

# Flavoursome Food on a Budget



Use tinned,  
fresh or dried  
ingredients,  
plus a few  
others,  
to easily  
produce tasty  
one-pot dishes.

MINIMUM UTENSILS  
MAXIMUM TASTE

**Mothers' UNION**  
Christian care for families

# Basic food items and price guidance

In order to stretch, add taste and cook tinned or dried food, here is a list of basics to have at home all the time.

Some supermarket reduce items before closing, pay them a visit then to restock. The bargain corner is worth a look. Always buy the basics when they are on special offer. 'Own' brand items are often, but not always, cheaper. Look for the price per kg to compare. Frozen fish, meat and veg are often the best value.

## Onions

They make anything taste better.

## Potatoes

Potatoes can be eaten mashed, boiled, roasted or as chips.

## Fresh vegetables

Veg in season are the cheapest, for example - winter and early spring: sprouts, celery and root veg. Late spring: leafy things. Summer: lots of choice. Autumn: carrots and leeks. Veg. are often cheaper bought loose but look out for the supermarkets economy packs, and compare prices. Roots and onions last longer and are more filling than leafy veg. so better value. Frozen veg are good value.

## Ground black pepper; salt; garlic (granulated, powdered, fresh or in a jar); chilli (ground or flaked); stock cubes

All these seasonings add flavour to meals, shop around for best value. Indian/Chinese/Asian shops often sell these cheaper and in bigger quantities along with other spices.

## Cooking oil

You can buy rapeseed, sunflower and vegetable oil for a reasonable price, olive oil is good but costs more.

## Sliced bread

Most supermarkets sell value brand 400g brown and white sliced bread.

**Plain or self-raising flour** Useful for sauces and baking, buy supermarket own brand.

## Measurements

If you have no scales, approximate weights of food and volume of water in recipes has been measured, then put into a medium sized mug.

200ml	=	¾ mug water or ½ large mug
300ml	=	1 full mug
tsp	=	teaspoon
tbsp	=	tablespoon
dsp	=	dessert spoon

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## Breakfast

### Porridge

Serves 1. Cheap and nutritious

40g supermarket own brand porridge oats (½ mug).  
200mls water.  
Milk to serve.  
Sugar or salt to your taste.

#### METHOD

Put porridge into small pan with the water and heat stirring all the time until the water evaporates and it clogs together 5-15minutes, the longer you cook, it becomes creamier. Serve with milk and sugar or salt to your taste. Options are to make it with milk and serve with honey, yoghurt and fruit.

### Oats with Peaches

Serves 1. Using tinned fruits

40g (half a mug) rolled oats if you can get them *or* porridge oats.  
½ tin peaches or other fruit, chopped.  
100mls. milk.

#### METHOD

The evening before bed measure out the oats into a cereal bowl. Add milk and the peaches with a little juice from the tin if you like, mix together. In the morning add extra milk if necessary to serve.

## Burgers and fishcakes

### Chickpea and Corn Burgers

Serves 4. Vegan recipe, very satisfying.

1x400g tin drained chickpeas.  
1x340g tin drained sweetcorn.  
Salt and pepper.  
3 tbsp flour, plus more for dusting.  
1 medium finely chopped onion.  
1tbsp. oil.

#### Optional

Small bunch of coriander or parsley chopped.  
1 lemon.  
1 tsp. cumin.



#### METHOD

Put the chickpeas and sweetcorn into a processor, if you have one. If not pound them with the end of a potato masher, fork or pestle and mortar. You could put chickpeas in a microwave for 30 seconds to make them softer to mash with a fork. Add the herbs, onion, seasoning and flour. The option is to add the zest of one lemon by grating or peeling the lemon and cutting the peel up very finely, along with the cumin. Shape into 4 burgers and coat with the extra flour. Leave in fridge for half an hour to firm up. Heat the oil in a frying pan, fry on a medium heat to cook through for about 4-5 minutes on each side. Another option is to leave out the chickpeas to make sweetcorn fritters.

## Feel Good Fish Cakes

Serves 4. Canned fish are high in nutrients.

250g (2 medium) potatoes or  
80g packet of instant potato + 300mls (1 mug) water.  
1x120g tin sardines/tinned mackerel/pilchards in  
tomato sauce.  
Salt and pepper. A little flour. 1 tbsp. oil.  
*Optional*  
1 tbsp. mayonnaise or 1 tbsp. Greek yoghurt.  
1 tbsp. chopped parsley.



### METHOD

Make mashed potatoes, either from instant only putting in 300mls water (not the 350mls they say for making mash) or cook potatoes in water for 15-20 minutes until soft, drain and mash. Leave the potato to cool before next stage. Put sardines into a bowl and mash. Add mayonnaise or Greek yoghurt and parsley if you have them, it will taste great without. Add the mashed potato and season the mixture with salt and pepper, mix well together. Shape into 4 fish cakes and cover lightly with flour. Leave in fridge for half an hour to firm up. Heat oil and fry for 3-4 minutes on each side on a medium heat until crispy.

## Corned Beef Burgers

Serves 4.

Fresh or packet mashed potato.  
170g. tin corned beef.  
Salt and pepper.  
Little flour.  
1 tbsp. oil.  
*Optional*  
1 tbsp parsley.

### METHOD

Follow the fish cake recipe for the mashed potato. Mash the corned beef up into small pieces (get your fingers into it) and mix with the mashed potato. Add parsley and seasoning. Shape into 4 burgers and cover lightly with flour. Leave in fridge for half an hour to firm up. Heat oil and fry for 3-4 minutes on each side until crispy and cooked through.



## Minestrone Soup

Serves 6.

The beans and pasta make a very thick filling meal. You can add what ever vegetables you have.

1 carrot. 1 onion, skin removed.  
1 peeled potato.  
1x340g tin sweetcorn. 1x400g tin tomatoes.  
1x400g tin baked beans in tomato sauce or 1x400g tin of beans.  
2 stock cubes, chicken or veg.  
50g. pasta shapes (½ of a mug).  
Salt and pepper  
*Optional*  
Hand full of grated cheese or cooked sausages..



### METHOD

Chop carrot, onion and potato or any veg you have into small pieces. Put into a large pan with sweetcorn, tomatoes and baked beans/beans. Add stock cubes and a little water to JUST cover the vegetables. Bring to the boil and boil gently for about 15minutes. Add pasta shapes, or break up some pasta you have into small bits and cook for a further 15 minutes. Season. An option is to serve with some grated cheese sprinkled on top or add some cooked sausages.

## Corned Beef Pie

Serves 2 man sized portions.  
Comfort food.

350 g (3 med sized) potatoes  
or 80g packet instant mash.  
1 chopped onion. 1 tbsp. oil.  
Salt and pepper. 170g corned beef tin.  
*Optional*  
200g baked beans. 2 tbsp. tomato ketchup.  
Grated cheese.



### METHOD

Make mashed potatoes, either instant following packet instructions or cook potatoes until soft, about 20mins, then drain and mash well. Add a little milk if you have it. Fry onion in oil until soft and browning about 5 minutes. Open corned beef tin, cut and crumble it into a large oven proof dish. An option is to add tomato ketchup or baked beans if you have some and mix it through the corned beef. Add cooked onions and mix these all together and season. Spread the mashed potato on top, I like to pull a fork over the top to make it look attractive, sprinkle with grated cheese if you have some. Bake for 30 minutes in moderately hot oven 180°C Gas 4, until just turning brown at the edges. You can cook this in a frying pan on the hob if no oven, stirring well and serve potato separately.

## Roast Chicken

Serves 4. A very easy tasty dish.

4 chicken thighs or 8 drumsticks with skin on (thighs and drumsticks are usually the cheapest chicken to buy).  
1 chicken stock cube.  
Salt and pepper.  
*Optional*  
1 tsp dried thyme.

### METHOD

Put the thighs or drumsticks in an oven proof dish. Add only 200mls. boiling water to the stock cube to dissolve it, then add to the dish. Cover with seasoning and optional thyme. Cook in oven for 35 minutes at 200° C. Gas 6. Then to get the skin crispy, grill for 10 minutes.



## Green, Brown or Puy Lentils with Onions

Serves 2. My favourite.

Serve with sausages or cold as a salad.

2 thinly sliced medium onions.  
1x400g packet/tin cooked green, brown or Puy lentils or 150g dried lentils.  
1 tbsp. oil. stock cubes. Salt and pepper.  
*Optional* 2 carrots.  
1 celery stick or some swede (whatever veg you have), cut into small chunks.  
4 chopped bacon rashers or ½ mug.  
1 tbsp. fresh parsley or other herbs .



### METHOD

With cooked lentils - Heat pan and add the optional bacon, cook for 5 minutes to let the water come out of it, drain this off if there is a lot Add half the oil and all the onion, cook for another 5 minutes. Add a little more oil and the optional root veg, which will take 25 minutes to cook through, keep stirring so they don't catch too much. Stir in the drained lentils, 1 stock cube, parsley and seasoning, heat for another 10 minutes.

### METHOD

With dried lentils - Rinse them first. Brown the onion/veg in the oil for 10 minutes. Then add 400mls water and 2 stock cubes and cook for 25 - 40 minutes on low heat depending of type of lentil, you need them with a bit of bite.

## Roasted Vegetables

Serves 2.

I love these, we make them once a week with a variety of vegetables, sweet potatoes are lovely. Great also as a salad cold, with oil and vinegar dressing, so make extra when cooking them.

1 onion.  
1 large potato.  
2 carrots.  
+ 2 vegetables of your choice.  
1tbsp oil.  
Seasoning . . .  
1 clove garlic, crushed or ½ tsp .garlic granules.  
Salt and pepper.

*Optional*

1tsp dried herbs.

You can add or replace with any of these vegetables: parsnip, swede, squash, cauliflower, celeriac and sweet potato, just buy when in season (winter time) and are good value..



### METHOD

Peel the vegetables (I only do this for thicker skinned veg like swede, squash and celeriac) and cut into large chunky pieces, no smaller than 3cm or an inch. Place them on a baking tray, add the oil and lots of seasoning, the herbs and garlic are optional, but add to the taste. Mix them well with your hands so they are all coated with the oil. Spread them out in a single layer and cook in a high shelf in a hot oven 220°C Gas 7 for 45 min. or longer until tender and turning golden brown at the edges.

## Potato and Yellow Split Pea Curry

Serves 4. I love split peas.

1 tbsp oil.  
1 chopped onion.  
2 tsp .garlic granules.  
½ tsp chilli flakes or powder;.  
3-4 medium potatoes or 350g, peeled and cut into even sizes.  
200g dried yellow split peas or 1 mug full.  
2 stock cubes, with 500ls water or 2 full mugs of water, salt and pepper.

*Optional*

2 tsp curry powder.  
1 x 400g tin of chopped tomatoes.



### METHOD

Rinse the split peas in water until water runs clear, drain. Heat the oil and add the onion, cook until soft about 5 minutes. Then add the garlic, chilli and curry powder, if you have some, for a minute or two, just enough to bring out the flavours of the spices, don't let them burn. Add the potatoes, peas and tomatoes and the stock cube and water. Stir well and cook on the hob gently with lid on for about 40 minutes until the potatoes and peas have softened, be careful it doesn't go dry, add extra water if needed. Season. Meat option is to add chicken pieces. If you don't have curry powder this is still a great meal, you could add extra chilli if you like it hot.

# Pasta

Cook the pasta in lots of water according to packet instructions (usually 8- 10 minutes) and make it a cheap, quick and tasty meal with one of the following sauce-based recipes: 75 g—100g pasta for one person. 1 mug = 100g

## Sardines

Serves 2. This dish is popular in Italy.

150g - 200g dried pasta, cooked.  
1 tbsp. oil. 1 chopped onion.  
2 garlic cloves or 1 tsp garlic granules.  
1x120g. tin sardines in tomato sauce or any other fish in tomato sauce.  
Small pinch dried crushed chillies, salt and pepper.  
*Optional*  
½ lemon juiced. Freshly grated cheese to serve.



### METHOD

Heat oil and add onion, cook till soft, then add garlic cloves or granules, cook for a few minutes. Then add sardines and all their sauce and chilli flakes, heat through. When pasta is cooked add sardine mixture to it and add lemon juice or cheese if you have them. Season.

## Tuna and Tomato

Serves 2.

This sauce is good with burgers.

150g - 200g dried pasta, cooked.  
1 clove of chopped garlic or 1 tsp. garlic granules.  
1 tsp. oil. 1 chopped small onion.  
Pinch of chilli flakes. 1 tin chopped tomatoes.  
1x80g tin tuna (drained). Salt and pepper.  
*Optional* 1 tbsp. parsley.

### METHOD

Heat oil and add onion, cook for 5 minutes. Add parsley, garlic or granules and chilli flakes, cook for 2 minutes. Once tomatoes are added cook over low heat for 10-15 minutes to develop flavour and thicken. Put the tuna in, season and heat through then add the cooked pasta, mix well and serve.



## Anchovies, Chilli and Toasted Breadcrumbs

Serves 2. Famous chef's recipe.

For toasted breadcrumbs . . .  
3tbsp. oil. 1 clove garlic or 1 tsp garlic granules.  
100g. breadcrumbs *or*  
4 slices (grate sliced bread or cut fine).  
Salt and pepper.  
*Optional* 1 tsp. dried thyme.  
For pasta sauce . . .  
150g - 200g dried pasta, cooked.  
1 clove garlic or 1 tsp. garlic granules.  
1x50g tin anchovies.  
1 tsp. chilli flakes, salt and pepper. 2 tbsp. oil.  
*Optional* 1 lemon.



### METHOD

For toasted breadcrumbs . . .

Heat the 3 tbsp. oil and add the garlic, thyme and breadcrumbs on a medium heat, (be careful they don't burn) they will fry and begin to toast, stir until they are really crisp and golden. Season and set aside on kitchen paper.

Heat the oil for sauce with the garlic, low to medium heat. Put the anchovies on top and after a minute or two they will begin to melt, sprinkle in the chilli and squeeze in the juice of the lemon, season. Toss in the cooked pasta stir well and sprinkle the toasted breadcrumbs on top for a delicious meal.

## Homemade North African Flatbreads

Makes 3 small.

This bread is cheap and easy to make for any meal and gives an oriental twist, great with homemade tomato sauce (tuna and tomato pasta recipe) add an egg for a meal.

100g. plain flour,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mug.

$\frac{1}{2}$  tbsp. oil.

Pinch salt.

Warm water.



### METHOD

To make flatbreads

1. Measure the flour and add the salt in a mixing bowl. Make a well in the centre of the flour and add the oil. Mix into the flour with spoon to begin with, then your fingers, then add little by little 30-50 ml. of warm water until mixture comes together to form a dough, don't make it too wet. If you do add extra flour.
2. Knead the dough for 3-4 minutes, or until elasticated a little so that the dough springs back whilst you are kneading. Let it rest for about 10 minutes.
3. Divide into 3 balls. With your fingers press out each ball to the thickness of a 50p piece and about a 10cm diameter round. Heat a large empty frying pan over a high heat. Cook the flatbread one at a time on each side for about 3 minutes, or until slightly charred, cooked through and a little puffed up. Keep warm on a plate covered with a tea towel, or in the oven.

## Bean or Pea Hummus

Serves 4.

Middle Eastern food to serve with flatbreads or toast. Traditionally made with chick peas.

1x400g drained tin of any cooked bean or chick pea, yellow split peas are lovely in this dish but are dried and will need cooking according to packet first.

1 clove garlic or 1 tsp. garlic granules.

5 tbsp. oil.

Salt and pepper.

*Optional*

Juice  $\frac{1}{2}$  lemon

$\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. cumin;

1 tbsp. tahini paste (sesame seed paste) or

1 tbsp peanut butter.



### METHOD

Put the beans into a processor, if you have. If not pound the beans with the end of a potato masher, fork or pestle and mortar. You could put chickpeas in a microwave for 30 seconds to make them softer to mash with a fork. Add the garlic and continue pounding (it will take some time), then gradually add the oil and seasoning and optional ingredients if you have them, until you have a smooth paste. It will be slightly thicker and chunkier than a food processor produced version, but will still taste good.