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Pinchin' Pennies in the Kitchen

6 Tips to Save Money With Unit Pricing

Unit pricing is a term that describes pricing goods to determine what the cost is per unit of measure, such as pounds, ounces or quarts. Finding the unit price of an item allows consumers to find the “best buy” and determine any advantages to buying in bulk or switching brands.



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Tips for Unit Pricing in Grocery Stores

1. Check the shelf tag.

- The shelf tag usually shows the total price and price per unit (price per ounce, pound, quart, etc.) of each product. This can be used as a quick reference while shopping.



2. Know how to calculate the unit price.

- Item price ÷ item size = unit price
- Example:
 - Item price: \$2.99
 - Item size: 12 oz.
 - Unit price: $\$2.99 \div 12 \text{ oz.} = \0.249 per ounce

3. Compare different forms of the same product.

- Items can be found in many different forms, such as fresh, frozen, dried and canned. Save money by purchasing the least expensive form.

4. Compare different sizes and brands for price and quality.

- Larger-size packages of food are often a better deal, as long as they have the lowest unit price and all of the food is used before its quality decreases. Name brands usually are more expensive than store brands. Try a less expensive option and compare it to your usual brand.

5. Read and compare Nutrition Facts labels.

- Compare calories, fat, protein, sodium and other nutrients so you know what you are purchasing. Which is the better nutritional bargain?

6. Remember coupons.

- Using coupons can reduce the price even more. Sometimes coupons can decrease the price of name-brand products to the price of store-brand products. Be sure to do the math.

Which is the best buy?

Example 1.

Product 1



Price per ounce \$0.166

Product 2



Price per ounce \$0.155

Answers: 1. \$0.166 per oz.; product 2 is best buy; \$0.155 per oz.;

While purchasing ingredients for the following recipe, compare the prices of fresh versus frozen blueberries and different brands or sizes of yogurt. Also consider buying items such as flour and sugar in larger-size packages.

Blueberry Coffeecake

- 1 c. lemon low-fat yogurt
- 3 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- 1 egg
- ½ c. sugar
- 1½ c. flour
- 1 Tbsp. grated lemon peel
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 1½ c. fresh or frozen blueberries*

*Be sure to thaw and drain frozen fruit before adding to recipe.

Heat oven to 375 F. Spray a 9- by 9- by 2-inch baking pan with nonfat cooking spray. Beat yogurt, oil, egg and sugar in a large bowl. Stir in remaining ingredients except blueberries. Carefully stir in blueberries. Spread all ingredients in the pan. Bake about 35 to 40 minutes or until cake springs back when touched lightly in center. Cool 10 minutes. Serve warm or cool.

Option: Instead of blueberries, use raspberries or blackberries.

Option: Drizzle lemon glaze over top after baking. To make glaze, mix ⅔ c. powdered sugar and 3 to 4 tsp. fresh lemon juice. Mix sugar and lemon juice until smooth and drizzle on cake. Note: nutrition information does not include optional lemon glaze.

Makes eight servings. Each serving has 227 calories, 6 grams (g) fat, 38 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 12 g sugar, 6 g protein and 192 milligrams sodium.

Source: Recipe courtesy of the Washington Farmers Market Nutrition Program

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For more information about nutrition, food safety and health, visit this website:

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