

Food Storage Planner

1. Understand Needs:

What foods was your family craving during the pandemic?	
What foods were missing from store shelves during the pandemic?	
What foods do you need for family members with dietary needs.?	
What foods are traditions for birthdays and holidays?	
What are the family's favorite meals, breakfast, lunch and dinner? Choose 10	
What are the family's favorite desserts?	

2. Set a Budget.

3. Create a shopping list

Once you have completed the chart above its time to get out the recipes. In a chart or spread sheet record all the ingredients from the first recipe. Move on to the other recipes, if there are ingredients that repeat make a tally mark next to that item. Continue this process until you have a master list of all the ingredients in all your meals, desserts, items missing from your stores during the pandemic and foods the family was craving. You should be able to see a pattern. You may have more green beans than corn, more pasta than rice, more cookies than cakes, etc. As you work on your food storage you will want to purchase items in those ratios. This does not mean you will only be eating 10 different meals for three months. What it does mean is that as you

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Prepped when it really counts

make other meals or try new recipes, you will naturally gravitate to those that have ingredients your family likes.

Be sure all food groups are covered. Each food group provides different vitamins and minerals and we need all of them. Check out food group daily serving sizes to determine how much you need to store for your size and age family or purchase Mother Hubbard: What She's Doing Now which includes a storage calculator. Available at <https://www.totallyready.com/>

4. Time to shop.

Pull out the grocery ads. Sit down with your ingredient list and see what you can find that is on sale. Don't go crazy hitting too many stores, it won't be budget friendly. Remember it is far more important to have a two or three-month supply of a balanced diet than a one-year supply of oatmeal. Oatmeal three times a day will get old fast! Don't shop more than once a week. Shopping more often equals spending those extra bucks; the "I just need one thing" trap.

Purchase enough food for a balanced diet for one week, then a month, then three months. If a disaster strikes next month a one week supply of every food group will serve you better than a three month supply of olives and tuna.

5. Mark your purchases.

You need to decide if you want to mark your cans with purchase dates or expiration dates. I prefer to use the date I purchase foods. Every manufacturer has a different method of dating their products. Some date as they are produced, some a pull date, some an expiration date, some with a "best used by" date. All mean something different, therefore, I prefer to use the date I purchase an item and then I know I am using food, oldest first. Decide on a method that works for you and mark those packages of food.

6. Inventory.

Create a chart or spread sheet and record all purchases. Once you complete your three month supply you can ignore the spread sheet if you work out a rotation plan. I record everything on a grocery list as I use it and then transfer to a shopping list as items go on sale. I never buy anything not on sale, saving lots of money.

7. Make room.

A coat closet does not have to be a coat closet. Move the coats to the bedroom, add shelves and it's now the grain and condiments closet. For storage ideas check out the posts on the Totally Ready Facebook page.

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

8. Move on to non-food items.

Now it's time to make a list of non-food items you use regularly. Include items such as medications, toiletries, cleaning supplies, toilet paper, and laundry detergent. One approach to creating a list is to brainstorm with the family and then post list on the fridge. Ask everyone to add items to the list for a week. Again, ask yourself what was difficult to find during the pandemic.

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