

Food budgeting ideas

1. *Buy bulk on big items, like flour, sugar, oil, pasta, rice, nappy wipes, nappies, shower washes, shampoo & conditioners.* This saves \$\$\$'s as you're only buying them every couple of weeks or month or so. (keep flour in the fridge or freezer to prevent weevils)
2. *Buy home brand or cheap brands on essentials such as oil, flour and sugar, pasta, rice, oh and your plastic wrap, alfoil, plastic bags etc.* Most of these products are made by the big brands. You generally can tell which brand makes the product as the cheap brand packaging is similar to the expensive brand (bottle shapes, plastic slow pours in the bottles and caps, etc) – also even cheap olive oil is better for you than other oils.
3. *Watch for specials in your junk mail.* Make a list of items you buy regularly and watch your junk mail for those items. Often you only can save a few dollars by going to a different shop, but when you add up the savings over a month or two it makes a difference.
4. *Buy meat in bulk whenever you can.* Try to buy from a local butcher whenever you can, the meat will be better quality and quite possibly local as well (al of which helps your local economy) if you buy meat at the supermarket, check the price per kilo on the label first, often the smaller trays will cost more. Watch for specials and buy a larger amount then split into 3 meals and freeze the rest..
5. *Write a list and make a plan of all the meals.* and try to work out what each meal costs, often you can find 3 or 4 meals that are very cheap to make and you can rotate them each week.
6. *Split your shopping into two trips.* Buy a fortnights worth of staples & essentials the day after payday (bread, flour, meat, veges, toiletries, cleaning stuff, etc) then make another trip to the supermarket a couple of days before the next payday, if theres money left for the biscuits, softdrinks, sweets and other non essential things, then that's the time to buy them.
7. *Make your own baby food and freeze it!* take some of the food served for the older kids blend or wizz it up. It's a huge saving, and fresh fruit is cheaper and often better when stewed up at home.
8. *Buy frozen veg.* It's cheap, doesn't go off and is always used. It contains all the nutrients in fresh veges thanks to new methods of freezing food. Don't skimp on this, cheap brands contain the reject veggies and the stems so spend a little extra on it. *Eat out of your garden whenever you can,* rocket grows very easily as does tomatoes. If you are not a gardener, but would like to try, the secret is to only grow one thing. (buy a \$5 bag of pottingmix, open the top and plant a tomato in it, you'll get much more than your \$5 back in fresh and tasty tomatos)

9. *If you have dog, feed it your table scraps* (minus any cooked bones!) This reduces pet food consumption, reduces waste and your pet's coats will be shiney and healthy. (but don't give them chocolate or chocolate spreads!) Save your tuna water or brine and give it to your dogs, it's great for their coats and for cats too!!! Buy in bulk for your pets too, it can save a lot of money, specially if you get on special. Dog meat from a butcher can be much cheaper in the long run than tinned meat.

10. *Eat before you go*, THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT ! don't go shopping when you are hungry, you spend more money when your hungry. It tends to get spent on snack foods, lollies, chocolate and biscuits.

11. *Never buy off the end of aisle* but go into the aisle and check other brands! Often they put the more expensive items on the ends. Likewise, they will always put the more expensive items within easy reach inside the aisle, (they spend a lot of money researching human behaviour) BEND DOWN and look at the price of the items on the bottom shelf.

12. *Do the planet a favour*, buy cotton nappies and wash them. You'll save an immense amount of money, reduce your carbon footprint, and reduce land fill.

13. *Ask yourself* if you really need it. Compulsive buying adds \$\$\$'s.

14. *And of course* - never, never, never pick up things that are located beside the checkout. These items are put there purely to promote compulsive buying. Make a resolution to ignore these corporate tricks.