

Healthy Eating for Athletes on a Budget

Young athletes need good nutrition for optimal performance. Eating healthy food doesn't have to break the bank. By following a few guidelines, a nutritious diet can be delicious and stay within budget.

- **Drink More Water.** It will keep you hydrated and is very low cost. Keep a reusable water bottle with you for staying hydrated on the go.
- **Plan Ahead.** Make a grocery list and stick to it. Avoid impulse buys. Join loyalty programs and cut coupons. Shop around, look for deals online and in the newspaper. Aldi and Wal-mart Neighborhood Market are great places to shop and save money.
- **Purchasing.** Price compare generic brands with name brands by looking at the unit price. Compare prices for fresh, frozen, dried, or canned items. Buy expensive sports products in bulk and share costs with other team members. Look for deals on non-perishable items online. Buying items in bulk or large sizes, instead of individual portion sizes, saves money.
- **Fruits and Vegetables:** Look for in-season fresh fruits and vegetables as they cost less. Both canned and frozen fruits and vegetables are just as nutritious as fresh, and often less expensive. Keep your freezer stocked with frozen vegetables for quick additions to meals.
 - Look for canned fruits packed in 100% juice and low or no sodium canned vegetables and beans.
 - Farmer's markets are a great place to shop for less expensive in-season produce.
 - Freeze in-season fruit to enjoy year-round.
- **Grains:** Whole grains pack more nutrition for the money. Look for these items in bulk bins and large size bags to save money.
 - Look for brown rice, 100% whole wheat breads and pastas, rolled or steel cut oats, and whole grain crackers.
- **Meats and Protein:** Look for less expensive cuts of meat, such as chicken thigh meat instead of breast meat. Eggs are a great source of protein and are low cost. Frozen or canned seafood can be big money savers. Look for sales and stock up, freezing what you don't eat right away.
 - Braising and stewing can make inexpensive cuts of beef taste tender and delicious. Also cooking in a slow cooker helps these cuts of meat and is convenient when short on time.
 - Mixing ground meats with beans, oats, or mushrooms can stretch these items, making them less expensive per serving and more nutritious.
- **Healthy Fats:** Pick healthy fats such as olive oil, canola oil, natural peanut butter, avocados, and unsalted nuts. Make your own salad dressings and dips.
 - A little goes a long way! Be sure to follow correct portion sizes for these items, it will help you save money.
- **Prepare.** Using correct portion sizes can save you money. Find recipes that feature few ingredients and are easy to prepare. Plan some vegetarian meals as meats tend to be more expensive than beans, for example. Cook meals that stretch expensive items, like soups, stews, casseroles, and stir-fries.

Seasonal Food Guide

Purchase fruits and vegetables in-season for the best prices.
If you find a good deal, buy extra and freeze them to use later.

January broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, grapefruit, kale, leeks, lemons, oranges, parsnips, rutabagas, tangelos, tangerines, turnips	February broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, grapefruit, kale, leeks, lemons, oranges, parsnips, rutabagas, tangelos, turnips
March artichokes, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, leeks, lettuce, mushrooms, parsnips, pineapple, radishes, rutabagas, turnips	April artichokes, asparagus, broccoli, cauliflower, leeks, lettuce, mushrooms, pineapples, radishes, rhubarb, spring peas
May apricots, artichokes, asparagus, cherries, lettuce, mangoes, okra, pineapples, radishes, rhubarb, spring peas, strawberries, Swiss chard, zucchini	June apricots, blueberries, cantaloupe, cherries, corn, kiwi, lettuce, mangoes, peaches, strawberries, Swiss chard, watermelon, zucchini
July apricots, blackberries, blueberries, cantaloupe, corn, cucumbers, green beans, kohlrabi, lettuce, mangoes, okra, peaches, peppers, plums, raspberries, strawberries, summer squash, Swiss chard, tomatoes, watermelon, zucchini	August acorn squash, apples, apricots, blueberries, butternut squash, cantaloupe, corn, cucumbers, eggplant, figs, green beans, kiwi, kohlrabi, lettuce, mangoes, okra, peaches, peppers, plums, raspberries, strawberries, summer squash, Swiss chard, tomatoes, watermelon, winter squash, zucchini
September acorn squash, apples, beets, butternut squash, cantaloupe, cauliflower, eggplant, figs, green beans, lettuce, mangoes, mushrooms, okra, peppers, persimmons, pomegranates, pumpkins, spinach, sweet potatoes, Swiss chard, tomatoes	October acorn squash, apples, beets, broccoli, butternut squash, cabbage, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cranberries, grapes, leeks, lettuce, mushrooms, parsnips, persimmons, pomegranates, pumpkins, rutabagas, spinach, sweet potatoes, Swiss chard, turnips, winter squash
November beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, cranberries, leeks, mushrooms, oranges, parsnips, pears, persimmons, pomegranates, pumpkins, rutabagas, spinach, sweet potatoes, tangerines, turnips, winter squash	December broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, grapefruit, kale, leeks, mushrooms, oranges, papayas, parsnips, pears, pomegranates, rutabagas, sweet potatoes, tangelos, tangerines, turnips