



Senior Series

A partnership between Ohio State University Extension
and Ohio Aging Network professionals



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Grocery Shopping for One or Two

With such a variety of foods to choose from when grocery shopping, it can be challenging to shop for one or two people. Many of the single-serving frozen foods and meals have been proven to have high nutrition content, plus they are convenient, taste good, and can be inexpensive if purchased when on sale. Take the time to read the ingredients to make sure nothing inside can cause problems for you, such as high sugar or salt content.

Learning how much to buy for one or two is helpful. There are many cookbooks designed for one or two, with recipes yielding only two servings rather than four or more. You may also want to take the time to rework your favorite recipes for smaller yields, unless it is a recipe that you like and it freezes well. You may want to invest in a vacuum sealer or use small plastic food storage

bags to store single or double portions. With a vacuum sealer, foods last longer in your freezer, and you can purchase foods that are on sale and freeze them in portion sizes. Remember to label and date each item so it is easy to identify later.

Meal planning and creating shopping lists, according to the store layout, will help you economize at the grocery store. Spending as little time in the grocery store as possible and not shopping when you are tired, depressed, stressed, or hungry will also help you economize and stick with your list.

Clipping coupons will help save dollars, too. Many manufacturers have web sites, allowing you to go online for coupons. Buying non-food items at the grocery store can be more expensive than at other places such as discount stores.

Buying Vegetables for Two

(consider how many meals/side meals you would like to have for a week)

Artichokes	2 each
Asparagus.....	1 pound
Beans (green/wax)	1/2–3/4 pound
Broccoli.....	1 pound
Cabbage.....	1/2 pound if served raw
Carrots.....	1/2 pound
Celery	1 small bunch if served raw
Cucumbers	1
Greens (lettuces)	1 pound*
Onions (medium)	2
Peas	1–1½ pounds
Sweet/White Potatoes ...	3/4–1 pound
Tomatoes.....	1 each

*Remember to check out the pre-packaged salads

Buying Meat for Two

(consider how many meals/side meals you would like to have for a week)

After checking prices, ask yourself if it would be cheaper to buy meats on sale by the 1/2 pound or by the pound. If it's cheaper by the pound, cut it down and freeze portion sizes. This process will work with most meats and allows you to plan ahead and save money.

Portions of Meats for Two

Chops	2–4 (depends on size)
Ground Beef	1/2–2/3 pound
Hot Dogs	1/2 pound
Liver.....	1/2 pound
Pot Roast	2–3 pounds
Roasts.....	3–4 pounds can make 2–3 meals
Sausage	1/2–2/3 pound
Smoked Ham.....	3/4-inch thick slice
Spareribs	2 pounds

Meats, baked goods, and fresh produce pose the biggest difficulties in shopping for one or two. When a meat item is on sale, buy several pounds and either cook one or two portions the same day, or divide the rest into one-serving portions and use a vacuum sealer or plastic bags to freeze for later use. You can do the same thing with many bakery items, including breads or baked goods. Most freeze very well, thaw quickly, and can be defrosted in your microwave.

Pre-packaged salads can be purchased in smaller amounts that are cleaned and ready to eat. Some salads come with dressing included. Many stores now have a salad bar where you can buy just the amount you need. Fresh and bagged salads may be a little more expensive per pound but you will save in the long run because you will not be throwing out produce that has spoiled.

With a little planning and these hints in mind you can become a savvy small quantity shopper!

Remember to:

1. Decide what meals you would like to have throughout your shopping cycle.
2. Organize your shopping list according to the layout of your favorite store/s.
3. Look for bargains and clip coupons.
4. Don't shop when you are hungry, tired, depressed, or stressed.
5. Watch the register as you check out to make sure you are charged the correct price.
6. Check out the frozen foods—it may cost you more to make a meal than to purchase one.

7. Cook ahead and freeze what you can.

By taking the time to follow some shopping, buying, and storage techniques, the task of shopping for one or two will become less frustrating and less expensive.

References

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Practical Kitchen (Cindy Sanchez). Retrieved from Internet 08/27/04 (www.practicalkitchen.com/cooking_for_two).

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Author: Deborah Weber, Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging, Inc.

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Keith L. Smith, Associate Vice President for Agricultural Administration and Director, OSU Extension

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