

**Small Spaces,
Small Budgets**

by

'Average Concerned Mom'

A Common Sense Approach to Stockpiling Food For Those who Live in Small Spaces and Have a Small Budget

This sample plan is designed to give a family of four (2 adults and 2 children under 7) a cheap, compact way to store a 2-week supply of food to meet their basic nutritional needs. This plan is designed for my family, taking into consideration our weight, ages, and food preferences (no artificial ingredients) – but it can easily be adapted for families of different numbers, sizes and ages.

This plan is:

- Compact: a 2-week supply fits into a 66-quart clear storage box.
- Expandable: add as many 2-week boxes as you wish to get food for your desired timeframe (for a pandemic, perhaps 6 to 12 weeks)
- Cheap: a 2-week supply of “bare bones basics” costs about \$130 (cheaper if on sale)
- Nutritious: It meets our family’s **basic** survival nutritional needs (calories, protein, fiber) and gives **options** for meeting vitamin and mineral needs.

I have included basic recipes for people who are not used to cooking. The food in this plan can be prepared over an open flame (such as a propane or kerosene camp stove) either by boiling in a pot or frying in a pan. Of course if you have access to a stove, more interesting foods could be baked.

Here are the answers to some questions people have when I share this buying plan with them.

What are you talking about? Pandemic? Store 6- 12-weeks of food? Why on earth?

I’ll leave that one to the experts. This is a how-to guide, not a why-to guide. (-:

You can check www.pandemicflu.gov for a lot of information about pandemic influenza along with their recommendation to stockpile 2 weeks of food and water in case it happens. I personally believe 6 to 12 weeks would be a better recommendation. The US State Department and the UN have both given the recommendation to THEIR employees, to stockpile food for 12 weeks, so I feel what is good enough for them is good enough for my family! If you feel that way too, but just can’t figure out how to afford it (and store it) continue reading!

Why store dried foods instead of canned, ready to eat?

Canned foods are bulky and expensive. If you are trying to store 6 to 12 weeks (or more) of food, and you live in tiny quarters, you need to think small and compact. I think it makes more sense to store compact, dried foods; have some chlorine bleach and a way to boil or filter water, and store some water. Storing ready-to-eat foods (such as canned ravioli, soups and cornflakes) is a good idea for hurricanes and such, up to about 2 weeks if you can afford it; but more than that doesn’t make sense to me unless you live in a house with a very large basement or pantry area.

And, frankly, dried “hard-to-prepare” foods have a better chance of not being “raided” by busy parents ahead of time. It is just too tempting to open a can of soup for lunch on a hectic day, before you know it, your stockpile is gone.

So how do I store vitamin-rich foods?

The cheapest and most compact way to get vitamins (and simplest) is as supplements. A 12-week supply for a family of four would fit in a shoe box and cost around \$60. Supplements would be easy to transport if you had to relocate, and they have a long shelf life. And frankly, right now, supplements are a big way my kids get their vitamins – their boxed cereal is fortified; their juice and milk is often fortified, and they take a vitamin pill already.

Dried fruits and vegetables are expensive compared to supplements, but add some variety to the diet and are fairly compact. If you can buy in bulk and repackage they would go a long way in soups and stews. www.sfherb.com or www.waltonfeed.com are good places for soup mixes.

Of course, canned fruits and vegetables add variety to a “bare bones” subsistence diet. They are however, more expensive and bulkier to store. Best nutritional bets in canned foods are: canned tomatoes (NOT sauce or paste); orange, grapefruit and pineapples juice or chunks for Vitamin C; canned pumpkin and yams for Vitamin A; and greens such as spinach, collards and okra.

Other ways to meet your needs for vitamins AND variety? In a small apartment, sprouting would be a good choice. You can do it cheaply (in jars with cheesecloth) or you can buy specialized sprouters. www.sproutpeople.com is one excellent source for sprouting information and equipment. Some people think there is a health risk to eating raw sprouts so you would have to investigate that and see for yourself; you can always stir fry the sprouts, or more realistically, grind them up and bake them into pancakes smothered with syrup so your kids will eat them. Or, you could just grind up the vitamins and stick them in the pancakes, and skip the extra work. (-: The grown-ups might like the crunchy sprouts though.

One HUGE advantage to sprouts is that you can grow them indoors. If you have access to a balcony or a backyard or the roof, there’s always the container garden idea. A great concept for maximum produce with limited effort and space is here at www.squarefootgardening.com. With a garden, you do have to worry about animals (or passers-by) getting into your produce, and the hassle factor may be high. But if it works, you’d have **actual fruit and vegetables** to eat instead of sprouts. (At least, you would if it wasn’t winter. For winter, I’m thinking sprouts.)

Commonsense Says: Lay in your supply of grains-and-beans basics first, for however many weeks you feel is reasonable, and then add more of the variety food, as space and budget permits. Some dried fruits and veggies, some canned applesauce; maybe try some sprouts. If it were me, I’d try to get the kids to eat

whatever is cheapest and has the biggest nutritional bang for the buck. (Kids, meet sprouts.)

But, my kids won't eat powdered milk, beans, oatmeal and cornbread (and certainly not sprouts.)

Well, this is a problem. Boxes of Cheerios and Cornflakes are much bulkier (and more expensive) per serving than dried oatmeal and cornmeal.

Look at this comparison:

1 box of brand-name "oat-circle" cereal has 14 servings and costs \$4.00. That's 28 cents/serving.

1 carton of Generic Brand Oatmeal has 30 servings and costs \$3.19. That's 10 cents/serving – almost a third of the cost of ready to eat stuff!

12 weeks of brand-name cereal for one child would cost you \$24.00, but 12 weeks of oatmeal for 1 child would only cost you \$9.60. If you are only storing 2 weeks of food, the extra bulk and expense may not be an issue, but if you are aiming for 12 weeks you will run into serious cost and storage issues with ready-to-eat foods. What can I say? It's your call!

Commonsense says: Teach your kids to eat oatmeal and cornmeal mush, at least once in a while. Maybe you could store 2 weeks of "regular life" foods, and then 2 more weeks of the "bare bones" items, and see how it goes from there? Use the "bare bones" food on a regular basis to help you save money for additional items. And remember -- there's no downside to having kids who eat cheaper food.

How will I cook all these foods if we lose power for any reason?

First, let's all hope we do not lose power at any point during a pandemic. OK, now let's be realistic. It could happen, either for a short term (your oven breaks, the line to your house comes down and it takes people longer than usual to repair it) or for much longer time period. Whatever the reason, you will want to be able to prepare the food you have.

At a bare minimum, you will need a backup way to boil water and fry food in a frying pan. I'll leave it to the experts to help you figure out the pros and cons of the various propane, kerosene and wood stoves that are out there. Some are safe (or safer) for indoor use. If you live in an apartment building, your options are probably more limited. It may be you could (quietly, surreptitiously, and VERY carefully) operate a small camp stove indoors under close supervision – or you could use something on your balcony or outdoor stairwell. I don't know.

One excellent fuel for apartment dwellers is called "**EcoFuelXB**".

See link here: www.ecofuelxb.com/safety.html This fuel comes in a can (like fuels used for chafing dishes), and can heat foods up to 400 degrees F (so you can

actually boil and cook over it, not just warm up soup). Since it does not have any risk of explosion, it is safe to store in bulk in places like apartment buildings where other fuels are not permitted. It has a very long shelf life – at least up to 10 years. It is probably more expensive than other fuels, but because of its excellent safety profile, it would be a good choice for apartment dwellers as a back-up fuel source.

Safety Note: if you are using any type of fuel or stove indoors, be sure to never leave it unattended while cooking, keep it out of reach of children at all times; only operate it while sober, and be sure to have a working carbon monoxide detector. And crack a window while cooking. And again NEVER leave it unattended while you are cooking. That's how fires start. Thank you.

To conserve whatever fuel you have and make it last longer, you can cook using a simple **thermal** or **haybox cooker** which works just like a crock pot only without needing electricity. A thermal cooker can be constructed extremely simply. Use a heavy pot with a lid. Cast iron works great – you want a heavy pot that you can use on top of your stove. The heavier it is, the better it will retain the heat. You can find complicated directions for making your own haybox cooker online, but here is a very simple way I have found that works just as well:

Boil your water or cook your food (rice, beans, whatever) over your propane camp stove or EcoFuel can + stove for about 10 minutes; then remove the pot from the heat source. With the lid on, and quickly wrap the pot in a blanket. I use a regular fleece blanket that I have around the house. Finally, wrap the wrapped pot in either aluminum foil or in one of those emergency foil blankets you can get at any emergency supply store or at the dollar store. Keep the whole thing somewhere relatively warm and out of a draft (I use my non-working oven!) for about 4 to 6 hours. The blanket plus foil wrapper will serve as insulation and will keep the pot of food cooking just as a crock pot does.

If you live where it is ever sunny, including the northern parts of the USA in the spring to fall months, you may be able to cook using a **solar oven** – if you have access to about 2 to 4 hours of direct sun per day, perhaps on the roof of your apartment building. www.solarcookers.com a good one costs about \$25 and you can make your own for about \$10.

If this doesn't work – what are your back-up back up options? We eat oatmeal raw, mixed with a little lemon juice and some oil and dried fruit. You can sprout small beans such as lentils and garbanzos and eat them raw; though large beans like pintos and black beans must be cooked. You can eat nuts and seeds and dried fruit raw. It wouldn't be pretty, but you could survive. If that really doesn't appeal to you, and you have absolutely no possibility for a back-up propane stove in your apartment, I guess it would make more sense to store the more expensive canned foods. You will just have to find a lot of extra room for them.

What about water? How will I eat all this food if we lose our water supply?

If we lose power for a length of time, it is likely that people in apartment buildings over about the fifth floor will not be able to get their water pumped up to them. Investigate now to see how you could get water in such a circumstance. Meanwhile, it does make sense to store water at home. I believe it makes more sense to store it separately from your food; that is, store water in water containers and store food without the water. That way, you have more flexibility in storage places. You can store the dried food, grains and beans in places that might reach freezing temperatures (such as in an attic or storage space) which would not be good for canned foods. Likewise, you can store the water in places that might attract rodents. In addition, should you need to relocate, you could just take your food and your empty water containers and move more quickly to a new spot.

OK, I'll try this – but – I don't know how to cook. Will it be hard to cook every day, 3 times a day?

You can do this. C'mon, in all honesty, these meals will not be anything fancy. Frankly they will be really boring. No fresh meat or vegetables to slice, simmer and sauté. Think basic pioneer (or cowboy) cooking. Pancakes, tortillas and beans. Lentil soup and stews. Oatmeal with a side of...raisins.

You don't have to try to be the "Martha Stewart" of Sheltering-In- Place. Just plain adequate is fine enough; you are talking about survival cooking, here nothing else. (And as an added bonus, once you have a box or two of these "preps" at home, you will **never** have to make an emergency run to the store after a vacation or before a snowstorm!)

Nutritional Considerations

Here are the parameters I used to build my family's first "box", based on the free "body calculator" at www.dietitian.com, and on what I could figure out on my own for the kids.

Nutritional goals per day are:

140 lb. mom = 2,500 calories / 65 g. protein / 25 g fiber / 5000 IU vit A / 60 mg vit. C /18 mg iron
180 pound dad = 3,000 calories/ 75 g. protein / 25 g fiber /5000 IU vit A / 60 mg vit. C /18 mg iron
35 pound 4YO = 1,500 calories/ 12 g. protein / ?? g. fiber/ 2000 IU vit. A/ 45 mg vit c /10 mg. iron
25 pound 1YO = 1,000 calories / 10 g. protein /?? g. fiber/ 2500 IU vit. A ?/ 45 mg vit. C /6 mg. iron

total/ day = 8,000 calories/ 162 g protein /75 g fiber/14,500 IU Vitamin A/210 mg Vit C/52 mg iron

Nutritional note – for kids, it would be hard for them not to get enough fiber, eating whole grains, beans; in fact the problem would be making sure they do not overfill on fiber before they get enough calories and nutrients. I can't find any

authoritative amount of fiber recommended for kids, so I will take a stab at it and say it is about 10 g .each.

So my bi weekly goal is: 14 x 8,000 calories = 112,000 calories / 2 weeks
14 x 162 g. protein = 2268 g protein / 2 weeks
14 x 75 g fiber = 1000 g fiber / 2 weeks

I am not a nutritionist or a dietitian, but I can see that this food box does not come anywhere close to providing the daily recommended amount of vitamins A, C, or really most vitamins. Most vitamins are found in fruits and vegetables, which are usually purchased fresh. As I mentioned earlier, canned fruits and vegetables are expensive and a 12-week supply would take up a lot of room. Dried fruits and vegetables would be a more compact alternative, however, my family really doesn't eat them very much and so they would be a waste. **COMMONSENSE SAYS: don't buy foods your family won't eat.**

For survival purposes, I have made dried fruit and vegetables only a small part of my plan. Instead, I supplied vitamin supplements which my children will eat. However, there is nothing wrong with altering this plan to suit what your family will actually consume. If your family will eat dried veggies in a stew or soup, store more of those. If they will eat dried fruit as a snack or in a pancake, stock those.

If you are making these boxes up for others, I might suggest making up Basic Boxes, and giving list of Bonus Items they may like to add, along with a separate box or storage container. If you buy items in bulk and repackage, you can make the Basic Box even more affordable on a large scale. And even low income families can afford some of the extras in the Bonus Box, but might find the cost of storage materials more than they could afford. One nice thing to add would be cans of dehydrated cheese – these are expensive and you wouldn't want to use them on a weekly basis – but one can would go a long way in making comfort foods that were familiar to kids like pizza, burritos and mac `n cheese.

Basic Box: Contains enough calories, protein and fiber to keep our family alive for 14 days. Contains some fruit and vegetables, and has vitamin and mineral supplements. What I've listed contains about 110,000 calories, 3,500 g. protein and 1450 g. fiber. On sale it should cost about \$130 and take up the space of two 56 quart storage boxes, with room for supplemental items.

As money and space permits, add more varied items. You can aim for less fiber; more vitamins, protein and calories...and taste! Add things your family likes, like canned fruit and vegetables, specialty items like powdered eggs or freeze dried cheese and evaporated milk if your kids will drink it.

Supplemental items may cost \$50 more but because of the bulk of the items may only add 4 to 7 days of calories and protein; however they will make the foods much more interesting and palatable. Families with more or older children will need to increase amounts of items to be sure to have enough calories and protein.

Basic Box Contents:

	Calories	g. protein	g. fiber	\$ cost
STARCHES				
5 lb white flour	7500	225	75	2.39
5 lb whole wheat	7500	300	350	1.99
5 lb. white rice	7500	150	75	3.19
4.4 lb. Masa Harina (corn flour)	7260	100	60	3.00
5 lb. corn meal	7500	150	75	1.79
5 pounds spaghetti/elbows	8400	280	32	6.00
5 lb. sugar	8505	0	0	2.99
42 oz. box oatmeal	4500	150	120	3.99
16 oz. box mashed potatoes	1680	24	24	1.69
2 lb. bag popcorn	2970	108	130	1.00
PROTEIN FOODS				
2 x 64 oz. box dried milk	5120	512	0	10.00
5 1-pound bags dried beans/lentils	5500	550	550	3.50
1 lb. bag plain almonds/nuts	3660	80	48	6.00
18-oz. jar peanut/almond butter	3200	112	32	2.19
1 lb. sunflower seeds	2660	112	14	4.00
1 lb. bag pumpkin seeds	2820	112	16	2.69
2 6 oz. cans tuna	200	30	0	1.60
1 14 oz. can salmon	630	84	0	1.50
1 can ham or sausage	1020	42	0	2.99
2 x 8 oz. jar parmesan cheese	1800	180	0	4.80
VITAMIN FOODS				
4 x 15 oz can pumpkin/yams	560	28	60	6.00
4 x 14 oz. can diced tomatoes	350	14	28	5.20
1 lb. dried fruit (raisins, etc.)	1760	16	32	4.00
OILS and FLAVORINGS				
48 oz .jar canola oil	11,520	0	0	3.19
1 jar 24 oz. honey	1,920	0	0	7.00
2 12 oz bags/bars chocolate	3,680	0	0	4.00
2 jars jam/jelly/marmalade	2,600	0	0	5.40
16 oz jar salsa	150	15	0	2.50
12 oz. bottle Tabasco				2.29
15 oz. bottle soy sauce				2.49
3.3 oz can beef bouillion cubes				2.99
40 count box of tea				1.50
yeast packets (if you will bake bread) cost varies maybe				2.00
40-count boxes Real Lemon/lemon juice (vitamin c)				2.00
salt				.25
vitamins for 14 days				12.00
SPICES! See list buy in bulk and repackage for variety				4.00
TOTAL/2 week period				
112,479 calories / 3520 g. protein / 1430 g. fiber				cost: about \$131
GOAL/2 week period				
112,000 calories/ 2268 g protein/ 1000 g. fiber				cost \$130.00

Supplemental items: (add items high in vitamins or protein; lower in fiber as money and space permit.

2 6 oz. cans of chicken	250	45	0	5.00
2 12 oz. boxes shelf-stable tofu	360	48	0	3.20
powdered eggs	3192	273	0	4.00
¼ a #10 can of powdered cheese				8.00
1 lb. dried vegetable soup mix	1600	64	32	5.00
17 oz jar olive oil	3,960	0	0	6.99
More spices				4.00
6 cans condensed milk				6.00
Molasses				
maple syrup				
More dried fruits and vegetables				
powdered or canned cheese, milk				
more canned fruits and vegetables				
* Vitamin A (sweet potatoes, pumpkin, peaches)				
* Vitamin C (oranges, pineapple; juices) and greens;				
* crunch/variety: sauerkraut, cabbage, applesauce; beets				
More canned meats, tuna, other fish				
shelf-stable sausages (to flavor beans)				
comfort foods like applesauce, chocolate, hard candy				
Other oils for variety				

Spices Will Be KEY!! Buy in bulk (www.penzey.com) and store in tightly sealed bags; I recommend at least 2 - 4 oz. of spices per two week period. . Top recommended spices are: oregano, cinnamon, cumin, whole coriander, whole (not rubbed) sage, ancho NM, or other single chili powder (no salt) chili powder, and garlic. Also dried parsley, dried onions, and a nice sea-salt is recommended.

Notes:

a) Flavorings are highly variable and can be altered according to region, availability, cost and what you might generally cook with or keep in your pantry.

b) Pay attention to personal dietary needs; menu suggestions will need to reflect low-sodium, low protein, peanut-free diet and so on. These ideas are only suggestions to get you started. The more restricted your family's diet, the more you will need to plan ahead as there will be no guaranteed specific foods will be available during a shortage.

c) Plan ahead carefully for infants under the age of one; who need either breastmilk or formula. You may wish to stockpile formula for a breastfeeding baby in case your supply runs low.

d) Plan carefully for children under the age of 4 as well. They will be the most sensitive to lack of calories, protein, and vital nutrients, as their developing bodies cannot develop well without these essential things. Of critical importance, beyond

protein and calories, is Thiamin, vitamin A, and vitamin D. A multivitamin may be your only choice; choose one which will be absorbed (dissolve) well in their bodies, this might be more expensive than a different vitamin you can buy more cheaply but it is well worth the extra cost. Be sure to have enough protein in the form of powdered milk; canned or powdered cheese; peanut or other nut butter – make sure it is foods your young child will eat and like, and is not allergic to.

e) Many items on the list above are available at regular grocery stores; however for best nutrition and variety, you might wish to have some special-order items such as powdered eggs, powdered or canned cheese, and more dehydrated vegetables than are available in grocery stores. Some sources for these are listed below. In addition, many health food stores may carry some of these items, as well as various whole grains which people like to add for variety.

Powdered eggs, milk and cheese: www.honeyvillegrain.com

Canned cheese and butter: www.mredepot.com

TVP – textured vegetable protein www.waltonfeed.com;
www.emergencyessentials.com

Bulk herbs and spices: www.penzeys.com;

Dehydrated cheese

Sprouts: www.sproutpeople.com

Vitamin and Mineral Considerations:

Vitamin C: ascorbic acid can make a Tang-like drink

Vitamin A: can be found in canned pumpkin and yams but degrades over time (how long)

B vitamins: can be found in whole grains BUT will degrade over time

Vitamin D: Can best be obtained through sunshine in late spring, summer and early fall – between hours of 10 to 2 on sunny days – 30 minutes in summer; more earlier and later in the year. Also fish oil or cod liver oil capsules; some fishes, or vitamin supplements. Also in the Tremulla mushroom I am told.

BASIC BOX SURVIVAL MEALS

Breakfast foods:

Oatmeal with milk and fruit or nuts
Cornmeal mush topped with syrup, fruit
Pancakes with oatmeal; ground nuts, fruit; or cornmeal

OVEN :

Muffins (with dried fruit or pumpkin puree)
Coffee Cake
Nut bread
Sliced bread, then make french toast (with powdered eggs)

Main Meal Foods:

Bean stew with bread or biscuits
Beans, salsa, and tortillas
Couscous, Rice or other whole grain pilaf with nuts, seeds and/or raisins
Rice stir fry with chicken
Tuna, Chicken or Bean Croquettes
Corn Cakes
Cornbread with warm salmon chowder
"Crepes" or tortillas filled with lentil stew
Corn or flour tortillas filled with chicken
Miso soup with tofu slices
Corn Cakes and ham slices
Macaroni and cheese

OVEN:

bread with nuts, seeds
pizza
tuna or other canned meat casseroles

Snack Foods:

Corn tortillas spread with nut butter
Flour tortillas spread with nut butter
Popcorn
Snack on raw or toasted nuts

OVEN: peanut butter cookies

Pumpkin pie
Dried fruit cobbler

Plan for Those With No Cooking Skills:

- A) Boil water; simmer: Porridges: oatmeal, rice pudding;
- B) Fry: tortillas
- C) Beans: basic black or pinto bean stew
- D) Fry; then simmer: basic whole grain pilaf
- E) No Knead bread

Simple Recipes

These recipes can be made on a camp stove with pot of water or frying pan. Note that to make beans and lentils, you will really want to experiment and see what flavorings you like best. You will want to get some cookbooks with more recipes. These are just a collection of a few suggestions to get you started. Most recipes call for celery and onions; if you don't have these on hand you can omit them, though you may also want to get some dehydrated ones just for use in legume recipes! Most recipes call for various spices, if you don't have one, you can usually omit; it won't taste as delicious, but it'll still be good!

BREADS AND CEREALS

Oatmeal (makes 2 servings)

- 2 ¼ C water
- Dash salt
- 1 C rolled oats
- Butter to taste (optional)
- Salt, sweetener, and or milk or cream as desired

Combine water salt and oats in a small saucepan and turn heat to high. When water boils, turn heat to low and cook stirring until water is just absorbed, about 5 minutes. Add butter if desired, cover the pan, and turn off the heat

5 Minutes later, uncover the pan and stir. Add other ingredients as desired and serve.

Add more powdered milk, almond meal, peanut butter, raisins or dried fruit for more nutrition. Top with a little butter or yogurt if you have it.

You can eat oatmeal raw; top with a little oil, lemon juice, and some fruit or nuts.

Cornmeal Porridge / Fried Cornmeal Mush

- 1 C cornmeal
- 1 C cold water
- 3 C boiling water
- 1 ½ t salt

Mix together cornmeal and cold water. Add to boiling salted water. Cover. Cook over medium heat about 10 - 15 minutes, stirring frequently, until mixture thickens.

If using as cereal, spoon mush into bowls and serve with milk and sugar, if desired. If frying, pour mixture into a loaf pan and chill completely. Remove from pan, cut into slices, and fry in a small amount of oil over medium-high heat until browned on both sides. Serve with sauce of your choice.

Zambian Peanut Porridge (Serves 4)

In a medium saucepan, bring to a boil
2 ¼ c. water

Combine in a bowl to make a smooth paste:

1 c. water
1 c. cornmeal (preferably white, not yellow)

Add to boiling water, stirring constantly to avoid forming lumps. Simmer 3 minutes. Add:

½ C peanut butter (preferably chunky) and simmer 3 to 5 minutes.
Add a dab of butter honey or brown sugar and milk for a hot breakfast cereal!

Indian Flat Bread (Chapatis) (Makes 10)

Combine:

2 C whole wheat flour
1 t oil
Pinch of salt

Gradually add

½ c. (or more) lukewarm water

Knead dough until it is soft. Cover with a clean damp cloth and let rest 1 hour. Divide dough into 10 pieces. On floured surface, roll each piece into a 4 inch circle. ¼-inch thick. Heat a heavy ungreased frypan. Cook each Chapati until it starts to bubble on the bottom, turn, fry on the other side, and remove. Stack in a tea towel to keep warm.

Variations: use white flour for half the whole wheat flour.

Crepes

Mix to make a very thin batter

1 C flour
1 C milk (powdered)
1 egg (powdered)
1/4 C water
Pinch salt
1/2 T oil

Whip with whisk until smooth, adding more water if needed. Pour small amount of batter into lightly oiled pan. Rotate pan until batter is evenly distributed, forming one large thin pancake. Fry until slightly brown. Turn and fry briefly on the other side. Serve with fillings.

Fillings can be:

- 1) 2 c. walnuts, chopped with ½ c sugar
- 2) Warm chocolate sauce (note: chocolate chips do not melt well; a chocolate bar will)
- 3) Peanut butter and/or jelly
- 4) Stewed dried fruit
- 5) Lentil or bean stew
- 6) Chopped ham
- 7) Chicken with sauce

Flour tortillas (makes 10)

(Note: this recipe doesn't "work" for me – it makes something that tastes like pie crust, not a tortilla. But it is a good tasting pie crust!)

Combine

2 C flour
1 t salt
Cut in with a pastry blender (or two knives)
¼ C shortening (oil?)
When particles are fine, add gradually
½ C lukewarm water

Toss with a fork to make a stiff dough. Form into ball and knead thoroughly on a lightly floured board until smooth and flecked with air bubbles. Divide dough into 8 balls for large tortillas, 11 balls for small ones. Roll as thin as possible on lightly floured board or between two sheets of waxed paper. Drop onto a very hot griddle or frying pan. Bake about 20 seconds until freckled. Flip edge, turn, and bake on second side. Wrap in a clean tea towel (cloth napkin or towel) to keep warm.

Corn Tortillas for technique see:

<http://www.texascooking.com/features/may98cornertortillas.htm>

Mix 2 cups Masa Harina (corn flour – note this is different from cornmeal which is used for cornbread)

1 and ¼ C. water (may add up to 4 T water as needed to make a workable dough.)

Mix the Masa Harina and the water to form dough. Pinch off a golf-ball sized piece of dough and roll into a ball. Set the ball between two pieces of plastic wrap or waxed paper and press into a flat circle. Cook on a hot, dry skillet (cast iron pan works best) for 30 seconds. Gently turn. Cook for 60 seconds on the other side (it should puff slightly). Cook another 30 seconds on the first side. Remove tortilla and keep warm.

Simple Pancakes

2 C flour
1 T baking powder
½ t salt
1 T sugar
1 or 2 eggs
1 ½ to 2 C milk
2 T oil

Preheat griddle or large pan over medium low heat while you make the batter

Mix together dry ingredients. Beat the eggs into 1 ½ C of the milk, then stir in 2 T oil. Gently stir this into the dry ingredients, mixing only enough to moisten the flour; don't worry about a few lumps; mix the batter very gently. If it seems too thick, add a little more milk.

Use a t or so of oil each time you add batter to the skillet (unless it is non-stick). Ladle the batter onto the skillet, making any size pancake you want. Brown the bottom of the pancake in about 2 to 4 minutes, flip pancake, and cook on the other side until it is also lightly browned. Serve.

Popcorn

It is amazingly easy to pop popcorn on top of the stove. You need a pan, some canola oil, some popcorn and you need to pay attention. That's it.

First, heat about 2 T oil in a pot. Add two or three popcorn kernels and place a lid on the pot. Put the heat at about medium high.

After about 2 or 3 minutes, the kernels should pop. When they all do, add about ¼ C popcorn kernels to the oil. You want the oil to slightly cover the amount of kernels you have in the pot. Let the popcorn pop until the rate of popping slows down. I do not find it is necessary to shake the pot while it is cooking. As soon as the popcorn seems to have almost stopped, remove pot from heat and wait another minute to be sure all the kernels are done popping. Then, pour popcorn into a bowl and sprinkle with salt, parmesan cheese, sugar, or whatever flavoring tastes good to you.

UNIVERSAL PILAF RECIPE (can be adapted for many ingredients)

This recipe is adapted from [The Tightwad Gazette III](#), by Amy Dacyczyn. It is a recipe template that can help you cook a simple main course using whatever ingredients you have on hand. This recipe makes 4 servings, or enough for 2 adults as a main dish!

GRAIN: One cup of uncooked grain. Choose from brown or white rice, bulgar, barley, or any whole grain. Small pasta s such as couscous or orzo would also work.

FAT: Two tablespoons fat, either olive or other vegetable oil or butter.

BASE VEGETABLES (for flavor):

Two or three cloves of garlic, minced and either one small onion or three shallots or one small leek, diced.

LIQUID: Two cups liquid: (choose from these possibilities)

Chicken, beef, vegetable, or mushroom stock or broth, (you can use water and bouillon cubes); cooking water from boiled vegetables; tomato juice or vegetable cocktail diluted with half water;

PROTEIN: 1/2 to 2/3 cup cubed cooked meat or other protein: chicken, turkey, roast beef, steak, pork chop, pork roast, ground beef, leftover ground beef seasoned for tacos, white, red or black beans, etc. You can mix half beans/half meat; or try canned meat or tuna.

ADDITIONAL VEGETABLE: 1/2 cup vegetable: Frozen or fresh peas, frozen corn, thinly sliced or grated carrot, green or red peppers, celery, etc. Even finely chopped fresh spinach is okay. Don't use potatoes.

SEASONING: Salt and pepper, any other herb or spice that goes well you're your ingredients. Try parsley, rosemary, chili powder, Worcestershire sauce, soy sauce, etc.

DIRECTIONS: Heat fat in large skillet. Add garlic and onion, shallots or leek; fry until tender. Add the grain to the skillet and fry until it just begins to brown. Pour in the liquid and bring to a boil. Add the cubed meat or beans, along with your chosen vegetables and seasonings; stir and return to a boil. Cover and cook until the grain is tender: about 15 minutes for white rice and up to 40 minutes for some of the whole grains. Check periodically to make sure you don't run out of liquid before the grain is tender. Stir and serve.

SOUPS

Pumpkin Soup

In a large saucepan, saute

1 T oil

2 cloves garlic (or ¼ t garlic powder)

Add and bring to a boil

2 C water and 1 chicken bouillon cube

And add

5 C pumpkin puree (about 2 cans) Boil till it looks yummy.

For added nutrition, remove 1 C soup and mix well in a different bowl with 1 C dry milk powder. Blend until smooth, add back to soup, Heat to simmer, but do not boil.

Sweet Tomato Soup

In a pot, boil

4 C water

2 beef bouillon cubes

When bouillon is dissolved, add

½ C uncooked rice

Boil until rice is almost done, about 15 minutes and then add

3 C canned (or fresh) whole tomatoes, peeled. Cook until tomatoes are heated through.

Add 4 t. sugar or honey and sweet cream (optional – maybe try a little milk)

Kentucky Bean Soup

In a 4 qt. saucepan, soak overnight

2 C dry pinto beans

6 C water

In the morning, dump out the soak water and add 6 cups new water. Also add 1/8 C salt pork with slits cut in it (optional, could flavor with 2 t salt or a bit of ham or bacon bits, or a bit of sausage)

½ C onion, chopped

½ t salt

Boil beans; reduce heat and simmer about 1 and ½ hours until beans are soft. Serve with cornbread.

Pumpkin – Tomato- Chickpea Soup

Overnight, soak ¼ cup chickpeas (garbanzos) in 4 C water. In the morning rinse and drain and use in place of the can of chickpeas.

1 T Olive oil

1 onion, finely chopped (or onion powder)

2 garlic cloves, finely chopped (or garlic powder)

1 t Salt

1/2 tsp ground cumin

1 can chopped tomatoes

1 T (brown) sugar

1 can pumpkin puree

2 T lemon juice (use real lemon)
1 can chickpeas, drained (or equivalent in dried and soaked)
1 pinch salt and fresh ground black pepper

Heat a large deep frying pan over a medium to high heat. Add the olive oil, onion, garlic, and salt. Cook, stirring for 5 minutes, or until the onions are soft and translucent. Add the cumin, and cook for a minute longer.

Add the tomatoes, sugar, pumpkin and lemon juice and bring to the boil. Cook for about 15 minutes or until the pumpkin is soft. Add the chickpeas and cook for 5 minutes longer.

Season with salt and freshly ground pepper.

BEAN AND LENTIL STEWS

Basic general bean recipe

Place any quantity beans in a large pot (wash them first and pick them over for stones, etc.) Soak the beans for at least 6 hours in water to cover; then drain the water, and place the beans in a pot with fresh water to cover and cook. Turn the heat to high and bring to a boil; skim foam if any. Turn the heat down so beans will simmer. Cover loosely.

Cook stirring occasionally, until beans begin to become tender. Add about 1 t salt to ½ pound of beans.

Continue to cook, stirring gently, until the beans are as tender as you like. (up to 2 hours) Add more water if needed. Drain and serve. Store covered in the refrigerator for up to 2 days or in the freezer for up to 3 months.

(Note with a pressure cooker usually beans can be cooked in about 30 minutes.)

Beans with Olive Oil

2 T olive oil
About 4 C pink, red, or black beans
½ C bean cooking liquid, or chicken, beef or vegetable broth (use bouillion cube)
Salt and pepper
Garlic or onion

Place oil in a skillet and heat to medium. When oil is hot, add 1 T slivered garlic or ½ C minced onion or scallion. Cook stirring over medium low heat until tender but not brown, 5 to 8 minutes. Add the beans and liquid and cook, stirring 5 minutes. Mash some of the beans with a fork and serve with salt, pepper and parsley for a garnish if you have it.

Tuscan White Beans

½ pound dried white beans (cannelloni, navy, Great Northern etc. washed and picked over)
20 fresh sage leaves or 1 T dried sage
Salt and pepper
2 t minced garlic
2 T olive oil

Place the beans in a pot with water to cover. Turn the heat to high and bring to a boil. Add the sage; lower heat so beans simmer. Cover loosely.

Cook stirring occasionally, until the beans begin to soften. Add ½ t salt until the beans are very tender; add more liquid if beans dry out.

Drain cooking liquid if necessary and then add garlic, more salt and pepper if that tastes good to you; stir in olive oil and serve.

Basic Lentil Recipe

- 1 lb. dry lentils
- 1 t salt
- 5 C boiling water
- 1 16-oz. can tomatoes
or tomato sauce
- 1-1/2 T chili powder
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1/2 C chopped celery
- 1 clove garlic, minced

Rinse dry lentils. Pick out any stems or stones.

Add salt and lentils to boiling water. Cover and simmer for 30 minutes. Do not drain.

Add tomatoes or tomato sauce, chili powder, onion, celery, and garlic. Cover and simmer 30 minutes more, or til lentils are tender.

Serve over rice, spaghetti or corn chips.

Makes 7 servings.

Lentils and Rice

- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 t olive oil
- 1 C (brown) rice
- 1/2 C lentils
- 1 t cumin
- 1/2 t cinnamon
- 1 t cloves
- 5 cardamom pods or 1/4 teaspoon cardamom powder
- 2 C water
- 1/4 cup raisins
- 1/4 cup chopped walnuts or slivered almonds

Saute the onion and garlic in olive oil until soft. Add the rice, lentils, cumin, cinnamon, cloves and cardamom, and stir to coat. Add the water and bring to a boil, then lower the heat and cook 20 to 30 minutes. Add the raisins and nuts, cook for another minute and serve.

Basic Black or Pinto Beans (serves 8)

- 4 C water
- 1 pound dried pinto or black beans (about 2 cups)
- 1 medium onion, chopped (about 1/2 cup)

1/4 C vegetable oil
2 cloves garlic (or garlic powder)
1 slice bacon (ham, sausage if you have it – or a little salt)
1 t salt
1 t cumin seed

Mix water, beans and onion in 4-quart Dutch oven. Cover and heat to boiling; boil 2 minutes. Remove from heat; let stand 1 hour. Add just enough water to beans to cover. Stir in remaining ingredients. Heat to boiling; reduce heat. Cover and boil gently, stirring occasionally, until beans are very tender, about 2 hours (Add water during cooking if necessary). Drain; reserve broth for recipes calling for bean broth. Cover and refrigerate beans and broth separately; use within 10 days.

Refried Beans (serves 4)

1/2 C vegetable oil or lard
2 C cooked Pinto or Black Beans
2 T chili powder
1 T ground cumin
1 t salt
1/8 t pepper

Heat oil in 10-inch skillet over medium heat until hot. Add Pinto Beans; cook, stirring occasionally, 5 minutes. Mash beans; stir in chili powder, cumin, salt and pepper. Add more oil to skillet if necessary; cook and stir until a smooth paste forms, about 5 minutes. Garnish with shredded cheese if desired.

Spicy Bean Stew Serves 2 to 4

Soak overnight

1 C kidney or pintos
4 C water

Next day add 1/2 t salt and cook until beans are soft.

Drain off excess water, leaving about 1/2 C so beans don't stick to bottom. Stir in:

2 t ground cumin
1/2 t salt
1 T tahini or 2 T sesame oil (if you have them)

Then remove from heat and add in any combination of these if you have them.

1 to 2 hard boiled eggs, chopped
1/4 feta cheese crumbled
1 diced tomato
3 falafels crumbled
1 med. Onion, finely chopped

Stir lightly to mix. Serve with pieces of pita or flatbread.

Basic Cooked Lentils

- 1 lb brown or green lentils (about 2.5 cups)
- 8 C water
- 1/2 small onion
- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- 1 bay leaf or substitute oregano

Bring to boil, reduce heat, and simmer, uncovered, until lentils are tender, about 20 to 30 minutes. Drain and let cool, remove onion, garlic, and bay leaf. Season with salt and pepper

Navy Beans with Sausage

- 1/2 pound navy beans
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 3 slices of summer sausage cut into small chunks
- black pepper to taste
- 1 T molasses

Soak beans over night. Sauté onion, garlic, and summer sausage. Drain beans, and add remainder of ingredients. Follow directions on bean package for water and simmer time.

Simple Stovetop Baked Beans (4 to 6 servings)

- 2 C dried beans, soaked overnight
- 2 onions, chopped (you can try dehydrated, or experiment with powder or dried flakes)
- 2 T molasses
- 1 t dried mustard
- 1 C tomato paste
- 1/2 t sea salt

Drain soaking water from beans and place them in heavy pot. Cover with boiling water and cook until tender, about 2 hours. When beans are tender, sauté onions in a little olive oil until golden. Add onions and other ingredients to beans and simmer 1 hours. 4-6 servings.

Rice and Lentils

Start rice cooking in twice the water called for; twenty minutes later add lentils, cumin, salt and a dash of pepper sauce to taste. Cook twenty more minutes.

BREADS AND MUFFINS (Recipes Needing an Oven)

No-Knead Bread

Adapted from Jim Lahey, Sullivan Street Bakery

Time: About 1 1/2 hours plus 14 to 20 hours' rising

3 C all-purpose or bread flour, more for dusting

1/4 t instant yeast

1 1/4 t salt

Cornmeal or wheat bran as needed

1. In a large bowl combine flour, yeast and salt. Add 1 5/8 cups water, and stir until blended; dough will be shaggy and sticky. Cover bowl with plastic wrap. Let dough rest at least 12 hours, preferably about 18, at warm room temperature, about 70 degrees.

2. Dough is ready when its surface is dotted with bubbles. Lightly flour a work surface and place dough on it; sprinkle it with a little more flour and fold it over on itself once or twice. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and let rest about 15 minutes.

3. Using just enough flour to keep dough from sticking to work surface or to your fingers, gently and quickly shape dough into a ball. Generously coat a cotton towel (not terry cloth) with flour, wheat bran or cornmeal; put dough seam side down on towel and dust with more flour, bran or cornmeal. Cover with another cotton towel and let rise for about 2 hours. When it is ready, dough will be more than double in size and will not readily spring back when poked with a finger.

4. At least a half-hour before dough is ready, heat oven to 450 degrees. Put a 6- to 8-quart heavy covered pot (cast iron, enamel, Pyrex or ceramic) in oven as it heats. When dough is ready, carefully remove pot from oven. Slide your hand under towel and turn dough over into pot, seam side up; it may look like a mess, but that is O.K. Shake pan once or twice if dough is unevenly distributed; it will straighten out as it bakes. Cover with lid and bake 30 minutes, then remove lid and bake another 15 to 30 minutes, until loaf is beautifully browned. Cool on a rack.

Yield: One 1 1/2-pound loaf.

Kentucky Cornbread (Serves 4)

350 degrees for 30 minutes

Mix together to cake batter consistency:

1 C flour

1 C cornmeal

1 t baking soda

1 t baking powder

1/4 t salt

1 1/2 C milk (use powdered plus water)

Pour into a greased 8 x8 inch pan or a greased muffin tin. Bake 30 minutes; serve warm.

Corn Bread or Corn Muffins

- 1 C Cornmeal
- 1 C white flour
- 4 t baking powder
- ¼ C sugar
- 1 t salt
- 2 eggs (reconstituted from powdered)
- 1 C milk (use powdered)
- ¼ C melted butter (or canola oil)

Mix flour with sugar, baking powder and salt, stir in cornmeal. Beat eggs; add milk and butter or oil. Combine with rest of ingredients, stirring a little bit until all ingredients are moist. Don't mix too much. Pour into a greased 9 x 9 x 2 inch pan. Bake at 425 degrees F for 20 to 25 minutes.

For muffins, pour into well-greased muffin pan, bake in hot oven 425 degrees F for 15 to 20 minutes. Makes 12 muffins,

Basic Muffin Recipe (makes 8 large or 12 small)

- 3 T canola oil plus some for greasing the muffin tin
- 2 C flour
- ¼ C sugar
- ½ t salt
- 3 t baking powder
- 1 egg (use powdered)
- 1 C milk (use powdered)

Mix dry ingredients in a bowl. Beat egg, milk and oil. Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients and pour in the wet. Using a large spoon, combine the ingredients quickly; do not mix too hard; stop as soon as the dry ingredients are moist. Batter should be lumpy and moist.

Spoon the batter into muffin tins, filling about 2/3 full. Bake 20 to 30 minutes at 400 degrees F.

Additions: add ½ C chopped dried fruit or nuts or chocolate chips; substitute honey or maple syrup for the sugar; different spices such as ground cinnamon, allspice nutmeg, mace, and ginger. Or cut back the sugar to just 1 T and minced up to 1 C cooked bacon, ham, or shredded cheese. Use whole wheat flour for up to half of the regular flour. Sprinkle tops of unbaked muffins with some sugar, or a mixture of cinnamon sugar.

Tips and Techniques

COOKING BEANS

Soaking and cooking beans before mixing with other recipe ingredients helps to get the right tenderness and can minimize final cooking time.

- Overnight soaking: For each 1 pound beans, dissolve 2 tsp. salt in 6 cups of water. Wash beans, add to salted water, and soak overnight.
- Quick soaking: For each 1 pound beans, bring 8 cups of water to boiling. Wash beans, add to boiling water, boil for 2 minutes. Remove from heat, cover and soak 1 hour.

To cook soaked beans: For each 1 pound dried beans, dissolve 2 tsp. salt in 6 cups hot water, bring to a boil. Add soaked beans, boil gently, uncovered, adding water if needed to keep beans covered, until tender. Yield 6 to 7 cups.

To cook old hard beans: Wash and sort to remove any discolored beans or foreign material. For each cup of dry beans, add 2 ½ cups of hot tap water and 2 tsp. of baking soda and soak overnight. Drain and rinse two times, then add water to cover and cook until tender and soft, about two hours, adding more water as needed.

Adding a tbsp. of oil will cut down on foam as beans cook. Stored beans should be rotated regularly. They continue to lose moisture and will not reconstitute satisfactorily if kept too long.

Remember that when a recipe calls for canned beans, you can substitute the equivalent in rehydrated and cooked dry beans. A standard can of beans contains about 1.7 cups.