over tips, tricks, cooking basics, and easy recipes that anybody can follow.

We at Coos County Public Health hope that this booklet helps inspire you to start cooking in your day-to-day life. We hope to show that cooking can be simple, and is a much cheaper option than eating out, even cheaper than eating at fast food restaurants!

Enjoy!

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10 Tips to Stretch your Food Budget



1. Plan meals and snacks for the week according to your budget
2. Make a grocery list (and follow it!)
3. Do not go to the grocery store hungry (you will end up getting more than what is on your list!)
4. Ask about loyalty cards at your local grocery store to get special offers and discounts
5. Check for sales and coupons in the local paper or online
6. Consider shopping at discount stores
7. Cook meals that may stretch leftovers from the day before (soups and casseroles are great ways to do this)
8. Plan some meals that don't have meat (meat's expensive!). Some good substitutes may be using beans, eggs, tofu, and peanut butter.
9. Freeze leftovers or bulk food items. Cook in bulk and freeze meal portions for another day. Refer to our tips on freezing foods.
10. Plan based on what is already in your refrigerator/pantry.

Comparing Unit Prices

What are Unit Prices?

Some stores show UNIT PRICES. This is the cost per ounce, pound, quart, etc. You can find this on the shelf edge under the product and next to the total price. Use the unit price to compare brands to get the best bargain.

This is what it looks like:



Let's walk through an example:

Question: In the example below, what is the best bargain, the *Name Brand* or the *Store Brand* product?

\$0.16 per oz.	
	\$3.00
18oz. Name Brand	

\$0.20 per oz.	
	\$2.75
14oz. Store Brand	

Answer: The Name Brand. All you have to do is look at the unit price (price on top left). You pay \$0.16 per oz for the name brand and \$0.20 per oz. on the store brand.

Therefore, the name brand is a better deal in this example, since it is \$0.04 less!

What you can buy for \$13

<u>You Could Buy...</u>	<u>OR You Could Buy...</u>
1. 1 pound cookies	1. 4 bananas
2. 10-ounce bag chips	2. 3 apples
3. 2 liter soda	3. 3 pears
4. ½ gallon ice cream	4. 3 oranges
	5. 12 broccoli stems
	6. 10 long carrots
	7. 1 pound raisins
	8. 1 jar applesauce
	9. 1 large can frozen orange juice concentrate
	10. Either a jar of peanut butter or ranch dressing for dip

❖ **The first column** may look appealing, but you are left with completely empty calories, leaving you unfulfilled and wanting more. Your food budget will suffer, ending in buying more food than you need.

❖ **The second column** provides you with a lot more food, as well as giving you a variety of vitamins, minerals, and micro/macro nutrients. This just means that you are getting the best bang for your buck for your health and your food budget. Your body will feel more fulfilled and you will end up spending less overall.

Food safety: what you should know

1. How long do I need to wash my hands?

To thoroughly get rid of bacteria, you must wash for 20 seconds with soap and warm water.

2. Clean surfaces before and after handling food

Use antibacterial spray to wash off surfaces before and after handling all foods.

3. Sponges also sponge up bacteria

Kitchen sponges are the number 1 source of germs in the house (more than your bathroom!). To kill bacteria, microwave a damp sponge once a week for one minute. Replace as frequently as possible, and toss out immediately if your sponge starts to smell.

4. Separate your foods

It is very important to separate raw meat, poultry, and seafood from fruits, vegetables, and cooked foods when preparing meals.



5. Cook meat thoroughly

Chicken, pork, hamburger, sausages, chicken nuggets, kidneys, livers, kebabs, and any meat or fish that have been minced or skewered should be thoroughly cooked through (juices run clear).

6. Storing meat and animal products properly

Refrigerate meat, eggs, seafood and other perishables within 2 hours. Store meat/poultry on bottom shelf of refrigerator so as not to touch or drip on any other food. Cooked meat should always be stored separately from raw meat.

Tips on Freezing Foods

1. Separate foods into meal portions
2. Seal tightly (you don't want freezer burn!)
3. Label your food with the date of when you cooked the food and the date of when you froze the food.
4. Never refreeze
5. Great to freeze: butter/margarine, grated cheese, pastry, bread, any fruit you're planning to put in a smoothie, meat, soup, casseroles, lasagna, chili
6. Defrost your freezer, make sure the ice doesn't build up
7. Follow the "Do Not Freeze" list:
 - ❖ Vegetables: Celery, cucumbers, lettuce, onions, peppers, raw potatoes, radishes, sprouts, salad greens
 - ❖ Fruit: Apples, grapefruit, grapes (unless you're planning on eating them frozen), lemons, limes, oranges, watermelon
 - ❖ Dairy: Milk, blocks of cheese, cottage cheese, cream cheese, custard, eggs in shells, mayonnaise, sour cream, salad dressing, yogurt (unless you're planning on eating it frozen)
 - ❖ Herbs: Basil, chives, parsley, other soft herbs
 - ❖ Other: Crumb toppings on casseroles and baked dishes, frosting (egg white and cream based), fried foods, pasta, rice, sauces (especially those made with cornstarch or flour)



Tips for Fruits

- ❖ Buy apples, oranges, grapefruit, potatoes, onions, etc by the bag instead of by the piece. They don't spoil fast and this is the cheaper option. Check carefully for already spoiled fruit/veggies before buying.
- ❖ Canned fruits are almost as nutritious as fresh fruit. Make sure it is canned in juice and is low in sodium.
- ❖ Freeze your fruit to make them last longer. Berries are great to freeze for a smoothie treat later.



Tips for Vegetables

- ❖ Buy frozen or canned veggies! They are just as nutritious if not more nutritious than fresh veggies. They are also cheaper and last longer.
- ❖ Plant your own. You can buy seeds with food stamps!
- ❖ Both fruits and vegetables are cheaper when they are in season. Look online to get a month-to-month breakdown to know what's in season. Many Farmer's Markets accept food stamps!
- ❖ Check out the local farmer's market, sometimes you can find cheaper deals than you'd find in the grocery store!



Tips for Bread and Grains

- ❖ Look for bargains on day-old bread at grocery store, or go to your local bakery outlet store
- ❖ Buy regular rice, oatmeal, and grits instead of instant. Save on money, salt, sugar, and calories.



- ❖ Look for 100% whole wheat/grain. Plain wheat and multigrain breads are usually not as nutritious. White bread lacks the most nutritious parts of the grain and thus tends to be empty calories

Tips for Beans

- ❖ Dried beans and peas are good source of protein/fiber. They can last up to 2 years without spoiling if stored properly (sealed containers).

- ❖ Cooked beans and opened cans of beans have a shelf life of about 5 days. Have a designated day once a week to clean out the refrigerator of any leftover beans as well as cook your batch of beans for the upcoming week



Tips for Milk Products

- ❖ Buy the largest size you can of milk, yogurt, and cheese before it could spoil. Larger sizes = cheaper overall
- ❖ Ultra-pasteurized milk has a longer expiration date
- ❖ Buy block cheese instead of shredded cheese to save on money. Shred using a cheese grater or manually chopping up cheese if desired.
- ❖ Buy large containers of plain or vanilla yogurt and add fruit for taste. Save on calories and money vs. getting single serving yogurts.



Tips for Meat

- ❖ Buy meats on sale; look for specials at meat counter
- ❖ Buy meat in bulk, and separate into portions then freeze
- ❖ Whole chickens are cheaper than buying parts of the chicken!



How to Cook Dried Beans

1. Sort. Look through bag to remove any damaged beans, small stones, or dirt.
2. Soak. Choose one of 2 options:
 - a. **Speedy Soak:** Add 10 cups of hot water to 1 pound of dry beans. Heat until boiling, then boil for 2-3 minutes. Remove from heat, cover and let stand for 1-4 hours.
 - b. **Overnight soak:** Add 10 cups cold water to 1 pound of dry beans. Let soak overnight.
3. After soaking, drain water out and rinse beans. Add 6 cups of fresh water in pot or slow cooker and follow these directions:
 - a. **Cook on stove:** Cook on medium heat for 1.5-2 hours. Cover with lid slightly tilted to let out steam, and cook until tender.
 - b. **Cook with slow cooker:** You can also use a slow cooker (aka Crockpot) to cook beans: turn heat on high and cook for 6-8 hours until tender.



How to Cook Rice

Use a 1:2 ratio for rice and water (for every 1 cup of rice you want to use 2 cups of water). Cook a $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of dried rice per person.

Ingredients

- 1 cup rice
- 2 cups water
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt



Directions

1. Bring water to a boil on stovetop. Use a pan with extra room, since rice expands when cooked.
2. Stir in rice and salt.
3. Cover the pot and turn the heat down low

Approximate cooking times:

White Rice: 18-25 minutes

Brown Rice: 30-40 minutes

Wild Rice: 45-60 minutes

4. Start checking rice at lowest times indicated above. When done, rice will be firm and tender, and no longer crunchy.
5. When done, uncover the rice, take off the stove, pour out any extra water if there's any left and let sit for a few minutes to dry out.

How to Cook Potatoes

Potatoes are easy to cook and can be enjoyed in many ways. Always wash potatoes well using cold running water and a scrub brush. You can leave skin on or off, and you can choose to cook potatoes whole or in pieces

Method 1: Bake: You can bake potatoes whole or in pieces:

Bake Whole Potatoes

1. Poke whole raw potatoes with a fork several times before putting in the oven.
2. Place whole potatoes directly on the oven rack.
3. Bake medium to large potatoes at 350°F for about an hour or until you can poke them easily with a fork or they feel soft when you squeeze them. You can bake them at a higher temperature for faster cooking and a crisper skin.



Bake Pieces Potatoes

1. Cut raw potatoes into wedges and season with salt, pepper or other favorite seasonings. Put the wedges on a baking sheet.
2. Bake at 350°F for about 20 to 30 minutes, depending on their size. You can bake them at a higher temperature for a crisper surface. They are done when you can poke them easily with a fork.

Method 2: Microwave

1. Cook potatoes whole or in pieces. Poke raw whole potatoes with a fork several times before putting in the microwave to release steam during cooking.

2. Place them on a microwaveable plate or bowl. Microwave on high until potatoes can be easily poked with a fork. Cooking time will vary in different microwaves and with different amounts of potatoes. Start with 3 minutes for one potato and add time in small amounts until they are soft.

Method 3: Boil

1. Add enough water to a saucepan to almost cover the potatoes. Bring the water to a boil and then add the potatoes.
2. Reduce heat slightly, then cover and cook until potatoes can be easily poked with a fork (20-30 minutes depending on size of pieces).



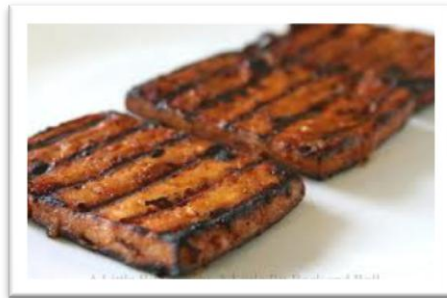
Want Mashed Potatoes?

Any cooked potatoes can be mashed. Use a potato masher or even a fork to mash the potatoes. Add cooking water, low-fat milk or buttermilk, yogurt, or nonfat or low fat sour cream until creamy. Add the seasonings of your choice.



How to Make Tofu Tasty

You may have heard some great health benefits about tofu (great source of protein, calcium, iron, etc.), but had tried it and not been very impressed. Use these tips below so that your tofu is a crisp, flavorful, mouth-watering staple food for your meals.



Preparing Tofu

1. Drain out water in package entirely. Slice tofu into half inch strips.
2. Tofu is like a sponge, so it needs to be dried out in order to soak up new flavors. There are a few ways to do this that you can choose from:

Microwave: Microwave strips for a few seconds each. Do this in batches (don't try to microwave the whole block all at once).

Boiled Water: Put tofu in pasta strainer over the sink. Pour hot salted water over the tofu.

Towel dry: Lay out strips of tofu on a dish towel. Lay another dish towel on top and rest a heavy book on top to apply pressure. Press for 15-30 minutes.

3. Cut into desired size: cubes or strips

Pick your flavors: You can use any flavoring you like for tofu. Soy sauce, sesame oil, minced ginger, minced garlic, lemon or lime juice, hot sauce, Worcestershire sauce, seasonings of choice, and barbecue sauce (thinned with water) are some examples.

4 (optional). Marinate tofu. Put tofu in container or a zip lock baggie with your flavors covering it. Put in the refrigerator for 30 minutes.

Cooking Tofu

Method 1: Fry on stove

1. Heat 2 tablespoons of oil on a pan on medium-high heat.
2. If you are using seasoning, rub it over the tofu before setting it in your pan. Put any kind of sauce on once tofu is in the pan. Tofu slices should have room between each other.
3. Let tofu cook for about 6-7 minutes on first side, and about 4 minutes on the second side, until browned.



Method 2: Bake

1. Preheat oven or toaster oven at 375°F.
2. Season or marinate tofu and put on cookie sheet.
3. Bake for 20 minutes, turn the tofu pieces over, then bake for another 20 minutes



How to Cook Hard Boiled Eggs

Hard boiled eggs are great snacks that are low cost, high in protein to keep you feeling full for longer, and can either be eaten by themselves or can be used in a variety of dishes. Here's how to make perfect hard boiled eggs:

1. Place eggs in a pot of cold water. There should be enough water to cover the eggs completely as well as an extra inch of water over them.
2. Heat eggs over high heat until water is boiling. Once boiling, immediately remove from the stove and cover your pan.
3. Let eggs stand in hot water for about 12 minutes for large eggs (9 minutes for medium eggs, 15 minutes for extra large eggs). Drain water.
4. Wait until eggs have cooled to peel. If you try to peel them before they are cool, the shell will stick to the egg. You can speed up the process by putting eggs under cold water.

*Note: the shelf life of a hard-boiled egg is about one week after boiling.



How to Thaw Frozen Meat

Important: Never thaw meat at room temperature. Please follow either of these methods to be safe from food contamination.

Method 1: Refrigerator

Thawing time: 24 hours

Remove meat from freezer and place in refrigerator for a full 24 hours to defrost.

1. Plan ahead to defrost meat
2. Place wrapped or covered meat in a dish to catch juices
3. Cook ground or stew meat within 2 days of thawing
4. Cook other meats like chicken, beef, steaks, etc within 3-5 days of thawing



Method 2: Cold Water

Thawing time: 1 hour per pound

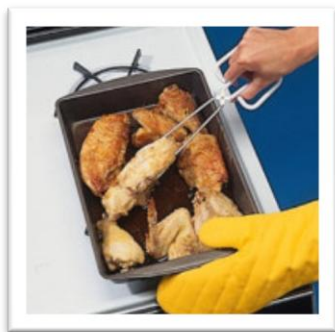
1. Secure frozen meat in a Ziploc bag.
2. Place in a bowl large enough that the meat can be fully submerged in water.
3. Fill bowl with cold water.
4. Change water every 30 minutes. One pound of meat will thaw in roughly one hour.



How to Bake Chicken

*Note: baked chicken are pieces of chicken rather than the full chicken

1. Preheat oven to 350°F
2. (**optional**). Remove Skin. If you'd like skinless chicken and your chicken still has skin on it, remove skin by grasping skin tightly and pull it off piece by piece. Use a sharp knife to cut off the skin if necessary.
3. Rinse raw chicken in cold water. Pat dry with a paper towel.
4. Prepare a baking dish. Line a baking dish or cookie sheet with aluminum foil with non-stick cooking spray, butter, or oil. The aluminum foil is not mandatory; it just makes cleaning up easier.
5. Lay chicken pieces onto pan, space evenly.
6. Give your chicken some flavor, get creative!
 - Rub a mixture of oil, salt/pepper, spices, and seasonings on chicken, such as: oregano, rosemary, garlic, lemon zest, cayenne, sage, etc.
 - Use premixed spice rubs that you can find in grocery stores such as Cajun rub, a spicy chili rub, etc.
 - Pour your favorite BBQ sauce on chicken
7. Bake the chicken.
 - As a general guideline, bake boneless chicken at 325-350°F for 15-20 minutes.
 - As a general guideline, bake bone-in chicken 325-250°F for 30-45 minutes
8. Check to make sure chicken is fully cooked. Make a small cut into the chicken, if there's any pink coloring or grayish color with gooey texture then it is not done. Bake for a couple more minutes, make another cut, and check again.



How to Cook Ground Beef

Ground beef is a staple item for many dishes. It is fairly easy to cook, and needs to be cooked thoroughly to ensure harmful bacteria have been taken out. Follow these steps to have a safe and delicious meal:

Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil or bacon fat (optional)
- 1 ½ pounds ground beef
- ½ teaspoon of salt
- Spices (optional)



Directions

1. Heat oil or fat in frying pan (optional): On medium heat to medium-high heat, heat oil or fat in pan. If you want to avoid the extra fat and calories, you can skip this step, but pay close attention to cooking the meat so it doesn't stick or burn.
2. Add the meat to hot pan: Add the beef to the center of the pan.
3. Break up meat into small pieces: Break up ground beef into small pieces with spatula. Sprinkle in salt and spices you are using, and stir occasionally to evenly brown.
4. Finish cooking: the beef is finished when it is evenly browned on all sides and there are no signs of pink left.

Note

- Cooked ground beef can be used immediately, refrigerated for up to a week, or frozen for three months.

Snacks

Ants on a Log

Ingredients

Makes 2-4 servings

- 2 celery stalks
- 2 tablespoons peanut butter OR almond butter
- Raisins OR Craisins



Directions

1. Cut celery stalks in 4 inch pieces.
2. Spread peanut butter on celery
3. Place raisins on top

Peanut Butter Banana Smoothie

Ingredients

Makes 2 servings

- 1 tbsp peanut butter OR almond butter
- 1 medium banana
- 1/2 cup milk (any kind: cow's milk, soy milk, almond milk, etc.)
- 1/4 cup yogurt (plain, vanilla, or strawberry)
- 1 cup ice cubes



Directions

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender. Blend until smooth and serve.

Fruit and yogurt parfait

Ingredients

Makes 1 serving

- 1 Handful of fruits of your choice: chopped bananas, strawberries and blueberries work well OR use canned fruit of your choice
- 1 cup yogurt (vanilla, fruit, or plain with honey)
- ½ cup granola OR cereal of your choice

Directions

1. Place half of the fruit on the bottom of cup or bowl.
2. Spoon half of the yogurt on the top of the fruit in each cup or bowl.
3. Sprinkle each cup with 1/4 cup granola.
4. Repeat layers.
5. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.



Optional

- Drizzle with honey and top with chopped nuts.
- Try other fruits, such as apples, peaches, oranges, etc.
- Use different flavors of yogurt, such as lemon or strawberry, or plain for less sugar.
- Honey is not recommended for children under 1 year old.

Devilled Eggs

Ingredients

Makes 12 devilled eggs

- 6 hard boiled eggs
- ¼ cup of mayonnaise
- ¼ cup onions, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon yellow or Dijon mustard



Optional

- 1 pinch of salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground pepper
- 1 pinch of paprika (for garnish)

Directions

1. Hard boil eggs. Directions for perfect hard boiled eggs can be found in page 15 of this book
2. Peel eggs and cut in half, length-wise. Lay out eggs cut side up on a plate
3. Scoop out yolks into small mixing bowl. Add mayonnaise, mustard, and onions. Mash and stir ingredients until blended. Stir in salt and pepper to taste.
4. Spoon one heaping tablespoon of the mixture into each egg white half evenly. The mixture should overflow each egg a little.
5. Sprinkle eggs with paprika if desired

"Not" Dogs

Ingredients

Makes 1 serving

- 1 peeled banana
- 1 hot dog bun (or substitute with slice of bread)
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- 1 tablespoon of jam, jelly, or preserves

Directions

1. Spread jam and peanut butter on both sides of the bun
2. Put the banana in the bun, and serve!

Optional

- If you want to get even more creative, chop up kiwi to reach a consistency similar to pickled relish. Spread on the bun - kids love it!



Breakfast

Homemade Pancakes

Ingredients

Makes 4 servings

- 1 cup flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- Dash of salt
- 1 cup milk
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted or vegetable oil
- 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon oil or non-stick cooking spray



Directions

1. In a medium bowl, stir together milk, butter (or oil), and egg
2. Add dry ingredients to wet mixture, mix until blended well
3. Heat a large pan over medium heat. Add a small layer of oil or cooking spray to pan's surface
4. Spoon 2-4 tablespoons of batter onto pan , depending on how large you'd like your pancakes. Use the back of your spoon to spread batter evenly.
5. Cook until pancake has a few bubbles, then flip with a spatula
6. Cook until browned on underside, 1-2 minutes more

Optional

- For dressing use maple syrup, fruit, peanut butter, jam, etc.

French toast

Ingredients

Makes 6 servings

- 4 eggs
- 2/3 cup milk
- ½ tsp salt
- 6 slices of bread
- For variation add:
 - 1 tsp vanilla
 - 1 tsp cinnamon
- Maple syrup



Directions

1. Beat eggs, milk, salt, vanilla, and cinnamon until blended. Pour in a flat, shallow dish.
2. Coat frying pan with non-stick cooking spray, oil, or butter and heat on medium heat.
3. Dip bread in egg mixture to coat both sides
4. Cook until golden brown on both sides
5. Serve with maple syrup

Alternative Baking Directions

1. Bake dipped bread at 450 degrees F for 15 minutes
2. Serve with maple syrup

Substitution

- Substitute maple syrup with apple sauce or peanut butter

Breakfast Burritos

Ingredients

Makes 4 servings

- 4 eggs
- ¼ cup milk (*optional*)
- salt, pepper, and chili powder to taste
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 4 (10 inch) flour tortillas
- 1 cup refried beans
- ½ cup (4 ounces) grated cheddar cheese
- 1 tomato, chopped



Directions

1. Mix eggs, milk and seasonings in a bowl.
2. Heat oil in pan over medium-high heat (350 degrees in an electric skillet).
3. Stir in the eggs and cook until firm.
4. Warm the tortillas on the stove, in the microwave for 10 seconds, or wrap in foil and heat in the oven.
5. Warm the refried beans in a separate pan.
6. On each tortilla, layer 1/4 of refried beans, eggs, cheese, and tomato.
7. Roll the burrito, cut in half, and enjoy!
8. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Microwave-only directions

1. Mix eggs, milk and seasonings in a microwave-safe bowl
2. Microwave on high for 45 seconds; stir.

3. Microwave until eggs are firm, about 30-45 seconds longer. Set aside.
4. Microwave tortilla with $\frac{1}{4}$ of refried beans and cheese for 90 seconds
5. Add eggs and tomatoes. Roll burrito, cut in half, and enjoy!

Notes

- Try your favorite salsa in place of the tomato.
- Use other vegetables that you have in the refrigerator, such as green or red bell peppers, or cooked corn.
- Serve with guacamole or light sour cream.
- Add meat or seasoned tofu crumbles for variation

Classic Oatmeal

Ingredients

Makes 1 serving

- 1/2 cup rolled oats
- 1/2 cup milk – or you can use 1 cup milk and skip the water for a creamier oatmeal
- 1/2 cup water

Optional

- Brown sugar
- Cinnamon
- Raisins or *Craisins*
- Fruit of your choice: bananas, peaches, apples (canned fruit works as well)
- Peanut butter and jelly



Directions

1. Bring milk and water in a pot to a boil.
2. Watch the liquid when it's boiling. Milk tends to rise up and foam quickly once it hits boiling point.
3. Turn heat to medium high.
4. Pour oats into the pot.
5. Add in honey.
6. Stir occasionally. Cook for about 3-5 minutes.
7. Remove from heat.
8. Pour oatmeal into a bowl.
9. Add optional ingredients of your choice

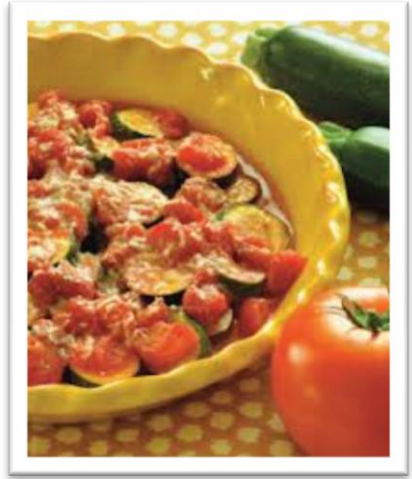
Simple Sides & Salads

Zucchini Zowie

Ingredients

Makes 8 servings

- 2 medium zucchini
- 1 14.5-ounce can diced tomatoes with juice
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder or 8 cloves garlic
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon parmesan cheese



Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
2. Wash and slice the zucchini in 1/4 inch thick of pieces.
3. Lay zucchini in a pie pan and pour tomatoes and juice over the top.
4. Sprinkle garlic powder, salt, and cheese on zucchini.
5. Bake uncovered for 35-40 minutes.
6. Cool slightly and enjoy! Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Optional

- Add one can of white beans to make this a complete meal

Potato Salad

Ingredients

Makes 4-6 servings

- 3-4 medium potatoes (*Waxy potatoes, like rounded and long white potatoes, work best for salad*)
- 3 hard-boiled eggs, chopped
- ½ cup celery, chopped
- ¾ cup mayonnaise OR cut calories by using reduced-fat mayonnaise or mayonnaise-type salad dressing
- 1 Tbsp prepared mustard
- ⅓ cup onion, finely chopped
- ¼ cup chopped pickles OR pickle relish
- salt and pepper to taste

Directions

1. Put potatoes in a medium pan and add water just to cover. Heat to boiling. Reduce heat and cover.
2. Cook just below boiling for 20-25 minutes, until potatoes are just tender.
3. Drain and cool slightly.
4. Peel and cut into cubes.
5. Combine potatoes, eggs and celery in a large bowl.
6. Mix mayonnaise, mustard, onion, pickles, salt and pepper in a separate bowl.
7. Add to potato mixture and stir gently to coat.
8. Cover and chill until serving time



Corn and Tomato Salad

Ingredients

Makes 6-8 servings

- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups corn, (canned/drained, frozen/cooked, or fresh/cooked)
- 3 small tomatoes, diced (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups)
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup Italian salad dressing OR oil and vinegar mixture
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup minced fresh basil OR cilantro
- $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 teaspoon salt



Optional

- Add chopped green or red peppers or zucchini
- Add black beans
- Add chopped avocado
- Add squeezed lime
- Add hot sauce for added spiciness
- Add cilantro

Directions

1. Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl.
2. Serve at room temperature or chilled.
3. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Creamy Coleslaw

Ingredients

Makes 4 servings

- 1/2 head of cabbage, chopped or shredded
- 1 cup carrot shredded
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon sour cream
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon white vinegar
- Salt and pepper as needed (little bits at a time)



Optional

- 2 tbsp green onion, chopped

Directions

1. Combine cabbage, carrot and green onion in a medium bowl
2. In a separate bowl, whisk together mayonnaise, sour cream, sugar, white vinegar, and salt and pepper
3. Combine mixtures together, mix well

Notes

- For variation add: Raisins, chopped apple, chopped celery
- *You can substitute mayonnaise with plain yogurt

Fiesta Chicken Salad

Ingredients for Salad

Makes 4 servings

- 2 boneless chicken breasts sliced into strips
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 (15 ounce) can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 (11 ounce) can corn
- 1 tomato, chopped
- ½ cup onion, sliced
- 1 (10 ounce) bag salad greens
- ½ cup salsa



Ingredients for Dressing

- 1 tablespoon BBQ sauce
- 1 tablespoon ranch dressing

Directions

1. Heat oil in skillet over medium heat. Cook chicken strips about 6 minutes on each side, until juices run clear. Make a small cut into a piece of chicken to see if it is pink at all. If there is still some pinkness, cook until you no longer can see any pink when cutting into it.
2. Mix beans, corn, tomato, onions, and greens
3. In a separate bowl, mix BBQ sauce and ranch dressing together
4. Top salad with chicken and dressing

Tuna Macaroni Salad

Ingredients

Makes 4 servings

- 2 cups macaroni, uncooked
- 2 cans tuna, water pack (5 ounces each)
- ½ cup chopped zucchini
- ¼ cup sliced carrots
- ⅓ cup diced onion
- ¼ cup mayonnaise or salad dressing



Directions

1. Cook macaroni according to package directions. Pour off the cooking liquid and cool.
2. Drain tuna.
3. Wash vegetables. Chop zucchini; slice carrots into thin slices; dice onion.
4. Mix all ingredients together in a bowl.
5. Chill until ready to serve.
6. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours

Refreshing Cucumber & Onion Salad

Ingredients

Makes 8 Servings

- 2 cucumbers
- Half medium onion
- 1 cup white vinegar
- 2 cups water
- 1 tablespoon pepper
- Salt to taste



Directions

1. Cut the ends off of the cucumbers and peel in strips. You can leave the cucumbers bare or striped with rind
2. Slice cucumbers in thin slices
3. Slice onion into thin slices
4. In a large container (such as a large mixing bowl), mix cucumber and onion slices
5. Add vinegar, water, pepper, and salt in the container. Mix well.
6. Seal tightly with plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 8 hours and serve cold.

Notes

- If you do not refrigerate for 8 hours or more, the cucumbers and onions will not have soaked up the vinegar mixture adequately.

Salad Dressing

Basic Vinaigrette

Ingredients

- 1 cup olive oil
- ½ cup of favorite vinegar (balsamic vinegar, apple cider vinegar, or red wine vinegar)
- 2 teaspoons of your favorite herbs (try oregano, rosemary, basil or dill)
- Salt & pepper to taste

Optional: Add 3 cloves of minced garlic

Optional: Add 1 teaspoon of Dijon mustard



Directions

1. In a jar or container with a lid, mix vinegar and herbs. Mix in 1 tablespoon of oil, secure container with lid, and shake vigorously. \
2. Continue to add oil and shake until you have added all of the oil.

*Will keep in the fridge for about 2 weeks

Creamy Dressing

Ingredients

- 2/3 cup non-fat yogurt
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons vinegar
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons herbs, fresh and dried

Directions

1. Whisk all the ingredients together. Let sit for 1 hour to allow the flavors to blend.

*Will keep in the fridge for about 1 week.



Main Courses

Cheesy Quesadillas

Ingredients

Makes 4 servings

- 4 corn OR flour tortillas
- 2 cups shredded cheese
- Filling Ideas:
 - Onions
 - Peppers
 - Zucchini
 - Broccoli
 - Beans (refried, whole)



Directions

1. Place one tortilla on a microwave-safe plate. Sprinkle 1/2 cup shredded cheese on half of the tortilla. Add vegetables, cooked meat or beans on top of cheese.
2. Heat in microwave for 1 minute.
3. Remove from microwave and fold tortilla in half. Cut in wedges to serve.
4. Repeat with remaining tortillas.

Other cooking options

Stovetop:

1. Place one tortilla on a hot griddle or frying pan.
2. Sprinkle with 1 cup of shredded cheese.
3. Add filling.
4. Cover with another tortilla and heat on each side until cheese melts.

Mini Pizzas

Ingredients

Makes 4 servings

- 2 English muffins or bagels
- ½ cup pizza or tomato sauce
- ½ cup shredded mozzarella cheese (substitute with other cheeses)
- 1 cup diced vegetables

Directions

1. Heat oven to 350°F
2. Cut English muffins or bagels in half and toast
3. Spread pizza sauce on English muffin or bagel
4. Sprinkle each half with cheese
5. Arrange vegetable pieces over cheese
6. Place on baking sheet and bake 10 minutes or until cheese is melted

Notes

- For variation, add pizza toppings of your choice: pepperoni, sausage, olives, eggs, etc.



Classic Spaghetti

Ingredients

Makes 4 servings

- 1 small onion (chopped)
- 2 tablespoons garlic powder
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon each salt & pepper
- 2 (15 ounce) cans tomato sauce
- 1 (16 ounce) box spaghetti noodles
- 1-1½ lb hamburger meat



Directions for sauce

1. In a pan, melt butter on medium heat. Cook onion until golden in pan.
2. Add hamburger meat and cook until meat has browned and is no longer red.
3. Add tomato sauce, salt, pepper, and garlic

Directions for noodles

1. Bring 2 cups of water to boil
2. Add noodles, stir for 2 minutes to prevent sticking on medium heat
3. Cover pasta with lid until water is brought back to a boil. Add 2 tablespoons of salt.
4. Once boiling, remove lid. Test the pasta every 2 minute or so to see if it is done. It is done when it is still firm to bite but cooked all of the way though and no longer is crunchy.

Simple Stir Fry

Ingredients

Makes 4 servings

- 3 cups fresh, frozen, OR canned vegetables (Such as onion, broccoli, carrots, pea pods, kale, peppers, bok choy, mushrooms, celery, spinach, zucchini, cauliflower)
- 2 tbsp oil (vegetable, olive, or canola oil)
- 3 tbsp stir fry sauce OR soy sauce to taste
- 2-3 cups of cooked rice OR 3-4 packages top ramen



Directions

1. Slice any vegetables needed into strips or bite-sized pieces
2. Heat oil 2-3 minutes in large frying pan or wok over medium-high heat.
3. Place vegetables in the pan. Cook and stir 3-5 minutes until crisp-tender
4. Return cooked meat or tofu with vegetables over stove. Add stir fry sauce or soy sauce. Cook and stir 1-2 minutes. Serve over warm rice OR seasoned top ramen



Optional

- Add tofu, or eggs into vegetable mixture and cook together in the pan
- Add cooked beef chicken or pork to stir fry. Do not add to vegetable mixture until cooked.

Quick Chili

Ingredients

Makes 7 servings

- ½ pound ground meat (beef or turkey)
- ½ medium onion, chopped
- 1 can (15.5 ounces) kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) diced tomatoes with liquid
- 1 ½ tablespoons Chili powder



Directions

1. Brown meat and onions in a large skillet over medium-high heat (350 F degrees in an electric skillet). Drain fat.
2. Add beans, tomatoes, and chili powder.
3. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook for 10 minutes.
4. Serve hot. Top with cheese, if desired.
5. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Notes

- Use pinto or black beans instead of kidney beans, if desired.
- Add dried cumin and/or oregano in Step 2 for extra flavor!
- *Great for freezing leftovers!*

Cheesy Broccoli Casserole

Ingredients

Makes 6 servings

- 4 cups fresh OR frozen broccoli (substitute with 1 can green beans)
- 1 can (10.75 ounce) cream of mushroom soup
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- 2 cups dry bread crumbs or crackers of choice
- ½ cup melted butter



Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 2-quart casserole dish.
2. Put broccoli in a large microwave-safe bowl with a small amount of water in the bottom; cook in microwave until tender, about 5 minutes. Drain liquid from bowl. Stir mushroom soup, Cheddar cheese, and mayonnaise with the broccoli until evenly mixed; pour into prepared casserole dish.
3. Mix bread crumbs and melted butter together in a separate bowl; spread evenly over the broccoli mixture.
4. Bake in preheated oven until the surface is bubbling, 20 to 30 minutes.

More Information and Recipes

For a more in depth overview of foods that you can or cannot freeze please visit: <http://onceamonthmeals.com/what-you-can-and-cannot-freeze/>

For quick, tasty, healthy, and budget-friendly recipes as well as tips and tricks such as using ingredient substitutions, visit the Food Hero website: <https://www.foodhero.org/>

For easy and budget-friendly WIC Recipes separated by food category, please visit Minnesota department of Health’s “Healthy Families” website: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/wic/newwicfoods/ppt/foodfunfacts/recipes/>

To find more budget-friendly recipes, Leanne Brown’s cookbook “Eat Well on \$4/Day”, can be accessed on her website. Please visit: www.leannebrown.com

For more budget-friendly recipes and cookbooks, visit SNAP’s website at: <http://www.whatcooking.fns.usda.gov>

For tons of resources about healthy eating, tracking your nutritional intake, nutritional education for kids, eating on a budget, etc. please visit USDA’s MyPlate website: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>



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Notes



Coos County Health & Human Services does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, gender, religion, marital status, sexual orientation or disability in the admission to or participation of its programs, services, or activities, or in employment.



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