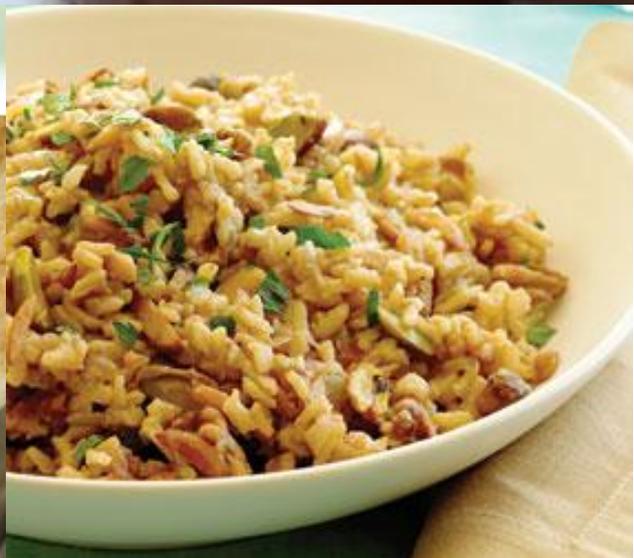




COOKING
SOCIETY

FRESHER'S SURVIVAL COOKING GUIDE



Saving Money when shopping

There are a few main rules when it comes to clever food shopping which can save you a lot of money.

1. Don't go shopping hungry; it's much easier to walk past the chocolates and other temptations with a full stomach
2. Compare the prices per litre or per 100g carefully. Don't be distracted by the brightly advertised products claiming to save you money
3. Be careful with multibuy offers, most of the time you end up buying things you didn't want in the first place or you buy way too much of something. Really ask yourself if and how much of it you would buy it if there wasn't a deal on it and then compare the cost of that with the deal.
4. Try and avoid the local Tesco and Sainsbury's as their prices are most of the times much higher than in the big stores. Lidl is a great local alternative.
5. Use a basket in the shop; you'll be more careful when picking up unnecessary items because it gets heavy after a while. A big trolley makes you feel like you need to fill it up.



Basics ingredients

There are some basic ingredients that are very useful to have in the house making it easier when it comes to making dinner. If you have a good selection of these basic things in the cupboard you won't have to go shopping every time you want to cook something.



Stocking up on tinned and frozen food allows you to have plenty of different vegetables in the house without the worry of them going off any time soon. Tinned vegetables are probably better for you than you think; most of their nutrients are retained when tinned so they're pretty healthy.

Here a little list of the most useful:

- **Chopped tomatoes and tomato puree** are great for so many things like pasta sauces, stews, chilli con carne, pizza, etc
- **Tomato puree** is essential in tomato sauces and keeps a good while in the fridge
- **Baked beans, kidney beans, chickpeas** are a cheap way to bulk out any stews or casseroles
- **Tuna, Sardines** go great on sandwiches or in pasta sauces and are very healthy
- **Potatoes** are super versatile and keep alright in a dark dry place
- **Frozen peas** keep forever in your freezer and are great in any dish as a vegetable
- **Garlic and ginger** are great strong flavours for curries and a lot of other dishes

- **Fresh chillies** are hard to beat in curries and chilli con carne. You can keep them in the freezer and then use straight from frozen
- **Bread** is very versatile. As well as beans you can put pretty much anything on toast, think fried mushrooms, scrambled eggs, sardines, etc. To mix it up **pita bread** and **tortillas** are cheaper and healthier alternatives for sandwiches, etc
- **Crème fraiche, soft cheese** make great bases for creamy pasta sauces and give a lovely creamy finish in soups and any other dishes
- **Stock cubes** are great for seasoning soups, pasta sauces, stews, etc
- **Eggs** can make a great meal with just a few extra ingredients like scrambled eggs or omelette and keep for a few weeks in the fridge
- **Rice, Pasta, Couscous** can be bought in bulk because it keeps forever and goes with almost anything

Using your freezer

The freezer can be your best friend when you're trying to save money. You can buy meat, fish and vegetable in bulk when you find a great deal in the supermarket and then freeze it at home; you can cook big batches of food and then freeze leftovers, which is great if you have busy times at uni like the exam period ahead and you don't want to spend too much time in the kitchen but still eat healthy. Great freezable dishes are for example lasagne, curries and cottage pie.

But apart from freezing food at home you can save lots of money when you have a look in the freezers in the supermarket. Frozen fruit and vegetables are very convenient and cheap especially if you only want to use small amounts as you can use them straight from frozen. Fish can be a lot cheaper if you buy it from frozen but you might have to compromise a little on quality compared to buying fish fresh from the fish monger; it still makes a lot of sense to buy it frozen if you have to watch your expenditures.

Having a clever stocked up freezer can save you lots of money and if you keep it full it even saves energy.



Herbs and Spices

Herbs and spices can make all the difference in any dish and really transform it into something special. As a poor student you might not want to splash out on lots of fancy spices that you only need for a single dish but be unlikely to use in other dishes. There are a few that you can use for lots of things but ultimately it is up to you how big your spice collection will be but here is a little list of the most important:



- **Pepper** very versatile and can go in almost anything
- **Dried Chilli flakes** can be used in anything that needs a kick, e.g. Pasta sauces, stews, baked beans, chilli con carne...
- **Paprika** sweet or hot, gives a lovely smoky flavour to any tomato based dish, baked beans or even scrambled eggs
- Curry paste is great if you want to make curry but don't want to get all spices separately
- **Stock cubes** give a great rounded flavour for not only soups but sauces. You have to be careful with quantities as it can get too salty very quickly
- **Mixed dried herbs**, are great if you are not looking for a particular herb but be generous with it as it doesn't have a very strong flavour
- **Parsley** goes with most things; try in salads, creamy pasta sauces, with mushrooms....
- **Rosemary** is great on roasted potatoes and tomato based dishes
- **Basil** goes well with any tomato based dish and salads
- **Thyme** is very versatile, great with tomato sauces, fish and meat

Don't be discouraged when you find a recipe with some crazy spice that you normally wouldn't use and don't have in your cupboard, try substituting it with something you do have or sometimes you can just leave it away completely if it's not essential for the dish; it might not taste exactly like the recipe wanted but chances are that it is still very nice without.

Herbs are a bit trickier than spices because they lose a lot of flavour when they are dried. Some herbs like thyme or rosemary have a strong natural taste and are therefore fine to keep dried but parsley, basil or coriander are best when they are fresh. I personally found that the basic mixed herbs are not too bad for a general herby taste.



Fresh herbs are the best when it comes to taste but unfortunately they don't keep for very long if you buy them in the supermarket.

The best way to have a steady supply of herbs is get yourself an herb garden which is not as difficult as you might think. All you need is a big flower pot, soil and some potted herbs which you can get in any larger supermarket. You can keep them inside or outside, wherever you've got space.

If you don't trust your green finger there is another way to have fresh herbs at hand. Freezing herbs enables you to keep them for a long time without them losing flavour and you can use them straight from frozen whenever you need them. You just need to wash and chop them and they are ready for the freezer. Either you put them in a container with a lid and then scrape out however much you need at the time or you pack them into ice cube trays with a little water. After 24 hours they are fully frozen and you can transfer them into a freezer bag – now you have perfect little portions of herbs that you can put straight in your pan.

Meat

Buying meat can get expensive very easily especially in small amounts. Taking advantage of multibuy offers when buying meat and freezing what you don't want to use right away saves you money and keeps you stocked up with meat for a while.

Alternatively, instead of buying a couple of chicken breasts when you're in the mood for chicken is to cook up a whole chicken and then using the meat for different meals like a curry, sandwiches or chicken salad, etc throughout the week. The same can be done with beef, pork and lamb. Storing the meat cooked in your fridge keeps it fresh for much longer than if it would be raw.

Roasting a whole chicken or a joint of beef is much easier than it sounds. It requires minimum preparation and once it's in the oven you've done all the work.

Here a few basic recipes to roast your meat without any fuss.

Roast Chicken

You need:

- baking tray
- 1 whole chicken (1.5kg)
- A few tbsp oil
- Salt, Pepper,
- Paprika or any spice or herb of your choice

How to:

- Preheat the oven to 180°C
- Remove any packaging and elastic bands from the chicken (check the insides as well)
- Rub the chicken with oil, salt, pepper and any other seasoning if you want inside and out
- Put it on the baking tray
- Bake it for 1h 20min, to check if it is done cut with the knife into the thigh and the juices should run clear
- Let it cool down and then you can easily strip the meat off the bones



Roast Beef

This is even easier than roast chicken; leftovers can be used in sandwiches, stir fries or any dishes that require diced beef. Just remember when using leftovers, they are already cooked and only need to be warmed through.

You need: ovenproof dish topside of beef (1.3kg)

A glug of oil

Salt, pepper

How to: Heat the oven to 220°C

Put the beef on the baking tray and leave the elastic string on (if it has any)

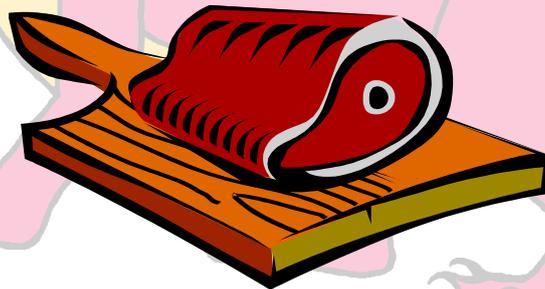
Season well with Pepper and Salt

Drizzle the oil over the top

Put the beef into the oven

After 15 min turn the temperature down to 180°C and bake for a further 40 min. This will give you a rare roast beef.

If you prefer it medium leave it in for another 15 min and an additional 15 min if you want it to be well done.



Recipes

Chips

You need: Baking tray Potatoes
Oil
Salt
Rosemary (optional)



How to: **Preheat** your oven to 200°C.
Wash the potatoes and **cut** them into your desired shape, wedges or chips.
Put the potatoes on the baking tray and mix them with the olive oil, salt (and rosemary if you have it)

Bake in the oven for about 25 min.

Done

Steak

You need: Frying pan Beef steak (rump, sirloin, rib-eye)
Salt, Pepper
Oil



How to: **Heat** oil in a frying pan
Season the steak with salt and pepper on both sides
Make sure the pan is really hot when putting the steak in
Fry the steak on each side for $1\frac{1}{2}$ - $2\frac{1}{2}$ minutes (depending how done you like it)

Basic Vegetable Soup

This is a great recipe if you want something healthy but substantial, and it's dead cheap.

This Soup recipe works with any vegetable, that can be peas, broccoli, sweet corn, spinach, leek or a mix of vegetables.... anything you can find in your cupboard.



You need:

One big pan Oil
 Hand blender 3 medium sized potatoes
 1 onion, roughly diced (optional)
 400-500g vegetable of your choice
 1 l of stock (vegetable, beef or chicken)
 Salt, Pepper
 1tbsp of crème fraiche or soft cheese (optional)

How to:

Cut the potatoes, onion and the vegetable into bite sized pieces (the smaller the pieces the quicker they cook)

Heat the oil in the pan and fry the onions for few minutes until softened

Add the potato chunks for another minute

Then **pour** the stock in and let it boil for about 10 min or until the potatoes are soft.

Put in the rest of the vegetable and continue cooking for 5 more minutes

Then **blend** the whole thing up. This is not essential, you can skip this bit if you like your soup as it is.

Season the soup to taste with salt and pepper

Add the crème fraiche or soft cheese if you want, it makes it a bit creamier.

Pita - Mini Pizzas

These are great for when you're not in the mood for cooking and it is very versatile and dead cheap. You can put literally anything on it. If you don't like the tomato sauce, you can use any pesto on the base.

You need: Pita breads (however many you like)

Tomato puree

Cheese (cheddar or mozzarella)

Any other toppings you like (e.g. ham, mushrooms, peppers, sweet corn, etc.)



How to:

Heat the grill on the oven

Spread a tsp or two of tomato puree straight from the tube on each pita bread

Put on any other toppings on and put under the grill for a few minutes until the cheese has melted and browned to your liking

Bruschetta

This is a good example that anything can be put on toast and if you like Italian food you'll love this.

You need:

A toaster

2 slices of bread

1-2 Tomatoes

1 garlic clove

A glug of olive oil

Salt and pepper

Some basil (if you have it)

How to:

Toast your bread

Slice your tomatoes and roughly chop the basil

Rub the peeled garlic clove on the toast

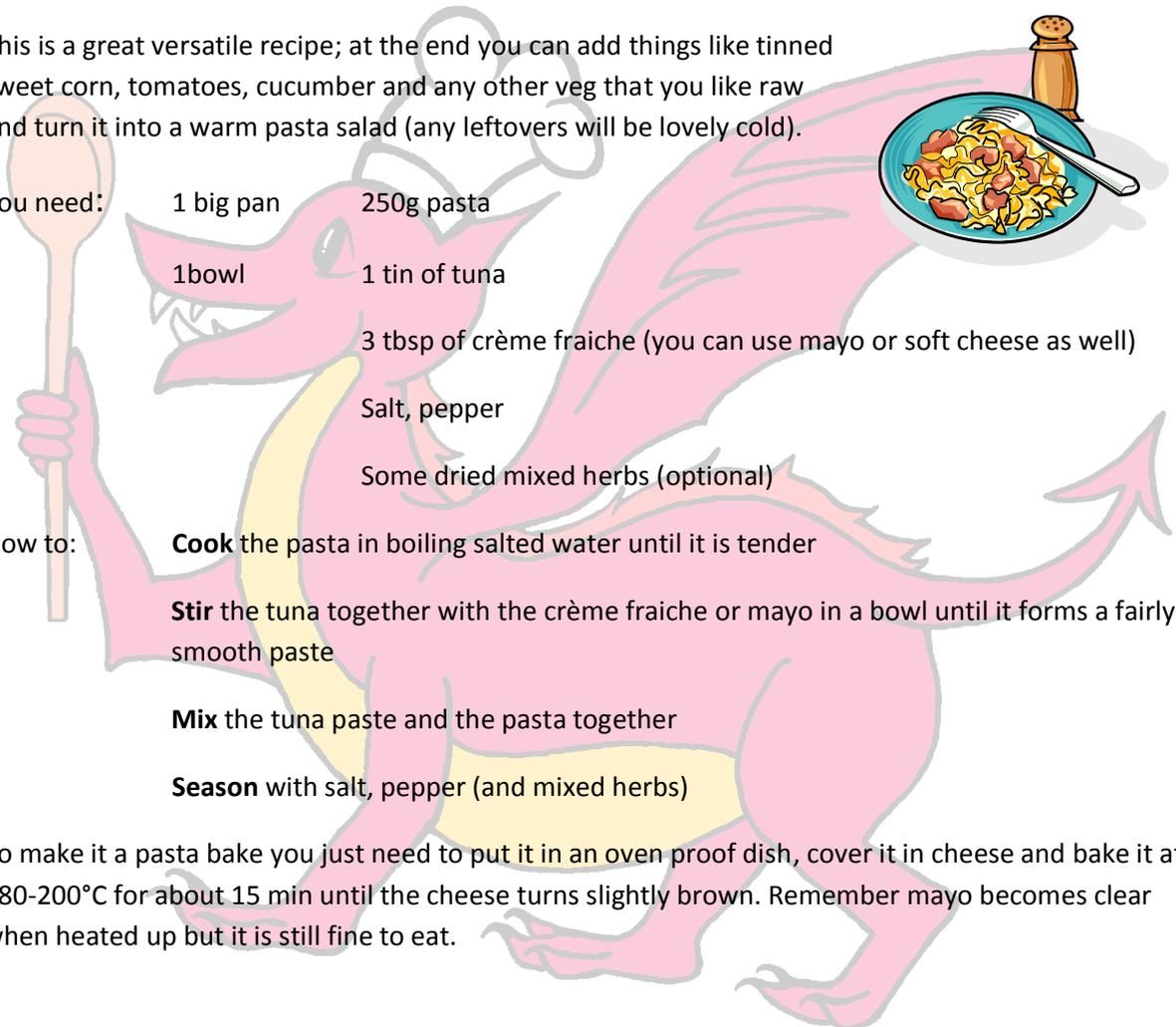
Put the tomatoes on top and sprinkle with salt, pepper, olive oil and basil

Pasta

If you want to get a bit more variety you can always change the pasta for rice or couscous, any pasta sauce works just as well with them. Swapping or adding ingredients like peppers, mushrooms, sausages, etc makes also a nice change when you get bored of a recipe.

Tuna and Pasta

This is a great versatile recipe; at the end you can add things like tinned sweet corn, tomatoes, cucumber and any other veg that you like raw and turn it into a warm pasta salad (any leftovers will be lovely cold).



You need:

1 big pan	250g pasta
1 bowl	1 tin of tuna
	3 tbsp of crème fraiche (you can use mayo or soft cheese as well)
	Salt, pepper
	Some dried mixed herbs (optional)

How to:

- Cook** the pasta in boiling salted water until it is tender
- Stir** the tuna together with the crème fraiche or mayo in a bowl until it forms a fairly smooth paste
- Mix** the tuna paste and the pasta together
- Season** with salt, pepper (and mixed herbs)

To make it a pasta bake you just need to put it in an oven proof dish, cover it in cheese and bake it at 180-200°C for about 15 min until the cheese turns slightly brown. Remember mayo becomes clear when heated up but it is still fine to eat.

Tomato Pasta Sauce with Sausages

Here you could just leave out the sausages to make it vegetarian or add any veg or other meat cut in chunks and fried together with the onion. Sausages are a great way of having meat in the dish but keeping it cheap.

You need: 1 pan 3-6 sausages of your choice (depending how meaty you like it)

 Baking tray 1 onion, finely chopped

 1-2 cloves of garlic, crushed or finely chopped

 1 pack (500ml) of tomato passata or creamed tomatoes

 2 tbsp tomato puree

 1 squeeze of brown sauce

 Salt, pepper, herbs (optional, but basil, parsley and thyme go great with this)

How to: **Heat** the grill in the oven

Put the sausages on the baking tray and prick each a few times

Put the sausages under the grill for a few minutes and keep turning them to brown them on all sides evenly.

 When they are done **cut** them in bite sized pieces

Fry the onion in a little bit of oil for two minutes

Add the garlic and fry for another minute

Add the tomatoes, sausage pieces, brown sauce, salt, pepper and herbs

Stir and let **simmer** for a good 15 min



Roasted Vegetables and Couscous

This is a really quick dish with minimum cooking involved but very healthy at the same time. You could add more vegetable if you want; courgettes and aubergines give a Mediterranean feel to it.

You need:

1 ovenproof dish	1 onion
1 bowl	2 tomatoes
	1-2 peppers (red or yellow works best)
	½ red chilli (optional)
	1 clove garlic either finely chopped or crushed
	2 tbsp olive oil
	1 tbsp sugar
	1 tbsp balsamic vinegar (optional)
	50g couscous
	60ml stock

How to:

Cut the tomatoes, peppers and onion into chunks

Finely **chop** the chilli

Put the vegetables in an ovenproof dish

Sprinkle over the olive oil and the sugar

Put it in a preheated oven at about 180 degrees for about 10-15 minutes until the vegetables are nice and crispy

Meanwhile, **put** the couscous into a dish and **pour** over the stock, then leave for 5 minutes

The couscous is done when all the water has been absorbed.

Mix the couscous and the vegetables and **sprinkle** with balsamic vinegar if you like

Eat.



Jacket Potato

With a **microwave**:

You need: 1 big potato

How to: **Wash** the potato and **prick** all over with a sharp knife

Pour a couple of tbsp of water on a plate and **put** the potato on top

Microwave on high for 10 min turning it over after 5min

To crisp the potato off, put in the oven at 200-220°C for another 15 min. If you're not too bothered about it being crisp you can just give it longer in the microwave. The potato is done when you can poke a knife easily through the whole potato.

If you don't have a microwave or you prefer them really crisp on the outside and have a bit more time to spare, you can do it in the **oven**:

You need: 1 baking tray 1 big potato

1tsp of oil

How to: **Preheat** the oven to 200-220°C

Wash and **prick** the potato

Rub a little oil over the potato, **put** on the baking tray

Bake at 200-220°C for 15 min and then turn the heat down to 180°C and keep baking it for another 45-1hr

The overall baking time depends of course on the size of your potato, check with a knife if the potato is soft in the middle



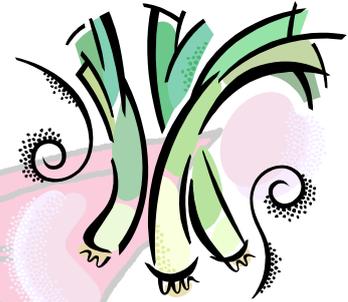
Jacket Potato Fillings

You can put pretty much anything in a jacket potato; here are a few other ideas instead of the classics beans and cheese, tuna or soured cream and chives.

Creamy Leek Filling

You need: 1 frying pan 1 leek, thinly sliced
2-3 tbsp garlic and herb soft cheese
Pepper

How to: **Fry** the leek in a bit of oil for two minutes
Add the soft cheese and **season** to taste



Mushroom Filling

You need: 1 frying pan 150g Mushrooms
A knob of butter
2 tbsp soft cheese
A small handful of parsley
Salt and pepper

How to: **Heat** the butter in the pan
Fry the mushrooms for a couple of minutes
Add the soft cheese and parsley then **season** to taste



Sweet corn, chilli & Avocado Salsa

You need: 200g tin of sweet corn, drained
1 avocado
1 red chilli
1 tbsp red onion, finely chopped
A small handful coriander leaves, chopped
1 lime, juiced

How to: Make sure the sweet corn, avocado and onion are roughly the same size
Mix all ingredients together in a bowl

Sweets

Oat Cookies

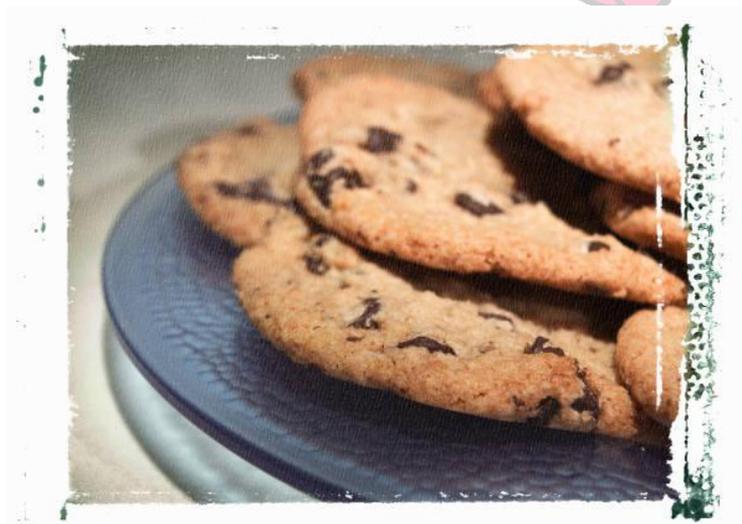
You need:

1 baking tray	3oz (85g) flour
Some baking paper	3oz (85g) sugar
1 small pan	3oz (85g) butter
1 mixing bowl	3oz (85g) oats
	½ tsp bicarbonate soda
	1tbsp milk
	1tbsp golden syrup
	Chocolate chips or dried fruit

How to:

- Melt** the butter, milk and golden syrup in a saucepan
- Put** the flour, sugar, bicarb and oats into a mixing bowl
- Add** the melted butter mix and make it into a dough
- Add** chocolate chips or dried fruit
- Shape** into little balls and **place** on a baking tray lined with baking paper
- Squash** down slightly
- Bake** in the oven at 150 degrees for about 10-20 minutes (depending on how crispy you like them)

TIP: if you're adding chocolate chips, make sure the dough has cooled down before adding them otherwise the chocolate will melt!



Useful Links

If you prefer fresh vegetable you should have a look at the "fruit and veg co-Op" in the union. They sell cheap fruit and vegetable bags every week in the Union

<http://groups.cardiffstudents.com/fruitveg/about/>

If you're looking for recipes there are a million websites on the internet which can be very confusing when looking for a simple recipe. I personally find the BBC Good Food website really helpful because it is organised and easy to find what you want. <http://www.bbcgoodfood.com/>

If you want simplicity stay away from celebrity chefs, they normally use loads of unnecessary and fancy ingredients; go with recipes for students instead: <http://studentrecipes.com/>

Another one of my personal favourites is <http://sortedfood.com/> where you can watch the recipes in videos which is a lot more entertaining than reading the recipes and you can see how easy it is.

Studentbeans offers a nice collection of a few student recipes

<http://static1.beanscdn.co.uk/assets/external/download/Studentbeans-RecipeBook.pdf>.

If you have any questions about recipes or want student friendly cooking tips visit the Cooking Society Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/cardiffuniversitycookingsociety>