

**THE SNAP CHALLENGE**  
**4 PERSON HOUSEHOLD**

**WEEK 1**

**DAY 1**

BREAKFAST

Cereal

LUNCH

PB&J and Apple

DINNER

Spaghetti w/meat sauce  
Salad

**DAY 2**

BREAKFAST

Egg Sandwich

LUNCH

Leftover Spaghetti

DINNER

Chicken Broccoli Stirfry

**DAY 3**

BREAKFAST

Oatmeal

LUNCH

Ramen Noodles w/Poached Egg

DINNER

Lentil Soup

**DAY 4**

BREAKFAST

Cereal

LUNCH

PB&J and Apple

DINNER

Salisbury Steak over mashed potato &  
green beans

**DAY 5**

BREAKFAST

Banana & Yogurt

LUNCH

Leftover Salisbury Steak

DINNER

Baked Chicken Thighs with roasted carrots  
and potato

**DAY 6**

BREAKFAST

Cereal

LUNCH

Ramen (with any leftover chicken and  
carrots added)

DINNER

Tacos with beans and rice

**DAY 7**

BREAKFAST

Egg Sandwich

LUNCH

PB&J Apple

DINNER

Sloppy Joes with Fries & Raw Veggies

**WEEK 2**

**DAY 1**

BREAKFAST

Cereal

LUNCH

Baked Potato w/Leftover Sloppy Joe

DINNER

Tuna Noodle Cassarole

**DAY 2**

BREAKFAST

Yogurt & Banana

LUNCH

Leftover Tuna Casserole

DINNER

Teriyaki Pork chops, Winter Squash & Green Beans

**DAY 3**

BREAKFAST

Cereal

LUNCH

PB&J & Apple

DINNER

Chicken & Dumplings

**DAY 4**

BREAKFAST

Oatmeal

LUNCH

Leftover Chicken & Dumplings

DINNER

Chili & Cornbread

**DAY 5**

BREAKFAST

Egg Sandwich

LUNCH

Leftover Chili

DINNER

Penne Chicken Alfredo w/Broccoli

**DAY 6**

BREAKFAST

Cereal

LUNCH

Ramen or leftover Penne

DINNER

Tomato Basil Soup with Grilled Cheese

**DAY 7**

BREAKFAST

Yogurt & Banana

LUNCH

PB&J with carrot sticks or apples

DINNER

Breakfast for Dinner (Pancakes, eggs and Sausage)

Meats

- 2 lb ground beef \$4.99/lb=\$10
- 1 lb boneless chicken thighs \$6.20
- 1 lb boneless chicken breast \$6
- 1 lb ground turkey \$3.99
- 18 ct egg Kroger brand \$5.19

Grains & Dry Goods

- 1 box cereal (giant or family size, max cost \$5)
- 1 (8oz) oatmeal Kroger brand \$2.00
- 2 pk English Muffin Kroger brand \$1.69 x 2
- 1 lb spaghetti pasta Kroger brand \$1.25
- 2 brown gravy pkg \$0.50 x 2=\$1
- Panko bread crumbs \$2.49
- Chicken bouillon Knorr \$3.69
- Curry powder \$3.99
- Rice 32 oz \$1.89
- Corn Starch \$1.99
- Taco Seasoning Pkg \$0.59
- Tortilla (flour or corn) \$2.99 or less
- Spanish Rice Knorr Rice Sides \$1.33
- Ramen noodles 6 pack \$2.00
- 2 Loaf bread \$1.99 x 2=3.98

Dairy

- 1 pk American Cheese Roundy brand (or block of cheese of choice for \$2.79 or less)
- 1 lb margarine varied brands \$1.49
- 1 Gallon Milk \$3.19
- 4 Yogurt Chobani 4 for \$5
- Mexican Cheese Blend shredded cheese 8 oz \$2.49

Fruits and Vegetables

- 8 bananas \$0.27 x 8 = \$2.16
- Romaine Lettuce head \$2.49
- 1 cucumber \$0.69
- 2 Roma tomato \$1.00
- 1 green bell pepper \$0.69
- 1 pkg button mushroom \$2.39
- 5 lb bag russet potato \$3.99
- Frozen green beans \$1.25

- Lentils La Preferida \$2.19
- Carrots 2 lb \$1.99
- Onion 3 lb \$3.49
- 1 garlic bulb \$0.50
- Apples \$3.99

Canned Goods

- 2 15 oz cans diced tomato \$2
- Soy Sauce Kikkoman \$1.49
- Peanut butter \$2.19
- Jelly \$1.99
- Spaghetti sauce \$1.69

\$119.50 total

SNAP budget \$120.17

There will be 2 eggs left over to double up in the ramen noodles, or hard boil to have for snacks.  
Bag of apples needs at least 10 apples in it to have enough for menu  
Ideas for peanut butter sandwich replacement due to allergy, dislike, ect: cheese sandwich:  
replace peanut butter with block of cheese of equivalent cost; egg salad, or tuna salad: replace  
peanut butter with 1 dz additional eggs and small mayo jar, or 3 tuna cans and small mayo jar.

4 PERSON WEEK 2.

### Meats

- 1 lb ground beef \$4.99/lb
- Pork Chops \$5
- 1 lb boneless chicken thighs \$6.20
- 1 lb boneless chicken breast \$6
- Breakfast Sausage Kroger brand \$3.79
- 18 ct egg Kroger brand \$5.19
- 2 cans tuna \$2.00

### Grains & Dry Goods

- 1 box cereal (giant or family size, max cost \$5)
- 1 (8oz) oatmeal Kroger brand \$2.00
- 2 pk English Muffin Kroger brand \$1.69 x 2
- 1 pkg egg noodle \$1.69
- Dried Basil \$1.99 (or fresh basil not to exceed 1.99)
- Penne Kroger brand \$1.25
- Jiffy Corn bread mix x 2 \$1.30
- Ramen noodles 6 pack \$2.00
- 2 Loaf bread \$1.99 x 2=3.98
- Pancake Mix \$1.99

### Dairy

- 1 pk American Cheese Roundy brand (or block of cheese of choice for \$2.79 or less)
- 1 Gallon Milk \$3.19
- 4 Yogurt Chobani 4 for \$5
- Cheddar shredded cheese x 2 8 oz \$5
- Shredded Italian Blend cheese 8 oz \$2.49
- Sour Cream \$1.25

### Fruits and Vegetables

- 8 bananas  $\$0.27 \times 8 = \$2.16$
- Frozen peas \$1.25
- Frozen mixed veg \$1.25
- Frozen green beans \$1.25
- Delicata squash x 2-3 \$3.00
- 1 lb fresh broccoli \$1.49
- 1 green bell pepper \$0.69
- Onion 3 lb \$3.49
- Apples \$3.99

Canned Goods

- 4 28 oz cans crushed tomato \$8
- 1 can condensed soup cream mushroom \$1.50
- 1 can condensed soup cream chicken \$1.50
- Jelly \$1.99
- 1 16 oz jar alfredo sauce \$2.00
- 2 can kidney beans \$1.78
- Apple sauce jar \$3.39
- Syrup \$2.49

\$119.99 total

SNAP allowance \$120.17

Some items from Week 1 that were already purchased will be used in Week 2:

Panko breadcrumbs

Margarine

Chicken bouillon

Garlic bulb

Soy sauce

## WEEK 1 RECIPES

### Egg & Cheese Breakfast Sandwich

- 12 eggs
- 1 can evaporated milk
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- ¼-½ tsp black pepper
- 12 english muffins
- 1 8 oz block cheese of choice
- 2 T butter or margarine

Place the butter in a 9 x 13 pan and put in the oven while preheating. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. While the oven is preheating, whisk eggs, milk, salt, garlic powder and black pepper in a mixing bowl until thoroughly combined.

When the oven is preheated, and butter is melted, take the pan out of the oven, pour egg mixture into the pan and place it back into the oven. Bake for 20-25 minutes, until the center is firm. Remove and let cool completely.

While the egg bake is cooling, cut english muffins in half, and place face down on a cookie sheet in the oven. Toast for 3-5 minutes to slightly crisp english muffins. Remove from the oven.

Slice cheese and place slices on the english muffin halves. Cut eggs into 12 equal portions. Put one portion on top of cheese and close the sandwich.

Wrap each sandwich in parchment paper and place the sandwiches in a large freezer bag. Sandwiches that will be eaten within 3 days can be stored in the refrigerator. Store the rest in the freezer until ready to eat.

To Reheat:

Sandwiches can be reheated in the microwave 1-2 minutes. Thaw first.

Sandwiches can be reheated in a toaster oven. Leave in parchment paper and bake in toaster oven for approximately 5-7 minutes. Thawed sandwiches reheat best.

### Garlic Chicken & Broccoli Stir Fry

- 1 lb boneless chicken breast
- 1 ½ tsp baking soda
- 2lb broccoli
- 4 cloves of garlic (or as much or as little as you would like)
- 2 T vegetable oil (or any equivalent neutral oil with high smoke point, like avocado or grapeseed)
- 2 c water



- 1T chicken bouillon
- 1 T rice vinegar or apple cider vinegar (or if your love of Asian cooking runs deep and you have it on hand, black vinegar)
- 1 tsp sugar
- 2 T soy sauce
- 1T cornstarch mixed with 2 T water

Cut chicken breast into slices  $\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick. Toss in bowl with the baking soda and set aside to tenderize for 20 min.

Cut broccoli into florets

Mince garlic

Combine water, bouillon, vinegar and soy sauce. Mix to combine and set aside.

Rinse chicken and pat dry.

Heat wok or large skillet over medium high heat. Add oil. Add chicken and sautee until chicken is cooked through. Remove chicken from pan and set aside.

Add broccoli to the pan and saute for 2-3 minutes until it starts turning bright green. Add garlic and toss for 1 minute. Add wet ingredients to the pan. Finish cooking broccoli in sauce until slightly underdone. Add chicken back to pan. Add cornstarch slurry. Stir until sauce thickens.

### **Lentil Soup**

- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium yellow or white onion, chopped
- 2 carrots, peeled and chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, pressed or minced
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp curry powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp dried thyme
- 1 large can (28 oz) diced tomatoes, drained
- 1 cup brown lentils, picked over and rinsed
- 6 cups water with 2 T chicken bouillon or vegetable bouillon (you can also use 4 cups vegetable or chicken broth with 2 cups of water)
- 1 tsp salt, more to taste
- Pinch of red pepper flakes (optional)
- 1 cup chopped kale or collard greens (optional)
- Splash of lemon juice (optional)

Warm the olive oil in a large Dutch oven or pot over medium heat. One-fourth cup olive oil may seem like a lot, but it adds a lively richness and heartiness to this nutritious soup.

Once the oil is shimmering, add the chopped onion and carrot and cook, stirring often, until the onion has softened and is turning translucent about five minutes. Add the garlic, cumin, curry powder and thyme. Cook until fragrant while stirring constantly, about 30 minutes. Pour in the drained diced tomatoes and cook for a few more minutes, stirring often, in order to enhance their flavor.

Pour in the lentils, broth and water. Add 1 tsp salt and a pinch of red pepper flakes (if using). Season generously with black pepper. Raise heat and bring the mixture to a boil, then partially cover the pot and reduce the heat to maintain a gentle simmer. Cook for 30 minutes, or until the lentils are tender but still hold their shape.

If using greens, add now and simmer for another 5 minutes, or until the greens have softened to your liking.

Remove from heat and stir in lemon juice and any additional salt and pepper desired.

(Roughly based on America's Test Kitchen's Lentil Soup in [The Complete Vegetarian Cookbook](#), with reference to The First Mess' favorite lentil soup)

### **Slow Cooker Salisbury Steak**

- 6 oz package mushrooms, sliced
- 1 medium yellow or white onion, sliced
- 1 ½ cup vegetable bouillon (or beef broth if you have it in pantry)
- 2 (1 ounce) brown gravy mix
- 2 T ketchup
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 2 T cornstarch
- 4 T water

#### Beef Patties

- 1 lb ground beef
- 1 egg
- ¼ c dried minced onion
- ⅓ c panko breadcrumbs
- 3 T milk
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp black pepper

Place mushrooms & onions in the bottom of your slow cooker.  
Combine beef patty ingredients and form 6 patties. Brown over medium high heat (about 3 minutes per side).  
Layer beef patties over mushrooms. Combine remaining ingredients *except water and cornstarch*. Pour over beef and cook on low 5 hours.  
Once cooked, remove patties and set aside.  
Turn slow cooker onto high. Combine cold water and cornstarch. Stir into the broth and let cook a few minutes until thickened. Add beef back into the sauce to coat.

Serve with mashed potatoes (one large or 1-2 medium russet potatoes per person) and green beans

(Adapted from "Spends with Pennies" Slow Cooker Salisbury Steak)  
<https://www.spendwithpennies.com/slow-cooker-salisbury-steak/>

### **Turkey Tacos**

- 1 lb Ground Turkey
- 1 T vegetable oil, or other neutral oil of choice
- 1 pkg Taco Seasoning
- Corn or Flour tortillas of choice
- 2 Roma tomatoes, diced
- 1 Garlic clove, minced
- 1 jalapeno, chopped (optional)
- 1 lime
- ¼ diced yellow or white onion
- Shredded Mexican Cheese Blend
- Spanish Rice- Knorr Rice Sides

Brown ground turkey in oil over medium heat. Add taco seasoning according to package directions.

For Pico de Gallo

Mix roma tomatoes, garlic, jalapeno, juice of lime and onion. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Prepare Knorr Rice packet according to package instructions

Warm taco shells and serve with taco mix, cheese and rice.

### **Sloppy Joes**

- 1 lb ground beef
- 1 sloppy joe dried seasoning package

- 1 medium yellow or white onion, diced
- Hamburger buns
- French fries
- Raw veggies- carrots, cucumber, peppers

Brown meat with onions over medium heat. Drain off grease if desired. Add sloppy joe seasoning according to package directions.

Cook french fries according to package instructions. (Can substitute baked potato if desired)

Serve with raw veggies.

## WEEK 2 RECIPES

### Tuna Noodle Cassarole

- 2 cans tuna
- 1 pkg egg noodle
- 1 can cream of mushroom condensed soup
- 1 can cream of chicken condensed soup
- 1 bag frozen peas
- 8 oz bag shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 cup Panko breadcrumbs (left over from Week 1 Groceries)
- 2 T melted margarine

Cook noodles according to package instructions. In a casserole dish, combine tuna, both soups, peas and half of the cheese. Add drained noodles and mix to combine. Mix melted margarine, breadcrumbs and the rest of the shredded cheese. Sprinkle breadcrumb mixture evenly over noodle mixture. Place in preheated 350 degree oven for 30 minutes, or until topping is golden and noodle mix is bubbling around the edges.

### Teriyaki Pork Chops, Winter Squash and Green Beans

- 1.25 lb boneless Pork Loin Chops (\$5 pack at Pick n Save)

#### Teriyaki sauce ingredients

- ¼ cup soy sauce
- 1 cup water
- ½ tsp ground ginger
- ¼ tsp garlic powder
- 5 T packed brown sugar
- 1-2 T honey
- 2 T corn starch
- ¼ cup cold water

#### Squash ingredients

- 2-3 Delicata Squash (or any winter squash of choice)
- 1 T olive oil
- Salt and Pepper
- Dried Rosemary

Rinse pork chops in cold water and pat dry. Season with salt and pepper and set aside.  
Prepare Teriyaki sauce:

Mix all but cornstarch and 1/4c water in a sauce pan and begin heating. Mix cornstarch and cold water in a cup and dissolve. After sauce is simmering, add cornstarch and water mixture, whisking well until sauce thickens. Heat until sauce thickens to desired thickness. Add water to thin if you over-thick it :).

#### Prep Squash

Cut squash in half and scoop out seeds. Then, cut each half into 1/2 inch moon slices. (Delicata is my choice because there is no need to peel) Toss squash slices with olive oil, salt and pepper and dried rosemary.

Toss pork chops in 1/2 of teriyaki sauce mixture. Spread squash slices and pork chops in a single layer on a sheet pan. Bake in a preheated 400 degree oven for 20-25 minutes, or until the pork chops reach 145 degrees on a meat thermometer.

Serve with green beans and additional teriyaki sauce.

## Chicken and Dumplings

- 1 lb boneless chicken thighs
- Salt and Pepper to taste
- 4 T margarine
- 1 medium white or yellow onion, chopped
- ⅓ cup flour
- 2 cups hot water
- 1 ¾ cup water with 1 T chicken bouillon
- 1 bag frozen mixed vegetables
- 2 carrots, peeled and sliced into ½ inch rounds
- ½ tsp dried thyme
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp black pepper

### For dumplings

- 2 cup flour
- 1 T baking powder
- ¾ tsp salt
- 3 T margarine
- 1 cup milk

### Prepare Dumplings

Mix together flour, baking powder and salt. Bring milk and margarine just to a simmer in a saucepan. (do not boil or milk solids will separate) Add milk mixture to flour mixture. Stir with fork or knead by hand 2-3 times until mixture just comes together.

### Prepare chicken;

Season chicken with salt and pepper, set aside

Chop onion, dissolve bouillon in water, peel and slice carrots

Heat Dutch oven or oven safe, high sided skillet over a medium heat.

Melt 4 T margarine in pan and add chicken pieces, browning on each side, about 3 minutes per side. Remove chicken from pan and set aside. Add onion to pan and cook for about 5 minutes, until onions are tender, but not browned. Stir in flour and stir for 1 minute, making sure all flour is incorporated into the fat, and there are no dry flour bits. Add water and bouillon, whisking constantly. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium high to high heat. Add carrots and mixed veggies, dried thyme and the rest of the salt and pepper. Return chicken to pan, with all accumulated juices. Reduce heat to low and keep at a simmer.

Scoop spoonfuls of the dumpling dough onto the chicken mixture in the pan, distributing across the top of the chicken mixture. Cover pan with lid and simmer for 10 minutes. Uncover and serve.

Adapted from The Joy of Cooking, 1997 edition

## Chili

- 1 lb ground beef
- 2 15oz cans crushed tomato
- 2 can kidney beans
- 1 15oz can diced tomato

4 T chili powder  
1 T cumin  
1 T garlic powder  
1 tsp salt  
Cayenne and black pepper to taste  
1 medium yellow or white onion, chopped  
1 green bell pepper, chopped

Brown ground beef with bell pepper and onion in a stock pot until meat is cooked through. Add spices, salt and pepper. Saute for 1 minute to bloom spices. Add crushed tomato, diced tomato and beans. Simmer 30-45 minutes. Add any additional chili powder, cumin, salt or pepper to taste.

Serve with sour cream and shredded cheese and Jiffy corn bread, prepared according to package instructions.

### **Penne Chicken Alfredo with Broccoli**

1 lb boneless chicken breast, cut into ½ inch strips.  
2 T olive oil or vegetable oil  
Salt & Pepper  
2 tsp garlic powder  
1 tsp Italian herb blend  
16 oz jar Alfredo sauce  
16 oz box penne pasta  
1 lb fresh broccoli

Season chicken with garlic powder, Italian seasoning, salt and pepper. Set aside. Boil pasta according to package instructions. While pasta is cooking, saute chicken strips in olive oil on medium heat. When chicken is browned, add alfredo and reduce heat to low. Drain pasta and add to alfredo chicken mixture. Toss and serve with cooked broccoli and shredded Italian cheese.

### **Tomato Basil Soup with Grilled Cheese**

2 cans crushed tomato  
4 cups water with 2 T chicken or vegetable bouillon  
2 tsp dried basil  
1 T olive oil  
½ tsp salt, more to taste

Heat olive oil in a saucepan. Add crushed tomato, salt and basil. Cook and stir for 1-2 minutes before adding the water and bouillon. Simmer for 20 minutes. Add to the blender and puree or use an immersion blender in the pan. Top with a drizzle of olive oil and a sprinkle of shredded Italian cheese. Serve with grilled cheese.

### **Breakfast for Dinner**

Prepare pancakes, eggs how you like them and breakfast sausage with syrup and apple sauce.



## THE SNAP CHALLENGE (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)

Many of us are blessed with the privilege to not have to think too much about how, when and if we will get our next meal. Even today, with the increased cost of food, my own shopping habits have not drastically changed. Sure, I watch my total cost and try to purchase frugally, but I still manage to include some of the sweet and savory snacks my family loves; I'm still able to purchase fresh vegetables and fruits; and, I still plan my meals and then shop, rather than shop the sales and then try to come up with things to make. But for many of our fellow community members in Southeastern Wisconsin, and around the country, trying to provide enough food for one's family is a daily struggle.

Some of the privileges we may take for granted:

### **I've been too busy to plan, or don't have the time or energy to cook a meal**

Get take out, go out to a restaurant, or swing by the grocery for prepared food.

### **I choose fresh fruits and vegetables, or organic produce because I perceive that they are healthier**

Fresh is more expensive. Not all communities have easy access to fresh produce on a consistent basis.

### **I base my grocery list on what is convenient and what my family enjoys, regardless of cost**

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, about 41.2 million people living in 21.6 million U.S. households participated in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in an average month.

The average SNAP household received a monthly benefit of \$297. (The average household size was 1.9 people) Households with children received a larger average monthly benefit of \$515 due to their larger average household size. About 37 percent of SNAP households received the maximum benefit for their household size. Ten percent received the minimum benefit (\$20), which is only available to households with one or two members.

For many families, the monthly stipend they receive through SNAP is the only money they have for groceries. The difficulties that low income households experience when trying to provide a balanced diet with enough food to last from week to week can be compounded by:

- Lack of nearby access to full service grocery stores
- Lack of kitchen appliances included in rental units
- Time restraints due to working multiple, minimum wage jobs
- Rising food costs

We ask that you prayerfully consider taking on this challenge:

To only spend the average SNAP benefit amount to feed your family for 1 week, 2 weeks or a month; to experience the challenge of trying to shop, cook and eat within a substantially limited budget; and at the end of the experience, take the difference between your typical weekly budgeted amount for food and the amount spent during the experience and donate it to an organization in our community that is fighting to reduce hunger. Some options are:

Hunger Task Force

House of Peace

Tosa Food Pantry

Street Angels

Nourish MKE

Attached are grocery lists, menus and recipes based on a four person household or a two person household. The lists and menus encompass a complete, two week period for breakfasts, lunches and dinners. The lists are based on regular prices at Pick n' Save, our predominant grocer in the Metro-Milwaukee area. Certain staple pantry items are assumed, and while they may be in some of the recipes, they are not included in the budget or grocery list. Staple items include: salt, pepper, oil, sugar, flour, basic spices.

For lunches in the four person household, it is assumed that two of the household members are children who are receiving lunch at school. The lunch menu is based on only needing two lunches per day Monday-Friday, and four lunches on Saturday and Sunday.