




Get Smart As You Shop

Fruits and vegetables can fit into any budget. The following tips can help you save money as you strive to eat more fruits and vegetables.



Remember, fresh, frozen, canned, and dried types all count toward getting more fruits and veggies.

Before You Shop




-  **Look for store ads** and use them when planning your weekly grocery list. Plan to buy the fruits and vegetables that are on sale and use them in meals and snacks that week.
-  **Plan your weekly meals and snacks** before you go shopping. Look through your freezer and pantry to see what fruits and vegetables you have at home that you can use.
-  **Think variety!** Make a point to try a new fruit or vegetable each week.



After You Shop

-  **Use fresh fruits and vegetables** within a few days after shopping and use frozen and canned fruits and vegetables later in the week.
-  As you are putting your groceries away, **chop some fruits and vegetables** and place in bags or storage containers. Keep them in the refrigerator so they will be ready to grab for lunches and snacks.

While You Shop

-  **Purchase fresh fruits and vegetables in season** when they tend to be less expensive.
-  **Buy whole fruits and vegetables** instead of pre-cut or pre-packaged forms which tend to be more expensive.
-  **Consider frozen and canned** if fresh are too expensive. Frozen and canned fruits and vegetables keep longer than fresh.
-  **Shop smartly!** Look out for added sugar in canned fruits; look for fruit packed in water or juice. Choose veggies with low sodium.
-  **Consider generic or store brands** instead of name brands. Store brands tend to cost less and have similar taste and nutrition.
-  If your budget allows, **buy larger bags of frozen fruits and vegetables**. They may be a better bargain and you can use what you need and keep the rest for later use.
-  **Buy canned or dried beans** and use them in recipes instead of meat which is more expensive. Traditional recipes made with meat such as chili, soups, and Mexican dishes like burritos are delicious with beans.

Visit www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov for more great tips and recipes



Seasonal Chart for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (shaded area indicates peak season)

* Many of the listed fruits and vegetables are available year round, but their cost will be higher and quality may be less.

Fruit/ Vegetable	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Tips
Apples	■	■	■	■	■				■	■	■	■	Choose firm apples with no soft spots.
Avocado	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Ripe fruit will be slightly firm, but yield to gentle pressure.
Banana	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Select bananas that are firm; with no bruises.
Bell Pepper	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Choose peppers with firm skin, with no wrinkles.
Broccoli	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Select bunches that are dark green.
Cantaloupe					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Select melons that are slightly golden with a light fragrant smell.
Carrots	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Pick carrots that are deep orange in color. Avoid carrots that are cracked or wilted.
Corn					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Husks should be green, tight, and fresh looking. The ear should have tightly packed rows of plump kernels.
Cucumber					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Choose firm cucumbers with rich green color and no soft spots.
Eggplant							■	■	■	■	■	■	Pick symmetrical eggplant; avoid oversized eggplants with may be tough and bitter.
Grapes						■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Look for firm, plump, well-colored clusters.
Lettuce	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Choose fresh, crisp leaves with no wilting.
Mushrooms	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Mushrooms should be firm, moisture-free (not dry), and blemish-free.
Onion	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Onions should feel dry and solid with no soft spots or sprouts.
Orange	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Pick oranges that are firm, heavy for their size and have bright colorful skins.
Peach						■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Choose peaches that are soft to the touch with a fragrant smell.
Pear	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Ripe pears will yield slightly to gently pressure a the stem end.
Strawberries				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Strawberries should be dry, firm and well shaped and be a bright shade of red.
Summer Squash						■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Look for squash that are firm with bright, glossy exteriors.
Sweet Potato									■	■	■	■	Choose firm, dark, smooth sweet potatoes.
Tomato					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Select plump tomatoes with smooth skins, free