

# Top Tips and Activities: Store Cupboard Basics



A healthy diet can sometimes be seen as an expensive way to live, but it doesn't have to be! Below are some basic foods with a long shelf life that you can keep in your cupboard which will provide you with good nutritious meals!

Keep some of these items in to provide the base of your meals:

- **Potatoes:** Potatoes are cheap and versatile! You can boil, mash, roast, bake or fry them. And although potatoes can grow legs if you leave them long enough, they do last a good few weeks if kept in a cool dark place, and if you do have space in the fridge, they last even longer!
- **Rice:** Rice is great with curries and chili, but you can also use rice in salads and risottos too!
- **Pasta:** Experiment making your own pasta dishes by adding vegetables, chicken or fish and try making your own sauces using tinned tomatoes.

It is really important to eat plenty of fruit and vegetables (at least 5 portions a day), and it's good to know that it isn't only fresh fruit and vegetables that count, as these can be costly and can go off quite quickly. Here are some ideas to meet your quota:

- **Tinned veg:** These count towards your 5 portions a day; they are low in fat and calories and keep for years! Tinned tomatoes are particularly good emergency items because they can form the base of many sauces.
- **Tinned Fruit:** Great to add to breakfast cereals on a morning, or to eat as a snack or a dessert, and they count towards your 5 a day!
- **Fruit Juice:** One glass of fruit juice counts towards your 5 portions no matter how much you drink! Concentrated juice is cheaper than chilled varieties but just as yummy!
- **Onions:** Onions are usually cheap, although red onions do cost more than white onions. They need to be stored in a cool dark place

and have a shelf life of a few weeks and they are great for adding flavour to a dish.

Each day we need 1-2 portions of protein based foods. Buying in fresh fish or meat can become expensive and difficult to store if you don't have plenty of fridge or freezer space, so here are a few ideas to get your protein from different sources.

- **Baked beans:** Beans on toast are a simple and easy dish to make! Beans can last for ages in your cupboard and they are a good source of fibre and protein, they also count to one 1 portion of your daily fruit and vegetable intake!
- **Pulses:** Even if you are a meat eater, pulses are a great source of protein and other nutrients. They have a long shelf life and can be used to make curries, chili, burgers or salads.
- **Eggs:** Eggs are cheap and can be used in many ways. They can be used to make omelettes or scrambled eggs, or can be boiled to eat in sandwiches or salads.
- **Canned fish:** Eating oily fish such as mackerel, salmon and pilchards are really important for good health and canned varieties last ages in the cupboard! Try adding fish to rice and pasta dishes, on toast or in a sandwich!
- **Milk:** Something that most people eat everyday whether it's on cereal or in their cups of tea! Keep a carton of UHT milk in. It's cheap and it can always be used in emergencies if you run out of fresh milk!

## Helpful Reminders:

Remember not to be tempted into buying foods that you won't or don't eat! Only keep foods stocked in your store cupboard that you will use. Keep a list of "must have" items that replace them once they have been used up and remember that although these items do have a longer shelf life you should always check the use by date before using them to cook!