

Three Meals for Four!

The frozen and refrigerated aisles of a supermarket offer many delicious, nutritious, and economical meals we can create at home. In this activity, you will plan a menu and shopping list for three meals — breakfast, lunch, and dinner — for a family of four using only frozen and refrigerated foods, then compare the cost to eating at a restaurant.

PART 1 Use online resources to plan and price your meals. Start with the chart below to choose menu items for breakfast, then create similar charts on the back of this sheet to plan and price lunch and dinner. Look on the Nutrition Facts labels for “Servings per container”. Record the total cost for each meal and the average cost per person in the spaces below.

Breakfast items			
Servings per container			
Cost for four servings			

Total cost: Breakfast _____ Lunch _____ Dinner _____

Average cost per person Breakfast _____ Lunch _____ Dinner _____

PART 2 Now check online menus to price comparable meals for four people at local restaurants. (To keep things simple, ignore the cost of tax and tip.) Use this chart to compare the cost of dining out to the cost of your home meals using frozen and refrigerated foods.

Restaurant Meals	Total cost	Cost difference	Cost per person	Cost difference
Breakfast				
Lunch				
Dinner				

PART 3 Surprised by the difference? Take it one step further. Use the chart below to calculate the average weekly meal costs per person for a family of four shopping in the frozen and refrigerated food aisles. (To keep it simple, we’ll assume the same meals are served every day.)

Home Meals	Cost per person	x 7 = Cost per week
Breakfast		
Lunch		
Dinner		
Total Weekly Cost per Person		

Now find out how this cost compares to the national average as calculated by the U.S Department of Agriculture (USDA). Go to <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/CostofFoodAug2023LowModLib.pdf>. Use the “Moderate cost plan” column to choose average weekly food costs for the four members of your imaginary family and add them together. Discuss in class how your frozen and refrigerated foods home meal plans compare to the national average costs.

Go to **EasyHomeMeals.com** to explore how you can build budget-conscious menus using frozen and refrigerated foods!

