

Financial fitness with nutritional wellbeing

The cost of living crisis continues to have an impact on the affordability of healthier diets for so many of us.

Healthy Eating Week is organised by the British Nutrition Foundation, focused on providing free, evidence-based advice and support for everyone who wants to find their way to eating a healthier diet regardless of these barriers.

There are more ideas on the [Healthy Eating Week website](#) with some inspiration and tips on how to:

[Save money on food](#)

[Focus on fibre](#)

[Get at least 5 a day](#)

[Vary your protein](#)

[Stay hydrated](#)

[Reduce your food waste](#)

Five ways to save money on your packed lunch

With potential savings of more than £1,000 a year, making packed lunches makes a lot of sense. It doesn't take a genius to work out that buying a meal deal from the likes of Tesco or Sainsbury's, is not cost-effective, setting you back from £3.00 to £3.50 each time, nor is treating yourself to a daily takeaway coffee at £1.65. Even with the staff discount, it soon adds up.

Homemade lunches needn't be boring or repetitive. Liven things up with some creative recipes, that are also easy on the wallet. From super noodles to nutritious salads, belly-filling sarnies, or snack-time treats, there's a recipe for every situation. If you're looking for inspiration, try [James Ramsden's Love Your Lunchbox: 101 do-ahead recipes to liven up a lunchtime](#) or [The Workweek Lunch Cookbook from Talia Koren](#).

Other ways to save include:

1. Plan ahead – Take a look at what is the cupboard, fridge, or freezer before doing the food shop to make sure you're not doubling up.
2. Batch cook – Batch cooking is a great way to save on money and time in the long run. Pasta and rice dishes are easy to make in bulk, along with stews with beans, soups, or muffins. You could just make a little extra for your evening meal and use the leftovers the day after for your lunchbox.

I'm a huge fan of [the Batch Lady](#) – Her method will show you how to make fast, simple, homemade, portion-controlled meals, that can be prepared in advance and then frozen for whenever you need them. So, you cook when you want to not when you have to. If you want to save time and money and get healthy, organised, and in control of your weekly meals, then this is the method for you.

3. Presentation is everything – you can make your own Japanese-inspired, compartmentalised bento box to use up leftover items in the fridge or cupboard.

The British Nutrition Foundation suggests putting a small handful of mixed dried fruits or nuts into reusable food bags or sealed containers to store in the cupboard to make your own easy snack.

And if you have some spare time, growing your own cress for your egg sandwiches could also be a fun project for the family, as well as cheaper than buying it from the

supermarket.

4. Get inspired – Even if you're not the most adventurous or competent cook, you can still make your lunchtime exciting.

If you're looking for cooking made simple, [Simply Cook](#) is a good starting place. [Try for £3](#) – choose 4 recipes for your first box – no commitment and you can cancel anytime. Three extraordinary pots of flavour, mixed with store cupboard ingredients and the cheapest of meat cuts, deliver delicious, affordable home cooking to your dinner table.

Top tip – I choose the recipes for 4 people, bulk up the ingredients, and save leftovers for my lunches. Lots of the recipes can be frozen.

5. Too Good To Go – I find delicious food in your area ready to be saved. Too Good to Go is an app looking to stop food waste by reducing the amount of food being put in the bin.

Cafés, restaurants, and bars offer up any food that would otherwise be thrown away which then gets sold as a heavily discounted 'magic bag'. The customer doesn't know what they are going to get but all food in it will be good to eat that day. These bags have a minimum £12 value and are sold via the app for £4. EL.

Join the fight against food waste and [download the app](#) here.



Photo by Ella Olsson on [Pexels.com](https://www.pexels.com)