

Plan a Balanced Menu

1. Know your budget and who you are cooking for. Troop 167 budgets \$3.50 per scout per meal so the total budget for each meal is # of people x \$3.50. How many people am I feeding? Are there any allergies or other food restrictions? What activities will we be doing?
2. Find a recipe that meets the dietary restrictions and activity level of the group. Take into consideration the amount of prep time it takes to make, the equipment needed and seasonal conditions.
3. Add sides as needed for a meal that is nutritionally balanced and filling.
4. Make a list of ingredients. Determine the amount of each ingredient that is needed based on recommended serving sizes and the number of people. See your Scout Manual or myplate.gov for guidance.
5. Don't forget to plan for the nonfood items. Pots, pans, stoves, utensils, foil, toothpicks, etc are provided by the troop but a prepared list will help ensure you don't forget anything at Pack the Trailer.

Create a shopping list

6. Review your list of ingredients carefully for items that are provided by the troop or could be brought from home with parent permission. Scant amounts of items such as spices, syrups and oil should be available in the troop chuckboxes. Check with the troop quartermaster and your parents. Don't forget to talk to other patrol members about their menus! Think of creative ways to use ingredients for more than one meal. Buying in bulk is usually cheaper than buying in small amounts. Share responsibilities.
7. Create a shopping list including the estimated cost of each item. If it looks like the list will be over budget, start brainstorming substitutions that are more economical. Can something be made from scratch? Can it be used for another meal? Is someone else already planning to buy it? Can it be substituted or eliminated altogether?

Go Shopping

8. Take your shopping list with you.
9. Compare prices. Store brands are often less expensive than name brands. Items in bulk containers are often less expensive than prepackaged items. Use common sense - a large jar may be better value than a small jar but not if half of it goes to waste.
10. It's OK to be under budget. Don't buy more food than is needed just because there is still money left to spend.
11. Don't go over budget. Consider substitutions or determine what can be put back. Remember a balanced meal is important.

A Scout is Thrifty.

<https://www.myplate.gov/> and the Cooking section of the Scouts BSA Handbook are two excellent resources for planning healthy meals on a budget.