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Recipe measurements:

1 tbsp = 1 tablespoon, about 15ml

1 tsp = 1 teaspoon, about 5ml

g = grams



Welcome

Welcome to the Big Union Cookbook from Your SU.

It can be extremely difficult as a student to make healthy meals whilst juggling a busy timetable and other commitments. Here at Your Students' Union, we have compiled a collection of tasty and easy recipes that are either cost-effective, cultural or eco-conscious to ease that pressure.

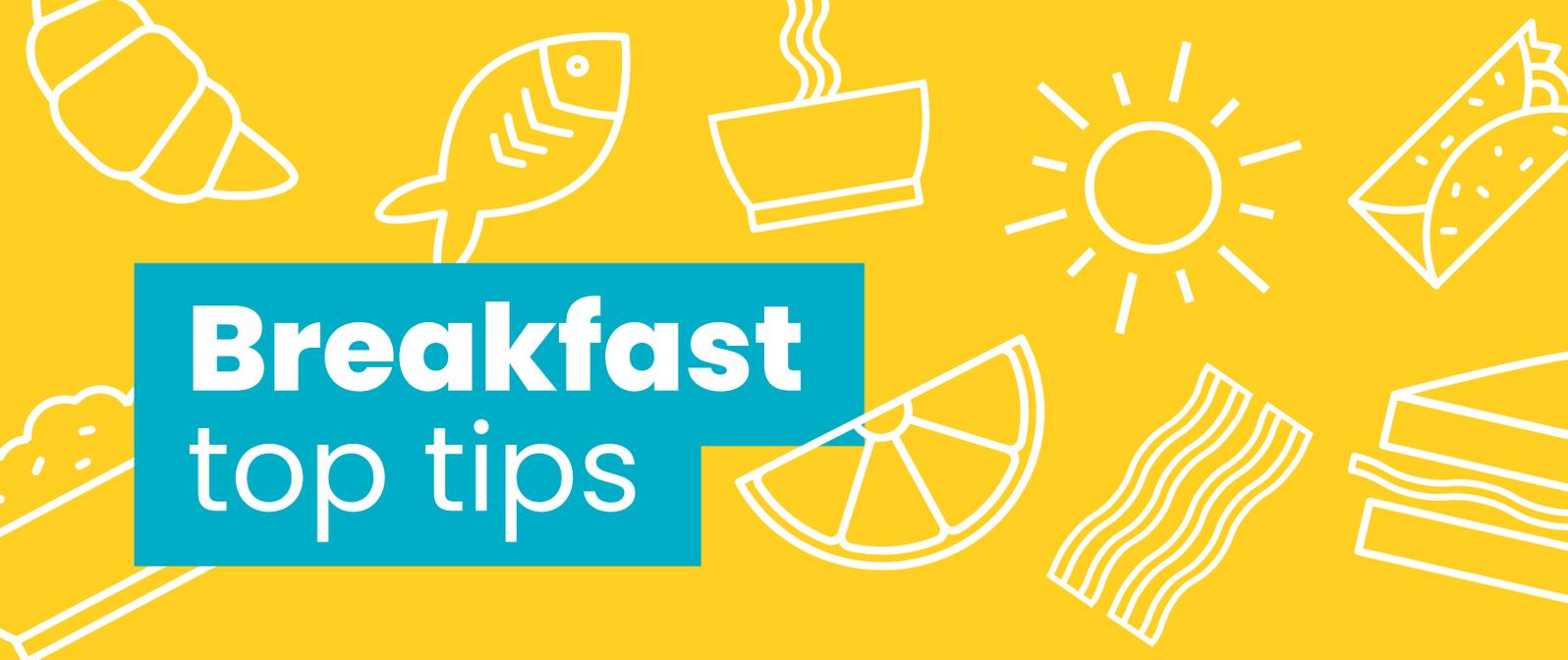
From Polish dumplings to avocado in Galaxy milkshake, we hope this cookbook will inspire you to try new things and help make meal-planning and budgeting stress-free!



Catherine
Community Officer

Feeling inspired? Why not share your delicious creations by tagging us @yoursu.campaigns on Instagram!





Breakfast top tips

- The old adage “breakfast is the most important meal of the day” is true! Not only will those calories be essential in giving you energy for the day ahead but starting out with a good meal will keep you fuller for longer and less likely to spend lots of money on snacks throughout the morning.
- If you are a fan of keeping it simple, your favourite well-known breakfast cereal will be just fine. For the best health benefits go for porridge, no-added-sugar muesli or plain shredded wheat.
- 80g of fruit = 1 of your 5 a day, by the way! For some porridge topping inspiration, search for ‘Heart Matters magazine’ where you’ll find a great article on 14 healthy porridge ideas by our friends over at the British Heart Foundation.
- If the idea of getting up that little bit earlier is simply unthinkable, there are plenty of on-the-go alternatives. With a bit of planning and pre-morning preparation, it is still possible to have a healthy, hearty breakfast. Start thinking the right way by checking out articles like ‘15 on-the-go breakfast ideas’ from BBC Good Food.
- Always remember... be it sitting down for a leisurely breakfast, or eating on the move, making your own breakfast will always work out cheaper than buying something en route.

With that in mind, stay tuned for our pick of breakfast recipes...

French toast rolls



Teguan Harris

Estimated cost: £4.53 (serves 1)

Summary: Bread rolls covered in cinnamon and filled with Nutella and fruits.

Ingredients

- 2 slices of bread
- fresh fruits of your choice
- Nutella
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- butter
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup milk
- sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Method (10 minutes)

1. Roll out the bread and cut the crusts off.
2. Spread the Nutella onto one side of the bread. Slice the fruits of your choice and place them onto the Nutella side of the bread. Roll the bread.
3. Add 2 eggs, 1/2 cup of milk, 1/2 teaspoon of ground cinnamon and 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract into a bowl and whisk.
4. Dip the rolls into the egg and cinnamon mix and then add to a pan of butter. Fry on medium to low heat on all sides until golden.
5. Add two tablespoons of granulated sugar and one teaspoon of ground cinnamon to a plate and coat the rolls with the mixture.
6. Serve with extra fruits of your choice.

I found this recipe on TikTok and have used it ever since. It is good for breakfast and snacks, it is nutritious and a sweet treat all in one. Overall, it is fun and easy to prepare and delicious!

Semolina banana cake



Kommu Shantita

Estimated cost: £9.05

Summary: A healthy cake for breakfast with coffee or after dinner if you have sweet cravings.

Ingredients

- 4 bananas, mashed
- 3 cups semolina
- 2 cups jaggery or brown sugar
- 1 tbsp plain flour
- ½ cup of curd (if you can't get curd use buttermilk)
- ½ cup butter
- 2 cups milk
- 1 ½ tbsp baking powder
- ½ tsp baking soda
- pinch of cinnamon
- ½ cup desiccated coconut
- pinch of salt
- A selection of dried fruit
- 1 tbsp ground cardamom (optional)

Method (45 minutes)

1. In a bowl combine bananas, semolina, cinnamon, cardamom (if using), jaggery or sugar, flour, butter, curd and salt.
2. Next add baking soda, baking powder, coconut, milk and dried fruit. Mix well and allow to sit for at least 20 minutes.
3. Grease a cake or loaf tin with butter and line with baking paper.
4. After 20 minutes if the batter appears dry add a little milk.
5. Pour mix into your prepared tin and bake for 20 minutes at 170C/150C fan/325F/gas mark 3.

I created this recipe myself. I always wanted to have my own restaurant and I like to experiment a lot. My dream is to have my own restaurant which describes my culture and also the super healthy recipes which I have created.

Irish potato cakes

Dan Connolly (SU Staff)

Estimated cost: £1.12 (serves 1)

Summary: A great way to use leftover potato, tasty on their own or as part of a cooked breakfast.

Ingredients

- ~300g cooled potato, mashed (leftover boiled or mashed potatoes work great)
- 1 egg (optional)
- ~100g plain flour
- pinch of salt
- optional extras: sliced scallions (spring onions), a handful of grated cheese, a handful of oats, chopped chives

As a kid I would happily eat these for any and every meal. My mum, nanny, and grandma all had different recipes (Nanny Nora would include an egg, Grandma Ala would just use flour and potato) and I loved them all.

Back in Ireland we'd have these with bacon and black pudding, nowadays I'm vegetarian but they still taste great with vegan black or white pudding, beans, eggs, mushrooms, tomatoes...

Method (10 minutes)

1. If you don't have leftover potatoes, peel and boil your potatoes until a knife passes through them without resistance. Make sure they have completely cooled before the next step.
2. Mix the mashed potato, flour, salt and egg (if using) to a rough dough, don't overmix. Add more flour if needed (the dough should form small patties that hold together).
3. If you're adding any optional extras mix those in too.
4. Heat a frying pan over medium-low heat, no need to add any oil or butter.
5. Form your dough into small discs. If your dough is sticky, wet your fingers a little first to make it easier to handle.
6. Dry fry in the pan until dark golden brown (~2 minutes) then flip and cook until dark and crisp on the other side too.
7. To serve, top with your favourite butter or spread and a sprinkle of salt (my favourite way) or have with beans, egg, and your favourite breakfast bits.

Easy scrambled eggs

Estimated cost: 32p (serves 1)

Summary: Scrambled egg in the microwave... what could be easier?

Ingredients

- 2 eggs
- 1 tbsp milk
- salt and pepper to taste
- serve with toast (or potato cakes from the previous page!)

This is a quick, easy recipe for cooking scrambled eggs in the microwave if you're running short on time or don't have a pan. Eggs are a very good source of inexpensive, high-quality protein. They are also a useful source of vitamin D which your immune system will love you for! When served with toast and your favourite accompaniments it can be a great meal in itself.

Top tip: Scrambled egg will continue cooking once removed from the microwave. To ensure your egg stays exactly as you want it, have everything ready to serve before that little bell lets you know your eggs are ready!

Method (3 minutes)

1. Rub a tiny bit of oil or butter round the inside of a microwavable dish.
2. Crack eggs into your ready greased microwavable dish – remember to check for shell!
3. Add the milk and a pinch of salt and pepper for seasoning (if you want to) and whisk lightly with a fork or small whisk.
4. Microwave on high uncovered for 30 seconds and whisk again with the fork.
5. Cook for another 30 seconds and whisk with the fork again. The eggs carry on cooking once out of the microwave so they might be done enough after this time, but if you like your eggs more cooked pop them in for another 30 seconds.
6. Spoon the eggs on to your toast and eat immediately.
7. Goes great with cherry tomatoes (fry in a little oil until they start to burst), wilted spinach (microwave for 15-30 seconds), smoked salmon, bacon, chilli flakes or pumpkin seeds.

Ultimate vegan breakfast



Estimated cost: £4.96 (serves 4)

Summary: A delicious, healthy vegan meal that doesn't just have to be eaten for breakfast.

Ingredients

- 450g potatoes, cut in to small chunks
- 4 tomatoes, halved
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped (or garlic in a jar)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 300g mushrooms (we recommend chestnut mushrooms)
- 8 vegan sausages
- 400g tinned baked beans
- 150g baby spinach leaves.
- pinch of dried herbs to season your potatoes (optional)

Method (50 minutes)

1. Preheat the oven to 220C/200C fan/425F/ gas mark 7.
2. Put the potatoes and tomatoes in a large roasting tin, sprinkle over the optional dried herbs, a pinch of salt and a drizzle of olive oil. Bake for 15 minutes.
3. Put the garlic in a mixing bowl, add the mushrooms and a drizzle of olive oil and stir to mix.
4. Add the mushrooms and sausages to the roasting tin and roast for 20 minutes.
5. Add the beans and spinach to the roasting tin and roast for a final 5 minutes.

Herby potatoes and tomatoes, plus garlic mushrooms and meat-free sausages, all roasted together in one baking tray? Sounds like the ultimate vegan breakfast!

Divide the ingredients if you want less, or why not share the food and costs with your flatmates and have a chilled communal Sunday brunch?

2 minute overnight oats

Estimated cost: £1.40 (serves 1)

Summary: Pop in the fridge the night before for an easy, nutritious breakfast in the morning.

Ingredients

- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
- 100ml milk (or water)
- 50g rolled porridge oats
- 2 tbsp natural yogurt
- 50g mixed berries (fresh or frozen)
- drizzle of honey
- ½ tbsp nut butter of your choice

Method (2 minutes + overnight)

- 1.** The night before serving, stir the cinnamon and 100ml of milk (or water to save money) into your oats. Cover and leave in the fridge.
- 2.** In the morning, loosen with a tiny bit more liquid (milk or water) if needed. Top with the yogurt, berries, a drizzle of honey and the nut butter.
- 3.** And...you're ready to eat!

You can make a larger batch and keep in the fridge for up to three days.

Adapt this recipe to suit your tastes. You could try adding dried fruit, seeds and nuts, grated apple or pear, chopped or frozen fruits for the perfect healthy breakfast. Check out BBC Good Food for some more of that Oaty Inspiration.



Main meal top tips

- A healthy diet includes a balance of protein, carbohydrate, dairy or dairy substitutes, fruit, vegetables and natural fats.
- Plant-based protein foods such as beans, lentils, chickpeas and other pulses provide protein and fibre and are naturally low in saturated fat as well as a cost-effective option. It is good to include these regularly in your diet whether you are vegetarian/vegan or not.
- Lentils are not only good for eating on a budget, they are also one of the best climate friendly proteins around! Other environmentally friendly foods include tomatoes, green peas and broccoli.
- If you choose meat as a source of protein, choosing cuts such as chicken thigh instead of chicken breast could prove cheaper and more flavoursome.
- Canned oily fish such as sardines and salmon can also be cheaper than buying fresh fish.
- Tinned food in general is a good idea if you are watching the pennies, things like tinned vegetables, beans and pulses will last a long time and prove very cost effective if bought in bulk. Remember, just because they are tinned doesn't necessarily mean you miss out on their health benefits.
- Using freezer space is one of the best ways to balance homemade meals for one person with combatting food waste. Batch cooking some of these larger healthy recipes and then freezing leftover portions means that you're not wasting food, and you will be sure to have quick, easy and healthy meals to fall back on in days and weeks to come. If you don't have much freezer space, why not try communal cooking with housemates or friends where you can share costs and meals throughout the week.

Use these tips with some inspiration from our main meal recipes!

Sweet potato, chickpea & coconut curry



Isabel Ferris

Estimated cost: £5.17 (serves 4)

Summary: A warming, tasty, easy, budget-friendly curry.

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp of vegetable oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped (or garlic in a jar)
- 3 tbsp curry paste (or 1 tsp turmeric, 1 tsp coriander, 1 tsp cumin, 1 tsp garam masala)
- 500g butternut squash / sweet potato, cut into 1cm cubes
- 1 courgette, cut into bite-sized pieces
- ½ mug frozen peas
- ½ cauliflower
- 400g tin chickpeas
- 400ml tin coconut milk
- 1 stock cube
- handful of spinach
- 2 tbsp fresh grated ginger (optional)
- rice or naan bread to serve

Method - on the hob (40 minutes)

- 1.** Heat oil in a pan. Sauté the onion and garlic until softened.
- 2.** Add the ginger, and curry paste or spices.
- 3.** Briefly microwave the cauliflower to soften then add to the pan with the squash or sweet potato. Season with salt and pepper.
- 4.** Add the coconut milk and stock cube. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer until the squash / sweet potato is soft, around 20 mins.
- 5.** Add the frozen peas, courgette and chickpeas and cook for five minutes.
- 6.** A couple of minutes before serving, stir in the spinach.
- 7.** Serve with rice or naan.



Veggie curries are great for substitutions & additions. Why not try...

- Toasted cashews and sultanas or other nuts and dried fruit
- Carrot or other root veg (microwaved and added with the cauliflower)
- Tomatoes, peppers, broccoli, or mushrooms chopped and added with the squash
- Baby sweetcorn and mangetout added whole or sliced in two with the frozen peas

Method - in the oven (40 minutes)

1. Put the onion, cauliflower (microwaved first until softened) and squash or sweet potato in a roasting tin with oil and the ginger and curry paste or spices.
2. Roast in the oven for 5 minutes at 210C/190C Fan/375F/gas mark 7
3. Add the coconut milk, stock cube, courgette, peas and stir then return to the oven until the squash / potato is soft, about 25 minutes.
4. Stir in the chickpeas and spinach for the last few minutes of cooking.
5. Serve with rice or naan.

This recipe uses budget-friendly ingredients and can be made in bulk. It freezes and reheats well, so is great when you need a quick meal.

It works with whatever vegetables you have available so it is good for using up leftovers and avoiding waste. As well, it is a healthy, plant-based meal, with lots of vegetables, with the chickpeas providing a low-fat, vegan, and protein source.

Making this brings up happy memories as it's one of the first recipes that my mum taught me to get me ready for living on my own at uni. It's warming, comforting, tasty, and reminds me of home cooked family dinners.

Vegan cottage pie



Kirsty Harrod

Estimated cost: £4.37 (serves 4)

Summary: This vegan cottage pie has a base of lentils with a thick slab of crispy mash on top.

Ingredients

- 1 onion
- 3 cloves of garlic
- 100g red split lentils
- 5 chestnut mushrooms
- 2 carrots
- 1 cup of veg stock
- Splash of soy sauce
- 1 tin chopped tomatoes
- 5 large potatoes
- splash of oat milk (or milk of your choice)
- knob of vegan butter (dairy can be used if you're not vegan)
- salt and black pepper
- mixed herbs OR basil, oregano, and rosemary
- olive oil
- red wine (optional at an additional cost)

Method (60 minutes)

1. Preheat the oven to 180C/160C fan/350F/ gas mark 6.
2. Peel the potatoes and chop them into roughly equal sized chunks. Add them to a pot of boiling, salted water and leave to simmer. Take them off heat when they're soft in the middle.
3. Dice the onion and mince the garlic. Add to hot oil in a pan and sauté for as long as possible.
4. Chop up the mushrooms and add to the pan. Add a splash of soy sauce then cook for a further 3-5 minutes.
5. Grate the carrots and add them to the pan. Stir for a minute.
6. Season the veg mixture with mixed herbs, salt, and pepper to taste.
7. Add in the lentils to the pan, then add the wine (if using). Turn up the heat to full and stir for a minute to cook off the alcohol.
8. Return to medium heat and add the chopped tomatoes and stock. Leave to simmer for 10-15 minutes.

Twists on a topping

- Make your topping crispy by sprinkling breadcrumbs on top. Make your own with a few slices of bread and a food processor or grater. All the better if it's a little stale.
- Try sweet potato or a potato and sweet potato mix for your mash topping. Peel and boil them in the same way you would a potato.
- Try mixing some grated vegan cheese in with the mash and sprinkle a little on top.

9. When the potatoes are done, drain the water and add the oat milk, vegan butter, salt and a bit of pepper. Mash the potatoes until smooth.
10. When the liquid in the veg mixture has been reduced, spoon it evenly into an oven dish, then cover with the mash. Run a fork through the mash for that iconic cottage pie look!
11. Place the pie in the oven for 10-15 minutes, or until the mash is golden-brown.

My gran, who was my absolute hero, died recently. This is the first recipe I ever wrote up for anyone, and it was because she requested it after I made it for her. She is very much a meat eater but enjoyed this vegan dish immensely!

Healthy besan chilla



Sandeep Kour

Estimated cost: £2.11 (makes 2 pancakes)

Summary: Gram flour pancake with lots of vegetables.

Ingredients

- 1 cup gram flour
- 1 grated carrot
- 5-6 finely chopped green beans
- 1 finely chopped small onion
- ½ finely chopped bell pepper
- ½ tsp salt
- small handful of finely chopped coriander
- pinch of red chilli powder
- pinch of turmeric powder
- 2 pinches of carrot seeds
- 2 pinches of fenugreek leaves

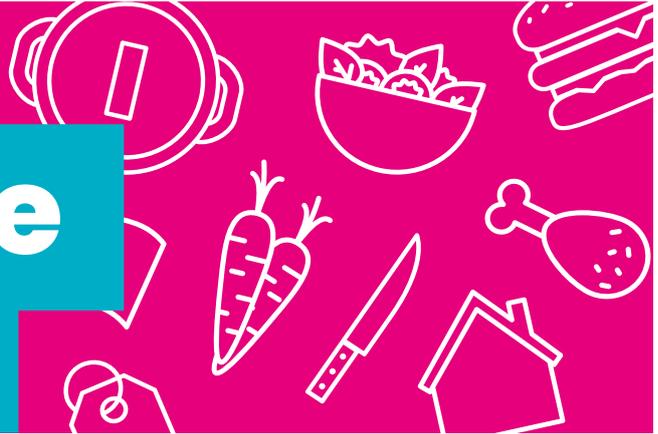
Method (12 minutes)

1. Add all ingredients to a bowl, slowly add water and mix until all the lumps dissolve and it turns into a semi-thick batter.
2. Heat some oil or clarified butter in a pan over a medium heat.
3. Take a ladle full of the mixture and gently pour it on the pan.
4. Cook for 2 minutes.
5. Turn it to the other side with the help of a spatula and cook it for 2 more minutes.
6. Keep the first one warm under a towel while you cook the second one then enjoy!

This is a simple recipe but is close to my heart, both as a mother and a daughter. My father-in-law was a patient of liver cirrhosis and unable to eat much, I tried various tasty and healthy recipes just to make him eat something.

He is not with me today but I want everyone to take care of their loved ones with healthy and tasty food. I also make these for my kids and they eat it with modern twists like mayonnaise and tomato sauce. So this recipe contains love and care of a mother.

Flexible vegetable crumble



Estimated cost: £5.61 (serves 4 generously)

Summary: A delicious, healthy vegan meal that doesn't just have to be eaten for breakfast.

Ingredients for the filling

- Approximately 600g of mixed vegetables, frozen, or cooked leftovers (if using leftovers skip Step 1)
- 1 x 400g tin of beans such as cannellini beans or chickpeas, drained and rinsed

Ingredients for the crumble

- 100g plain flour
- 100g ground almonds
- 100g butter
- 100g grated cheddar

Ingredients for the sauce

- 400ml crème fraiche
- 50g grams grated cheese
- salt and pepper

Method (40-50 minutes)

1. Steam the vegetables until tender. Different vegetables can have different cooking times so try chopping them to similar sizes or adding root vegetables first and green vegetables later.
2. In a bowl mix the crème fraiche with the 50g grams of cheese, salt and pepper.
3. Add the vegetables, mix, then spoon the filling into an oven-proof dish.
4. For the crumble, use your fingers to rub the butter into the flour and then add the almonds and cheese.
5. Scatter the crumble on top of the filling.
6. Bake for 30-35 minutes in a pre-heated oven at 190C/170C fan/375F/gas mark 5 until golden and bubbling.

This recipe is a great way to get plenty of vegetables into your diet. You can add any leftover veggies you have to the crumble, as well as tinned additions such as chickpeas, beans or peas. You can change the filling with the seasons making green and summery fillings when it's warmer and heartier root vegetable crumbles in the Winter.

Fishfinger bharta with pink pickled onions



Devina Whitwell (SU Staff)

Estimated cost: £3.71 (serves 2)

Summary: A simple, colourful and unusual recipe perfect for dinner for two.

Ingredients for the pickled onions

- ½ red onion
- red wine vinegar or lime juice to cover

Ingredients for the bharta

- 2 onions, sliced
- 2 large cloves of garlic, peeled and minced (or easy garlic in a tube)
- 1 tbsp finely grated fresh ginger (or easy ginger in a jar)
- 4 frozen fish fingers per person
- 3 tbsp rapeseed or vegetable oil
- 1 tsp fine sea salt
- 125g young spinach or any other mixed green vegetables (try green beans, broccoli, peas or sweetcorn)
- 1 lime
- 3 tbsp roughly chopped fresh coriander
- 2 red chillies, deseeded and finely sliced (optional)
- 2 tbsp English mustard (optional)

Method for the pink pickled onions (5 minutes + 2 hours)

1. Make your pink-pickled onions as far in advance as you can: between 2- 24 hrs ideally.
2. Finely slice your half a red onion into fine half-moons, place in a jar with a lid, or a bowl that you can cover.
3. Pour over red wine vinegar (or lime juice), pressing down on the onions until they are all just covered.
4. Put the lid on the jar or cover your bowl, and leave the onions to steep for at least 2 hours.

Top Tip: you can also get ready made pink pickled-onions from the supermarket for around £1 a jar.

Method for the bharta (30 minutes)

1. Preheat the oven to 220C/200C Fan/425F/ gas mark 7.
2. Put the frozen fish fingers on a baking sheet and cook for approx. 20-25 minutes turning halfway through to ensure the breadcrumb coating is really crisp.

Garlic & ginger

- You can buy garlic fresh, minced in a jar, or in a tube. If using fresh then a garlic press can be handy to crush the cloves. Garlic can be delicate. Keep moving it around the pan to avoid burning.
- Root ginger can be kept in the freezer. Use a potato peeler to peel off the tough skin and a fine grater to grate it. If using unfrozen you can use a teaspoon to peel off the skin (you really don't want any of that skin in your dinner!)

3. While the fishfingers are cooking, warm the oil in a large frying pan and cook the onions over a low heat for 20 minutes, stirring regularly until they are pale gold and soft.
4. Add the sliced chillies to the pan and cook, stirring all the while, for 3 minutes, then stir in the grated ginger, mince or grate in the garlic, and cook, still stirring, for another 2 minutes.
5. Spoon in the mustard and salt, stirring to combine, then add the spinach leaves/ other vegetables. Let them wilt in the pan for 2–3 minutes, stirring regularly, then squeeze in the juice of the lime and remove from the heat.
6. Take the fishfingers and break them up into chunks with a spatula then add them to the pan. Toss everything together, continuing to break the fish fingers into the rest of the ingredients.
7. Serve topped with the pink-pickled onions, adding extra chopped coriander if you'd like.

Traditional bharta is a vegetarian or fish side dish, using fishfingers here turns it into a great main meal with protein, healthy oils, and some extra crunch!

It works great on its own but you could pair it with rice for a bigger meal. You can also keep any leftovers in the fridge for a tasty lunch the next day.

Where possible try to make sure your fishfingers use sustainable sources of fish or try a vegetarian substitute.

Homemade Chinese takeaway



Aisha Benfield

Estimated cost: £5.74 (serves 2 + leftovers)

Summary: Chinese takeaway at home - what more could you want!?

Ingredients for the garlic chicken

- 2 chicken breasts or thighs cut into small pieces
- cornflour (enough to coat the chicken)
- a sealable sandwich bag
- 3 tbsp garlic paste
- 6 tbsp soy sauce (gluten free or regular)
- pack of spring onions cut lengthways into small strips
- 3 tbsp oil

Ingredients for the egg fried rice

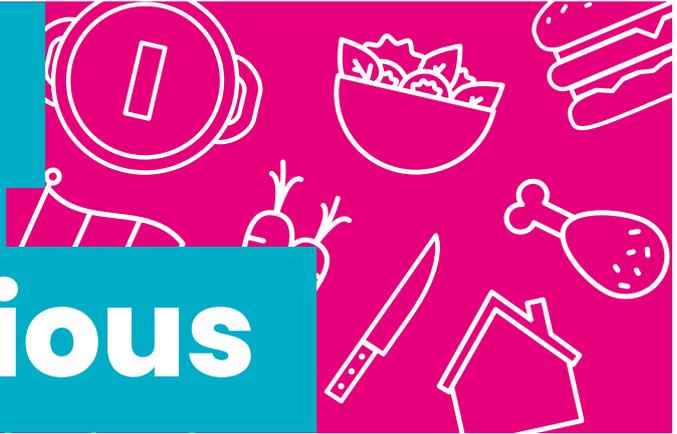
- 3 free-range eggs
- 2 servings of precooked rice
- 1 cup peas
- 3 tbsp soy sauce

Method (25 minutes)

- 1.** Place chicken pieces in the sandwich bag with a few tbsps of cornflour. Shake in the bag to ensure all of the chicken is coated.
- 2.** Fry chicken in hot oil until crispy and cooked through. Don't overfill your pan, I find cooking the chicken in batches helps with the crispiness. To check the chicken is cooked cut a piece in two, it should be white to the middle, with clear juices.
- 3.** Add spring onions, garlic paste and soy sauce (add more if needed) and cook through for a few minutes.
- 4.** Scramble your eggs in wok or pan for a couple of minutes then add the rice, soy and peas.
- 5.** Heat through well and stir continuously. Plate up the rice and chicken and serve with prawn crackers if you wish!

This is a wholesome dish that I regularly cook at uni - something that I have adapted over the years and love every single time I make it. I have coeliac disease so can't have many Chinese takeaways anymore (sadly!) so this is a great alternative!

Janine's chicken scrumptious



Rachel Nafzger (SU Staff)

Estimated cost: £4.70 (serves 4)

Summary: Filling, no fuss homemade comfort food.

Ingredients

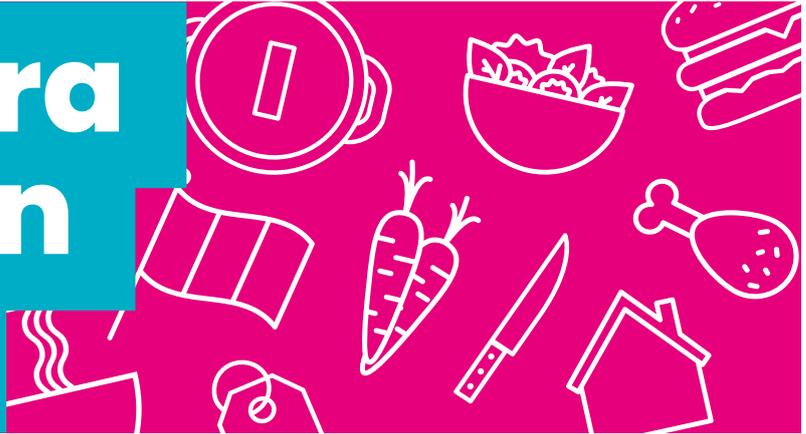
- 4 chicken breasts or thighs as a cheaper option
- 2 tbsp of dry breadcrumbs (can be bought in a pack or made using a leftover loaf that needs eating up)
- 4 level tbsp mayonnaise
- 60g cheese (parmesan or cheddar recommended)
- 1 tbsp chopped or dried herbs (try parsley and thyme or oregano)

Method (30 minutes)

1. Preheat oven to 210C/190C Fan/410F/gas mark 6.
2. Combine the cheese and mayonnaise in a bowl.
3. Arrange the chicken breasts on a baking tray and evenly top each chicken breast with the cheesy mayonnaise.
4. Sprinkle the breadcrumbs and herbs across over the top.
5. Bake for at least 20 minutes in the pre-heated oven. Check it is properly cooked by seeing if the chicken juices run clear when pierced.
6. Enjoy served with your favourite veggies or a green salad.

This is a family recipe of a dear friend and former housemate of mine. She introduced me to it when we both started living independently, fending for ourselves and figuring things out. She is sadly no longer with us, but her spirit lives on in this warm and comforting dish.

Gongura chicken gravy



Jenifer PremKumar

Summary: Gongura chicken is one of the traditional recipes of Andhra Pradesh in India.

Ingredients

- 5 tbsp oil
- 100g fresh gongura leaves (roselle plant leaves)
- 50g fresh coriander leaves
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2-3 elaichi (cardamon) pods
- 2 bay leaves
- 4-5 cloves
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 tbsp cumin seeds
- 4-8 green chillies (to taste)
- a few fresh curry leaves
- 1 tbsp ginger paste
- 1 tbsp garlic paste
- 1 large or 2-3 smaller tomatoes
- ¼ tsp turmeric powder
- salt

- 500g chicken breast or thighs, trimmed and chopped into large chunks
- 1 ½ tsp red chilli powder (or more/less if you prefer more/less heat)
- 1 tbsp coriander powder
- ½ cup of water
- handful of fresh coriander leaves, finely chopped
- a few fresh mint leaves, finely chopped

Method (1 hour)

1. Heat 1bsp oil over a low heat, add the fresh gongura leaves and fry for 30-60 seconds.
2. Add 50g of fresh coriander leaves, 4 to 8 green chillies and some salt and cook until the gongura leaves have fully wilted.
3. Take off the heat and mash the gongura leaves using a pestle or masher until it becomes a paste.
4. In another big pot or pan put the remaining oil, cardamon pods, cinnamon stick, bay leaves, and cloves.
5. Add the onions, cumin seeds, curry leaves, ginger and garlic paste, tomato and turmeric.

Tips and tricks

- Gongura is an edible leaf of the roselle plant used in Indian, Caribbean and Pacific cuisine, in the UK you may find it called red sorrel.
- A pestle and mortar are great tools to make a paste, whether that's a curry paste or a basil pesto. If you don't have a pestle and mortar, try using the end of a rolling pin and a sturdy bowl, or use a blender.

6. Cook on low heat for 5 minutes or until the onions go golden brown.
7. Add the chicken and continue to cook in low heat for about 5 - 10 minutes, moving the chicken around the pan so it cooks through.
8. Add the red chilli powder and mix it well, Cook for another 10 minutes at low heat.
9. Take your pan of mashed gongura paste and add it into the chicken gravy, mix it well.
10. Add 1 tbsp of coriander powder and mix well, now cook for 5 minutes on medium heat.
11. Add the ½ cup of water and salt to taste.
12. Add finely chopped coriander leaves and mint leaves and continue to cook for 2- 3 minutes.
13. Now the delicious and yummy gongura chicken is ready to serve! It goes well with rice.

This recipe is my family's traditional recipe which is prepared by my maternal grandmother on different festival occasions. This is also a favourite dish of mine. I used to help my grandmother in the preparation of gongura chicken gravy.

It is a slow cooked process where gongura leaves need to be cooked first and added to the chicken. It is a spicy dish and delicious too.

Marina's chickpea chorizo



Marina Garcia Gomez

Estimated cost: £5.30 (serves 2, perfect for sharing and great the next day)

Summary: A flavourful chickpea chorizo rice mixture.

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp oil
- 1 chorizo, sliced
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 tin chickpeas, drained
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 fresh chopped tomatoes, diced
- salt and pepper
- whatever seasonings you like, I use Cajun seasoning, Italian herb, and a little bit of Jamaican jerk
- ½ cup rice (or a precooked sachet)

Method (25 minutes)

1. Cook your rice according to packet instructions.
2. Meanwhile, add your oil to a pan over medium-low heat and cook your chorizo for around 3 minutes (just enough to make the oil red from the chorizo).
3. Remove chorizo and place it on a plate for now (try not to eat all of it!)
4. Add the onion and chickpeas to the pan alongside your favourite seasonings, cook for around 5 minutes.
5. Add your chorizo back along with the garlic and cook for 1-2 minutes.
6. Add in your chopped tomatoes and season with salt and pepper.
7. Simmer for about 5-10 minutes, however long you want really.
8. Serve up on top of your cooked rice.

This is a recipe that really helped me through University. It's so quick and easy, yet so flavourful, and healthy, it really helped me with all my studies. Plus it reminds me of the person who showed me it!

Pork strips in satay sauce



Estimated cost: £5.60 (serves 2)

Summary: A very nutritious, healthy and delicious Chinese food.

Ingredients

- 500g pork, cut into 2-3cm wide strips (boneless loin chops would work for this recipe)
- ½ cup cooking wine
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp cornstarch
- 1 tbsp oyster sauce
- 2-4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 5-6 scallions (spring onions) cut into segments, snip the green ends to use as a garnish
- 1 tbsp oil
- 1 tbsp honey
- 2 tbsp camellia sauce (this may be hard to find but you could replace with any of hoisin sauce, bbq sauce, smooth peanut butter, tamarind paste, or a teaspoon of curry powder, a teaspoon of five spice, and a splash of sesame oil)
- 1 tbsp soy sauce

Method (30 minutes)

1. Combine pork and cooking wine for three minutes, then drain and wash the pork.
2. Mix the soy sauce, oyster sauce and cornstarch and then marinate the pork in this mix for 10 minutes.
3. Combine the honey, soy sauce and camellia sauce (or substitute).
4. Heat the oil in a wok, add the garlic and stir fry until golden. Then add the cured pork strips and stir fry until the pork is golden. Then add the sauce. Stir well and simmer for a while before turning off the heat.
5. Sprinkle with the chopped scallion tips and serve with rice and vegetables.

This is a hometown dish. My hometown is from Shantou City, Guangdong Province, China. It is a gourmet city, such as beef balls, sausage noodles, etc. Our hometown is famous in China for its delicious food. My mother used to cook this dish when I was a child. The taste of this dish satisfies my longing for my hometown. And it is very healthy, material selection is not complex, a healthy and convenient home cooking.

Spaghetti bolognese (and more...)



Estimated cost: £4.10 (serves 4)

Summary: This recipe is perfect for batch cooking. You'll have lots of leftovers which means you don't have to spend loads on meals because they'll already have been made!

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 450g beef mince (to make it veggie, replace with your favourite meat substitute or use lentils and beans)
- 2 onions, diced
- 2 large garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 100g mushrooms, sliced
- 2 tins chopped tomatoes
- mixed herbs (oregano, basil, thyme)
- 250g of spaghetti (half a packet)
- cheese (optional, vegetarian parmesan recommended)
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce (optional)
- salad and/or garlic bread to serve (optional)

Method (40 minutes)

- 1.** Heat the oil in a large pan over a medium heat. Add the mince or meat substitute and break up with a spatula or spoon. Fry until browned.
- 2.** Add the onions and fry until soft. Add in the mushrooms and any other leftover veggies. Fry until soft and add in the garlic.
- 3.** Add the tomatoes, herbs, Worcestershire sauce if using and stir thoroughly. Season with salt and pepper. Simmer for 15–30 minutes, stirring occasionally until you can drag a spoon across the pan and liquid doesn't immediately cover the gap.
- 4.** Meanwhile, cook the spaghetti in lightly salted boiling water for 10 minutes.
- 5.** Drain and top with the bolognese. Sprinkle with cheese and black pepper. Serve with a simple salad or garlic bread.

Pasta and rice

- Wholewheat pasta is healthier than white pasta and usually no more expensive. It's higher in fibre and minerals and tastes great!
- Always make sure you season your pasta water with salt, and when you drain your pasta save a little of that water, the starchy water will make any sauce you're adding to the pasta smoother and creamier.
- For perfect rice every time, put a pan on the lowest heat of the smallest ring on your hob, and add two cups of boiling water for every one cup of rice. Cover and cook for 15 minutes. At the end all the liquid should be absorbed and you can fluff the rice with a fork.
- Try grating creamed coconut in to you rice at the start for coconut rice, or adding some frozen peas and sweetcorn after ten minutes for some extra veg.

Variations

- Swap your spaghetti for rice (see above), add a tin of kidney beans or mixed chilli beans along with the tomatoes, and swap the herbs for chilli powder, paprika, cumin, and you've got yourself a chili!
- In an ovenproof dish mix the bolognese sauce and pasta with a torn up ball of mozzarella, top with a mix of grated cheddar and breadcrumbs and pop in the oven at 190C/170C fan/375F/gas mark 5 until golden and bubbling.
- Skip the meat or meat substitute and add soft vegetables like tomatoes, peppers, and courgette along with a veggie stock cube for a pasta sauce that will keep well in the fridge or freeze for months!
- If you have a blender, make the pasta sauce as above then blend the sauce with a healthy splash of balsamic vinegar for a tangy soup, or a as a smooth sauce you can add to future bolognese or chilli sauces for quick flavour.

This recipe is more of a British Spag Bol than a traditional Italian Bolognese but it tastes great and makes a fantastic base for a range of sauces with different combinations of meat, vegetables, herbs and spices.



Cinnamon, spice and all things nice

Many recipes include a varying list of spices. Spices add depth and flavour, but the sheer number can be overwhelming or seem like unnecessary expense.

To help you out, we have gathered a list of essential spices to start off your spice rack. The dried, ground easy jars will be a great long-term purchase that see you through many, many meals as they last a long time. And the best bit? You can get everything on our list from your local supermarket for no more than £10.

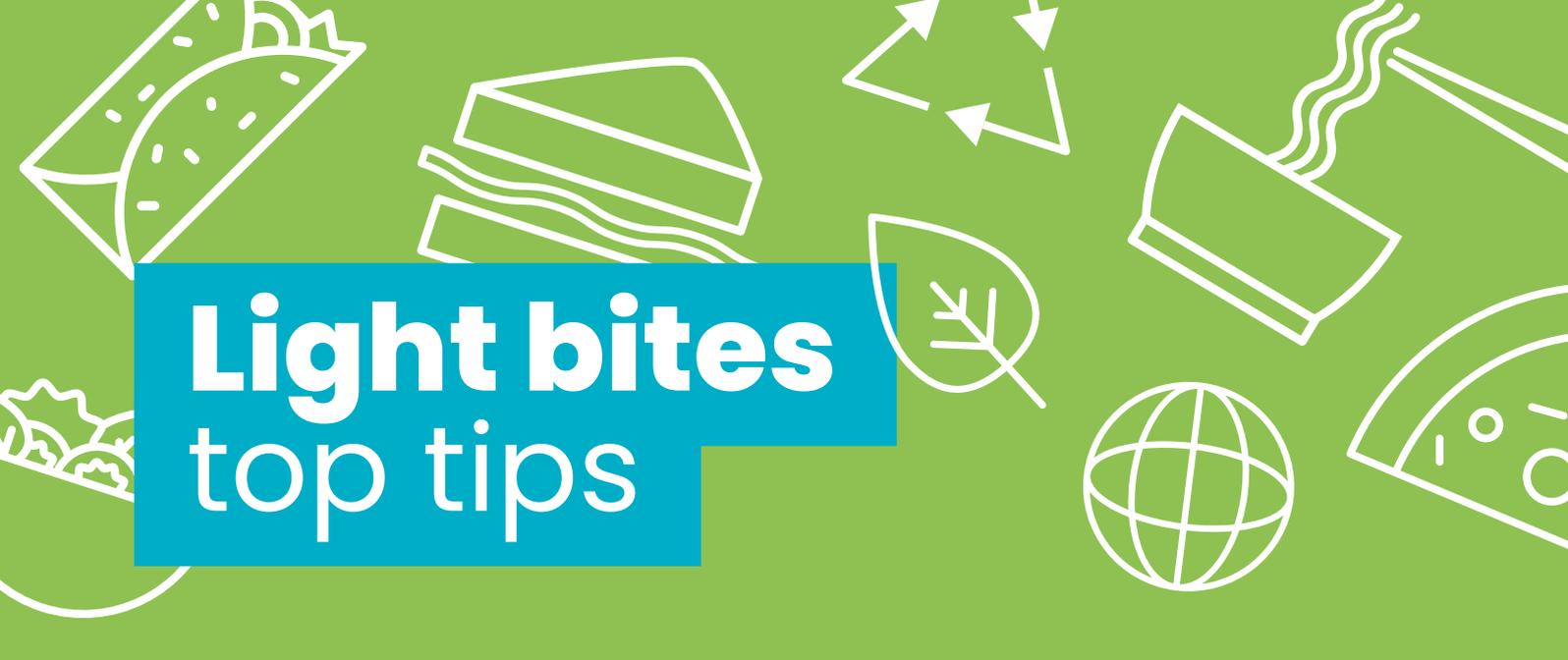
- **Ground Cumin:** this is good in curries, chillies, stews, soups and, if you're feeling adventurous, homemade falafel - 70p
- **Cinnamon:** a baking classic, also great in curries and other savouries - 70p
- **Dried oregano:** an old faithful in the cupboard that shines particularly well in Italian and Latin American dishes - 60p
- **Dried coriander:** good in Latin American dishes and curries; if you want to make your own curry paste it's recommended to use fresh - 70p
- **Smoked Paprika:** good in Eastern European, Spanish and Cajun dishes. Also great for homemade potato wedges. You can use in a curry or chilli too - 60p
- **Chili powder:** both a mild and a hot/cayenne so you have the choice of varying heat depending on dish and preference - 70p
- **Turmeric:** shines in Asian and Middle Eastern dishes. Also, if you're feeling even more adventurous and fancy trying out making your own chutneys - 70p
- **Ginger, either root or ground in a jar:** particularly great in Asian cuisine. Freeze root ginger then grate or chop what you need, when you need - 70p
- **Easy garlic in a jar:** an easy failsafe for when skinning, chopping and crushing actual garlic cloves is too much of a faff - £1



Bring out the best in your spices

Once you've bought your spices, here's how we think you can get the best from them:

- Make sure any fresh spices are stored in airtight containers and that any dried or ready-ground jars are always sealed when not in use.
- Store all spices somewhere dark and cool. Storing above the cooker may be convenient but could dry them out so they lose their flavour.
- The shelf life of dried and ready-ground spices is long, but keep in mind that they may lose a bit of their flavour after 6 months so more generous measures may be required after this point. Start out cautiously and do a little taste test so you can see if you need to add more or not.
- Dried herbs like to take their time. Make sure they're added early in the cooking process, so they have the chance to properly rehydrate and release their flavours.
- You don't want your spices to be raw or burned. Make sure they're cooked to bring out the flavour. If you're worried that they may burn add a splash of water to the pan to keep them hydrated.
- Sometimes buying premade pastes can be more cost and time effective, particular with more expensive or hard-to-get ingredients like lemongrass or galangal. Make sure you store them in the fridge to keep them fresh and batch cook and freeze so you get the most out of them after opening.
- Some herbs and spices go really well together. Chilli loves coriander, ginger, and garlic; cinnamon loves clove and nutmeg in sweet baking and cumin and cardomom in savoury sauces; pair cumin with cardomom and turmeric for Asian cuisine or oregano and smoked paprika for Latin American flavours.

The background features a vibrant green color with white line-art icons. These include a pizza slice, a sandwich, a recycling symbol, a leaf, a globe, a steaming bowl, and another pizza slice. A blue rectangular box is positioned over the top left, containing the title text.

Light bites top tips

- Snacks can be a great way to give you the energy you need throughout your day, and in between lectures.
- Making your own healthy packed lunch will also help to save money.
- Talking about saving money, look out for the special offers at supermarkets and remember to check the frozen and canned vegetable and fruit selections for cheaper items. Frozen and tinned goods do not lose their health benefits.
- If you prefer to go fresh, fruit and vegetables can be cheaper if you buy them from the local market rather than supermarkets – and more sustainable too as you are supporting local businesses.
- If you are worried about not using all the veggies in a market sized punnet or veg box, help combat food waste by using leftover vegetables to make soup – the ultimate healthy and filling light bite – or look at the sauce option for spaghetti bolognese on page 27.
- Overripe fruit can be added to milk, yogurt or fruit juice and blended with some frozen fruits to make a delicious smoothie.
- Bread can be a great addition to lots of things – as you may have noticed from our main meals above. It can also go stale quite quickly. With any leftover bread that needs using, try making your own breadcrumbs and use for coating fish or chicken, or for a delicious crispy topping on a pasta bake. Alternatively freeze those breadcrumbs for later and use for things like a homemade stuffing with your Sunday roast.

Read on for some lunch or lighter meal suggestions...

Polish dumplings (pierogi)

Julia Zabocklicka

Estimated cost: £5.62 (serves 2)

Summary: The most famous Polish dish! Revealing the secret to prepare a perfect Pierogi.

Ingredients for the dough

- 3 free-range eggs
- 1 (250ml) container of sour cream
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon baking powder

Ingredients for the filling

- 3 tbsp butter
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 2 cups cold mashed potato or sauerkraut
- salt and white pepper

Method (40 minutes)

1. Melt butter over medium heat. Add the onion and cook until translucent.
2. If using sauerkraut, drain, add to the pan and cook for 5 minutes. Season to taste, then remove to cool.
3. For the potato filling, remove from the heat, stir into the mashed potatoes, and season to taste.
4. Beat the eggs and sour cream until smooth. Sift together the flour, salt, and baking powder; stir into the wet mixture until a dough forms.
5. Knead on a lightly floured surface until firm and smooth. Divide in half, then roll out to a half centimetre thickness. Cut into 3 inch/8cm rounds using a biscuit cutter.
6. Place a small spoonful of the filling into the centre of each round. Moisten the edges with water, fold over, and press with a fork to seal.
7. Bring a pot of water to the boil, add pierogi in batches for 3-4 minutes each and remove with a slotted spoon when done.
8. Before serving, melt some butter in a hot pan and fry the pierogi for a minute or two on each side until golden.

Pierogi are an incredibly important part of Polish cuisine tradition. Family recipes have been handed down for generations. Usually served during Christmas and celebrations



Coconut sambal side



Tinesh Pandigama

Estimated cost: £1.53 (serves 2)

Summary: Coconut sambal is one of the well-known dishes among Sri Lankans. People prepare this dish very often for breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups grated or shredded coconut
- 1 dried red chili, ground in a pestle and mortar, or 2 tsp chili flakes
- 1 small onion or 2 shallots, finely chopped
- 1 lime
- salt to taste

Method (10 minutes)

1. Combine the coconut, chili flakes and salt in a sturdy bowl and mash with a pestle (or the back of a spoon) until combined well.
2. Add the onion and mash further until well mixed. Taste and add salt if needed.
3. Transfer to your serving bowl, squeeze over the juice of a lime, mix well and enjoy!

Coconut Sambol is a typical Sri Lankan side that we eat with rice, bread, and hoppers.

It comes from generations and gives a spicy and juicy feeling to the mouth if you taste this you don't need any more sides to eat with it.

Easy tasty tomato soup

Lauren Ramsay

Estimated cost: £1.19 (serves 2)

Summary: A quick and easy tomato soup for when you need vegetables in your system but have no energy.

Ingredients

- 1tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves (or to taste but at least one), finely chopped
- 500ml water, boiled
- 1 vegetable stock cube
- 1 tin chopped tomatoes
- salt and pepper to taste
- dried italian herbs (a premade mixture of basil, oregano and other herbs, or use dried herbs that you have to hand)
- pinch of chilli powder (optional)

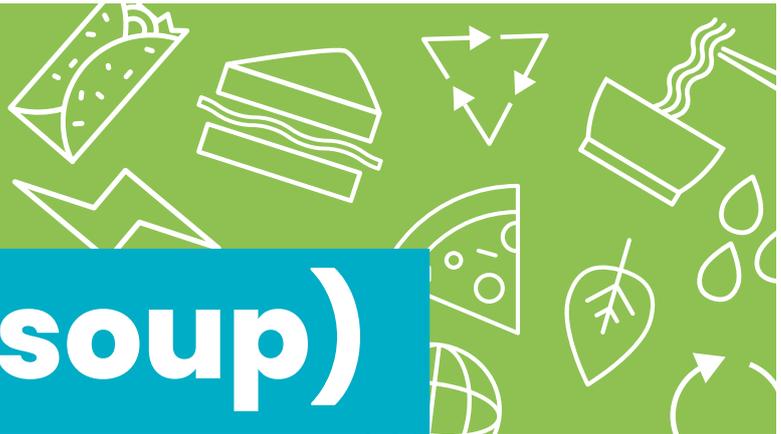
Method (30 minutes)

1. Heat the oil over a low heat and add the onions and garlic.
2. Cook until slightly golden, gently stirring so they don't burn.
3. Combine the boiling water and stock cube in a jug, stir until the stock has dissolved.
4. Add the tomatoes and stock to the pan and stir.
5. Turn the heat up to medium and add in your herbs and seasonings.
6. Simmer for 20-30 minutes.
7. Once cooked you can either blend for a smoother soup or enjoy it as is (the choice is yours!)
8. The soup goes great with buttered bread, or try adding a splash of balsamic vinegar or a dollop of sour cream for a little extra flavour.

This was the first recipe my mum taught me and I always make it when I realise I haven't eaten a lot of vegetables in the past few days.

It is a nice pick-me-up and is super easy to make - easy for those who struggle with things like depression or ADHD.

Caldo verde (green soup)



Estimated cost: £4.79 (serves 2)
Summary: A classic Portuguese soup.

Ingredients

- 1 litre cold water
- 1 onion, chopped
- 4 small potatoes, peeled and cut into cubes
- ½ chorizo
- 200g green cabbage cut into thin strips (if you can't find green cabbage you can use broad leaf spinach)
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp olive oil

Method (45 minutes)

1. Add the water, potatoes, onion and the chorizo to a pot and bring to a boil, don't start with boiling water.
2. Let it simmer for 30 minutes on a low heat.
3. Remove the pan from your hob. Take out the chorizo and place to one side, blend the soup to a thick consistency with a hand blender. If you have a jug blender you can transfer it in portions. If you don't have a blender use a masher to get it as smooth as you can.
4. Place back on the hob and bring back to a boil. Add the salt, cabbage and olive oil. Return to a boil for 4 minutes.
5. Turn off the heat. Ladle into bowls and top with slices of the chorizo.

Caldo Verde originated from the Minho Province in northern Portugal. Today, it is a traditional national favourite that has spread across the nation and abroad, especially to places where a large community of Portuguese migrants have settled like the UK.

Carrot & coriander soup



Estimated cost: £1 (serves 6!)

Summary: A healthy and fulfilling main meal.

Ingredients

- 2 tsp olive oil
- 2 onions, chopped
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 600g carrots, sliced
- salt and pepper to taste
- 750ml vegetable stock (use one or two stock cubes)
- 200g carrots, grated (optional if blending)
- handful of fresh coriander, chopped (optional, and brings the cost up a little)

Method (45 minutes)

1. Heat oil in large saucepan. Add onions and fry gently for 5 minutes or until softened. Add ground coriander and cook for 1 minute, stirring.
2. Stir the stock-cube or powder into a jug of boiling water until it is all dissolved. Add this to the pan along with the carrots and a pinch of optional black pepper to season.
3. Bring to the boil, then reduce heat, cover and simmer for 25–30 minutes, or until carrots feel soft and cooked through.
4. Remove from heat and allow to cool for a couple of minutes. If you like your soup chunky, then it is ready to serve. If you don't, and you have the means to do so, purée the mixture in a blender or food processor until smooth.
5. If you went for the puree option, return the soup to a rinsed-out pan before ladling into a bowl to serve, optionally add 200g of raw grated carrot for extra texture.
6. Serve with optional crusty bread and sprigs of fresh coriander.

Quick homemade pizza



Estimated cost: £3.10 (serves 1)

Summary: A simple, quick and versatile pizza.

Ingredients

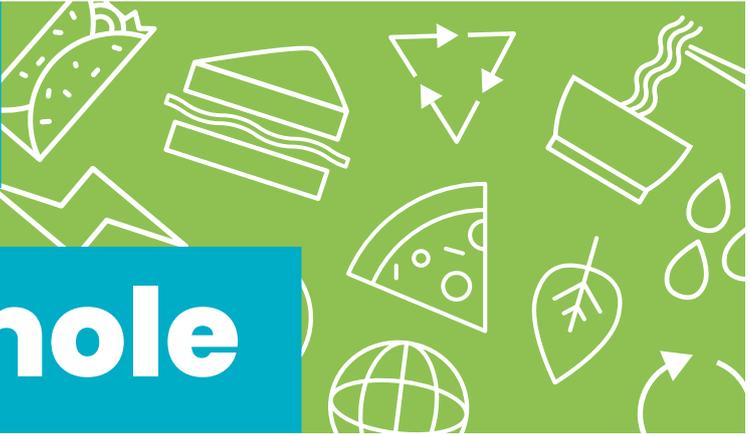
- 100g self-raising flour
- 60ml milk
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tin chopped tomatoes
- dried oregano or mixed herbs (optional)
- cheese, grated (if grating a softer cheese like mozzarella try freezing it for 15 minutes beforehand to make it easier)
- toppings! Pepperoni, ham, peppers, onions, mushrooms, chicken, pineapple... the list is endless.

Method (30 minutes)

1. Preheat Oven to 200C/Fan 180C/400F/gas mark 6.
2. Prepare your toppings (e.g. slice veggies, dice the chicken, and grate the cheese).
3. In a large bowl, combine the raising flour, milk and oil. Mix with your hands to form the dough.
4. Tip the dough onto a lightly floured surface and roll into a circle. Roll to the thickness of roughly two pound coins. Place on a baking tray.
5. Spoon on your chopped tomatoes and spread near the edges of the dough. Sprinkle an optional pinch of mixed herbs on top.
6. Add your toppings and cheese.
7. Bake on the top shelf of your oven for 20 minutes until the crusts are dark brown and the cheese is bubbling and golden.

Buying pizzas can be expensive in the long term so making your own is a cheap and easy way to have one of your favourite dishes. Making a pizza base doesn't have to be long and complicated...let this recipe show you how!

Fajitas and guacamole



Estimated cost: £3.32 (fajitas) + £1.54 (guacamole) (serves 2)

Summary: Another versatile recipe you can fill with whatever you have in the fridge.

Ingredients for the guacamole

- 2 ripe avocados, flesh scooped out
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 lime
- Pinch of salt
- Pinch of chilli flakes or 1 tsp chilli powder

Ingredients for the fajitas

- 1 tbsp sunflower oil
- 2 chicken breasts, diced
- 2 peppers, sliced
- 1 onion, sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 tsp chilli powder
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp paprika
- 6-8 tortilla wraps

Method for the guacamole

1. Use a fork to smash the avocados in a bowl to a paste.
2. Add the onions and use the same fork to squeeze the juice of one lime into the bowl. Mix and add in the salt and chilli to taste.
3. Store in the fridge until it's needed.

Method for the fajitas

1. Heat the oil over a medium heat. Fry the chicken until almost cooked, add in the peppers and onions and fry until soft and the chicken is cooked through.
2. Add in garlic and fry for 30 seconds.
3. Add in chilli powder, cumin and paprika and stir thoroughly.
4. Serve in tortilla wraps and top with the guacamole.

Fajitas aren't very needy. Perfect for if you don't want to juggle lots of different ingredients. They also make lots of leftovers so you don't have to cook every day to have tasty meals. You can have the fajitas on their own but having a homemade Guacamole is that extra step to impress!

Veggie chickpea burgers



Estimated cost: £4.70 (makes 6 burgers)
Summary: A veggie burger packed with flavour.

Ingredients

- ¼ red onion, finely chopped
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, finely chopped
- 4 large garlic cloves, crushed (or garlic in a jar)
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 can of chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- ½ cup oats
- ¼ cup plain flour
- ½ cup crumbled feta
- ½ cup sun-dried tomatoes, drained
- 2 tbsp olive oil

Method (30 minutes)

1. Mix the onion, parsley, garlic and oregano. Add chickpeas, oats, flour, feta and sun-dried tomatoes until the mixture starts to come together into a large ball.
2. Using your hands, form patties with the chickpea mixture, about half an inch thick and the size of a regular burger. Arrange them on a ready-greased surface such as a cooling rack or baking sheet big enough for 6 patties. Wet your fingers slightly if the mixture is sticky.
3. Heat oil in a large frying pan over a medium heat. Add patties two or three at a time and cook for 4-5 minutes each side until they are crisp and golden brown. You may need to add additional oil between turns or batches.
4. Assemble burgers using wholemeal buns and optional salad garnish.
5. Serve before they get cold!

This delicious recipe for vegetarian chickpea burgers is so simple to make and has all the flavours with the inclusion of sun-dried tomatoes and feta. Extra bonus? Chickpeas are an excellent source of fibre and protein.

Twice baked potato



Estimated cost: £2.50 (serves 2)
Summary: Perfect, filling comfort food.

Ingredients

- 2 large baking potatoes
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 6 spring onions, sliced
- 50g unsalted butter
- salt and pepper to taste
- grated cheese

Method (1 hour 30 minutes)

1. Preheat the oven to 200C/180C Fan/400F/ gas mark 6.
2. Pierce potatoes all over with a fork, then rub half of the oil, salt and pepper into the skin of the potatoes.
3. Put on a baking tray and bake in the oven for 1 hour and 15 minutes.
4. Fry the spring onion in the remaining olive oil. (For a non-vegetarian option you could add diced bacon at this stage too.)
5. Once cooked, place on a clean dry surface to cool and dry slightly.
6. Halve the now baked potatoes lengthways (watch the steam from those hot potatoes!)
7. Scoop out the potato and place in a bowl, mix in the spring onions and butter.
8. Scoop the mixture back into the potato skins.
9. Top with cheese or butter and bake in the oven for a further 10-15 minutes.

If you want something that's filling and easy to make, this recipe is the one! Although it may take a little while to cook, there are no complicated steps involved. It's tasty and oh so filling!

Speedy grape & chicken salad



Estimated cost: £4 (serves 4)

Summary: A fresh salad that mixes savoury and sweet, perfect for lunches across the week.

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp sunflower oil
- 300g chicken breast (or thigh) cut into strips
- 2 little gem lettuces, roughly torn
- 150g green seedless grapes, halved
- 1 ½ tbsp lemon juice (you can use freshly squeezed or bottled)
- 2 ½ tbsp mayonnaise
- 40g of shaved parmesan
- 1 packet of ready-prepared croutons
- ¼ tsp fennel seeds (optional)
- Salt and pepper

Method (15 minutes)

- 1.** Add the chicken to a hot pan with a splash of oil and cook on a medium heat for at least 6 minutes or until golden all the way through with clear running juices.
- 2.** Once cooked through, transfer the chicken to a large bowl.
- 3.** Add the torn lettuce, grapes and fennel seeds (if using), mix and season to taste with salt and pepper.
- 4.** In a small jug or mug whisk the lemon juice with the mayonnaise.
- 5.** Pour this dressing over the salad, mix and top with the croutons and parmesan.

Winter salad of squash, cauli & cheese



Estimated cost: £5.52 + £1.23 for the dressing. (Serves 4)
 Summary: A hearty, warm winter salad.

Ingredients

- 450g butternut squash, seeded and peeled
- 2 red onions, peeled and cut into wedges
- 1 cauliflower, broken into florets.
- 150ml olive oil
- pinch of nutmeg (optional)
- 100g ciabatta-style bread, torn into rough chunks
- pinch of finely chopped sage (optional)
- generous handful of lettuce leaves or rocket
- 145g ricotta, broken into rough chunks (any similar texture cheese is fine, such as mozzarella.)
- 45g parmesan (optional - note that traditional parmesan is not vegetarian)

For the dressing

- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 5 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

Method (30 minutes)

1. Heat the oven to 210C/190C Fan/410F/gas mark 5.
2. Cut the squash into big chunks and put them in the roasting tin with the onions and cauliflower.
3. Drizzle with the olive oil. You can add an optional sprinkle of nutmeg over the vegetables if you have it to hand.
4. Roast for 20 minutes, turning the veggies over a couple of times if possible.
5. Add the bread chunks on top of the vegetables, along with an optional pinch of sage, and put back into the oven for about 5 minutes till the bread is crunchy.
6. Meanwhile, make the dressing by putting the vinegar and olive oil into a small jug or mug and whisking until combined (you can also put them in a small clean jar with a lid and shake).
7. Arrange the vegetables and bread onto a serving dish on top of the lettuce leaves and drizzle over two thirds of the dressing, dot with the ricotta and scatter on the parmesan (if using).

Homemade pot noodle



Estimated cost: 90p (serves 1)

Summary: The quickest recipe in the book!

Ingredients

- 1 nest of noodles
- 50g frozen peas or frozen veg
- ½ a fresh chilli, finely chopped or a pinch of chilli flakes
- 2 tbsp chicken or vegetable stock powder or a stock cube.
- 3-4 small tomatoes, chopped
- any finely chopped leftovers (cooked chicken, mushrooms, cabbage)
- enough boiling water to cover everything

Method (5 minutes)

1. Put all the ingredients in a bowl and pour in the boiling water. Let rest for 2-3 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. Serve... simple!

One thing that often springs to mind with stereotypical student living...The infamous pot noodle! These pot sized snacks are speedy, simple and fairly cheap. But! Full of salt and not many nutrients.

So....why not make your own! The benefits of doing it this way include:

- *You decide exactly what and how much filling you will have.*
- *Use up all those leftovers, meaning you get the most out of your weekly food shop and help to combat food waste at the same time.*
- *You can make fresh, or put all the ingredients into an air-tight sealed pot to take with you to University, just add boiling water when you're ready to eat!*



Desserts & snacks top tips

Sometimes our day just isn't complete without a sweet treat here and there! If you love to snack, why not consider these healthier, eco-conscious alternatives?

- Swap out a large chocolate bar for a mini one. Still that sweet fix but for under 100kcal, and look out for bars rich in nuts for that slower releasing energy.
- Get your natural sugars in with a piece of fruit. Jazz it up with a tablespoon of nut butter.
- Satisfy that crunchy crisp craving with a nut/raisin mix, a small bag of popcorn or some rice cakes.
- Raw chopped veggies (such as carrot sticks) are great to snack on with a bit of hummus.
- Instead of ice cream try a protein-rich greek yoghurt with some fruit and nuts (and if buying low-fat yoghurt remember this often means it's higher in sugar)

And of course, all sweet treats are great as part of a balanced diet. Keep reading for a pick of creations you can make yourself...

Avocado galaxy milkshake



Deepu Sanjayan

Estimated cost: £2.90 (serves 2)

Summary: A rich, refreshing drink.

Ingredients

- 300ml milk
- 1 ripe avocado, flesh scooped out
- 100g Galaxy chocolate broken into pieces
- 2 scoops vanilla ice cream
- toppings: dry fruits, grated chocolate, sweets

Method (5 minutes)

1. Add milk and avocado to a blender and blend for around a minute until smooth.
2. Add the chocolate and ice cream and blend for another 1-2 minutes.
3. Check the consistency, if it's too thick add a little milk or water.
4. Pour into two glasses (or one big glass), sprinkle any toppings and enjoy!

Yomari (Nepali dumplings)



Rupa Prajapati

Estimated cost: £2.45

Summary: Sweet and healthy dumplings eaten on cold days to warm up the body.

Ingredients

- 400g rice flour
- 1 cup just boiled water
- khuwa (or substitute, see below)

Khuwa is a traditional Nepalese sweet filling made by simmering down milk very slowly over several hours until you're left with the milk solids.

As an alternative you can replace with condensed milk (it will be runnier than khuwa so be careful folding those dumplings!) and optionally add a pinch of cinnamon or cardamom, some chopped cashews or some grated coconut.

To try a chaku filling, toast a generous handful of sesame seeds, melted a chunk of jaggery (when heating any sugar it can get very hot, much hotter than boiling water so be very careful and only handle once cooled) then add the seeds to the liquid sugar.

Method (30 minutes)

- 1.** To make your dough, combine the rice flour and water in a bowl. Mix and once cool enough to handle form a soft dough. It should hold its shape but not be too firm.
- 2.** Once a dough is made, take a small portion of it and shape ready for the filling. Place the piece of dough in your hand and form it into a cone shape with a point at one end and make an opening at the other with your index finger into which you can place your filling then press the opening closed. A finished yomari should look a bit like a teardrop.
- 3.** Boil some water and place in the bottom of a pan or wok. If you have a steamer place the dumplings in the steamer on top of the pan, if not place them in the shallow water and cover. Steam for 15 minutes.

Easy banana pancakes



Caroline Hughes (SU Staff)

Estimated cost: 44p (serves 1)

Summary: A great and filling way of using up leftover banana.

Ingredients

- 1 egg
- 1 ripe mushy banana (the mushier the better)
- 1 large tbsp of peanut butter
- oil for frying
- toppings of your choice (optional), why not try maple syrup, chopped berries, or hazelnut spread (try to use a palm oil free or sustainably sourced brand)

Method (10 minutes)

- 1.** Mix the banana, egg and peanut butter together to create a semi-smooth batter.
- 2.** Heat the oil in a frying pan over medium heat.
- 3.** Once the oil is hot, spoon the batter into pan a tablespoon at a time, making sure that each dollop is spaced evenly and not too close together. You should have enough batter to make three or four mini pancakes. Flatten them down a little bit with a spoon or a spatula.
- 4.** Fry the pancakes until browned on both sides, turning once gently.
- 5.** Serve hot with a topping of your choice.

Super simple scones



Devina Whitwell (SU Staff)

Estimated cost: £1.34

Summary: Just three ingredients away from a cheap and easy sweet treat.

Ingredients

- 400g self-raising flour, plus extra to dust
- 175ml double cream
- 175ml lemonade

Method (25 minutes)

1. Preheat oven to 220C/200C fan/425F/gas mark 7.
2. In a large bowl mix all ingredients to make a dough.
3. Knead briefly, then tip onto a floured surface and use your hands to press to a 2cm thickness.
4. Line a baking tray with parchment (or grease with butter).
5. Grease the rim of a cup, mug or glass with butter and use to cut out round shapes from the dough. The grease will stop the dough sticking.
6. When you have got all the rounds you can from your dough, space them evenly on the pre-prepared parchment lined or greased baking tray.
7. Bake for 12-15min until golden. Leave to cool, preferably on a wire rack if you have it.

Healthy banana split



Estimated cost: £1.32 (serves 1)

Summary: A sweet tasty dessert... that's good for you!

Ingredients

- 1 banana
- 1 tbsp Greek or plain yoghurt
- 1 tbsp runny honey
- 1 handful granola
- 2 tbsp peanut butter (or nut butter of your choice)
- 2 tbsp fresh berries (optional)

Method (5 minutes)

- 1.** Peel and cut the banana in half or into chunks, depending on your preference and place in a bowl or deep sided dish.
- 2.** In a separate bowl, mix the yoghurt and honey together until smooth and well blended.
- 3.** Use a spoon to scoop the yoghurt and honey mixture into the middle of the banana slices. Top with granola and berries (if using).
- 4.** Put the nut butter in a microwave proof jug and heat it until it becomes smooth and runny.
- 5.** Drizzle the peanut butter on top of the banana using a spoon. And....enjoy!

Vegan dark choc & cherry muffins



Estimated cost: £3.58 (makes 12 muffins)
Summary: An indulgent treat to share with friends.

Ingredients

- 200g self-raising flour (you can use white, wholemeal or spelt; if you're not using self-raising add 1 tsp of baking powder)
- 200ml plant-based milk (e.g. soya, almond or oat)
- 100ml sunflower oil
- 75g soft brown sugar
- 350g frozen cherries
- 100g dark chocolate, chopped into chunks

Method (40 minutes)

1. Preheat oven to 180C/160C fan/350F/gas mark 4.
2. Combine the flour and sugar in a bowl and make a small well in the centre.
3. Combine the milk and oil in a large measuring jug or bowl and stir to combine.
4. Tip the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients, including the cherries, and approximately three quarters of the chocolate.
5. Stir to combine, but do not over-mix.
6. Spoon the ingredients into a muffin tray or paper/silicone cake cases.
7. Sprinkle the remaining chocolate on top of the muffins before putting them in the oven.
8. Bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes, they're done when a skewer or sharp knife comes out clean.
9. Leave to cool for a further 10 minutes before tucking in!

These delicious vegan dark chocolate and cherry muffins are extremely simple to make, only requiring a small number of ingredients.

Whole wheat flour provides a hearty, whole-grain base; a touch of brown sugar adds just the right amount of sweetness; dark chocolate delivers plenty of antioxidants and cherries provide lots of fibre and vitamin C.

Strawberry & almond crumble



Estimated cost: £5 (serves 6)

Summary: This strawberry and almond crumble is super simple to make and tastes delicious!

Ingredients

- 500g fresh strawberries (or frozen berries)
- 50g caster sugar
- 25g ground almonds
- 4 tsp vanilla extract

For the crumble topping

- 110g plain flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 75g cold butter (diced)
- 100g flaked almonds
- 75g demerara sugar

Method (40 minutes)

1. Preheat the oven to 200C/180C fan/400F/ gas mark 6.
2. Put the strawberries (or other fruit) into a round, oven proof dish – such as a pie dish. Sprinkle with the sugar, almonds and vanilla extract. Give the dish a good shake to mix the ingredients.
3. To make the crumble topping, put the flour and baking powder in a mixing bowl and rub in the cold, diced butter between thumb and fingers. Once finished, it should resemble breadcrumbs.
4. Stir the flaked almonds and sugar into the breadcrumb crumble mix with a fork. Tip this over the strawberry mixture, covering the strawberries in an even layer and giving a slight press in at the edges.
5. Place the dish in the oven and bake for approx 30 minutes until the topping is pale gold and the fruit juices are bubbling out at the edges.
6. Leave to cool for 10 minutes before serving by itself or with your favourite cream, custard, ice cream or crème fraîche.

Try switching the fruit filling for what's in season or on offer. Berries, apples, rhubarb and mango all work great in a crumble.

No-bake energy bites



Dan Connolly (SU Staff)

Estimated cost: £3.80 (makes 12-24 bites)

Summary: A great on-the-go snack you can make in bulk.

Ingredients for the base

- 300g oats
- 150g nut butter of your choice
- 100g runny honey, maple syrup, or agave
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ½ tsp salt

Mix-ins

- 75g dark chocolate chips + 75g chopped almonds or hazelnuts
- 75g dark chocolate chips + 75g shredded coconut
- 75g white chocolate chips + 75g dried cranberries
- 2 tbsp ground flax seed + 2 tbsp chia seeds + 75g dried raisins + 1 tsp cinnamon
- 100g dates, deseeded and chopped + 2 tbsp chia seeds + 2 tsp cocoa powder
- 50g chopped walnuts + 100g dates, deseeded and chopped + 1 finely grated carrot + 1 tsp cinnamon + pinch of nutmeg (leave out the nut butter from the base)

Method (10 minutes)

1. Add all base ingredients to a large bowl, choose which mix-in (or mix-ins) you'd like and mix!
2. If it seems too wet add more oats, if it's too dry or not holding together add more nut butter.
3. If you'd like square bites, line a baking tin with cling film and some oil and press the mixture into the tray. Chill for 30 minutes, then slice into squares.
4. If you'd like balls chill the bowl of mix for 30 minutes then use a spoon or scoop to form little bite-size balls.
5. Store in airtight container for up to a week or freeze for up to three months.

This recipe is quick, easy, and all about experimentation! Whatever nuts, seeds, fruit or sweets you have will work, and these bites will get you through the day until your next meal.

If you don't mind doing a little cooking, try toasting any nuts or coconut in a dry pan before adding.



Helping hands

Still worried about how to cook delicious, healthy recipes (like the ones featured in this book) on a budget? Check out the below recommendations to help...

Contextualise

When the shopping is done and that final total cost reveals itself, it can feel like all those 50p's here and £1s there have added up to something massive.

Stop! Take a breath. Think about exactly what you are getting for that total spend. A lot of the recipes in this book and elsewhere will equip you with two, four or even six portions, meaning that cost is spread out over several meals that can be used in the coming days and weeks.

You may also notice that many recipes in this book share ingredients, meaning that one lot of ingredients bought in bulk could see you through a variety of meals way beyond just one sitting. Check the recipe index for ways to use up ingredients.

Compare and contrast

The cost examples in this book have been estimated using the ingredient amounts provided alongside the current (as of July 2022) prices of items in TESCO and ASDA.

But if you take a bit of time to do some research, you may find ingredients even cheaper. Seek out the sales and cut prices. Explore your local markets. Go for own brands and target well-known cost-effective supermarkets such as Aldi and Lidl. There are loads of comparison articles out there regarding best value supermarkets in the UK. Why not give it a Google!



Think ahead

It's all about the long game. Having a plan of what you are going to eat for the week will help you budget by preparing how much you are going to spend on food and keeping that as your limit. It also means you'll be able to pre-arrange times where you could share meals with friends or housemates, meaning that the cost of ingredients could then be shared too. Use the meal plans at the end of this guide to help.

Get into the community spirit

There are lots of initiatives out in your local community that aim to swap, share and give away food at cut prices. Search your app store for some inspiration, maybe start with:

- **Olio:** where businesses and locals give away free unwanted food.
- **Too Good To Go:** where you can get some bargains on local businesses surplus food.

You're all good to go. Enjoy and happy cooking!



Meal planning

We have already explored the importance of meal planning to help with food budgeting and making sure you make time for proper meals. Look at the example weekly meal plan below made from recipes from this book.

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks
Monday	Overnight oats with fruits of your choice.	Easy tasty tomato soup.	Homemade Chinese takeaway	Nut/raisin mix, a small bar of chocolate.
Tuesday	Easy scrambled eggs	Chicken and grape salad	Twice baked potatoes	A piece of fruit, a small bag of popcorn.
Wednesday	Overnight oats with fruits of your choice	Easy tasty tomato soup	Slice of homemade pizza with salad	Easy scone with fruit jam
Thursday	Muesli with skimmed milk and a fruit topping of your choice.	Leftover homemade pizza	Healthy Besan Chilla	Chopped veggies with hummus, small bar of chocolate.
Friday	Porridge with a healthy topping of your choice	Homemade pot noodle	Chickpea sweet potato and coconut curry.	Avocado Galaxy milkshake
Saturday	French toast rolls	Polish dumplings	Fish finger Borta with pink pickled-onions	A piece of fruit, nut/raisin mix
Sunday	Communal ultimate vegan breakfast/brunch with housemates	Piece of fruit with nut butter of your choice	Vegan cottage pie	Communal strawberry crumble with friends.

Turn over to find a blank weekly meal plan so you can give it a go yourself...

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				



Shopping planner

Pantry items tinned goods like tomatoes and dry goods like pasta	Produce items fresh fruit and veg and not more than you'll get through	Meat items consider cheaper cuts and check use by dates



Dairy items milk, cheese, butter, or non-dairy alternatives	Bakery items wholemeal and seeded breads are better for fibre and protein	Household items washing up liquid, soap, bin bags, toilet roll

Where can I go to find more help and information?

If you feel you are struggling with anything to do with food, health or budgeting, there is help at hand:

- **The Students' Union Advice Service** offers free and independent advice and support on a range of problems. You can contact the advice service and book an appointment at yoursu.org/advice
- You can speak to the **University Counselling & Mental Health Service** if you are experiencing disordered eating and/or experiencing poor mental health. You can call them on **024 7765 8029** or email counsell.ss@coventry.ac.uk
- **SHOUT 85258** is a free, confidential, anonymous mental health text support service that you can access 24/7. To start a conversation, **text the word SHOUT to 85258**
- **BEAT** offer information and support for those experiencing disordered eating. They also have an online webchat service at beateatingdisorders.org.uk or call their helpline **0808 801 0677** (open 9am till midnight)

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- You may not achieve the results desired due to variations in ingredients, cooking temperatures, typos, errors, omissions, or individual cooking ability.
- You should always use your best judgement when cooking with raw ingredients such as eggs, chicken or fish and seek expert advice before beginning if you are unsure.
- You should always take care not to injure yourself or others on sharp knives or other cooking implements or to burn yourself or others while cooking.
- You should examine the contents of ingredients prior to preparation and consumption in order to be fully aware of and to accurately advise others of the presence of substances which might provoke an adverse reaction.
- Recipes presented may not have been formally tested by Your SU or for Your SU and we do not provide any assurances nor accept any responsibility or liability with regard to their originality efficacy quality or safety.

