

7-Day Budget Meal Plan for One

\$35 grocery challenge | 1 adult | 21 simple meals

A practical starting point: This plan uses low-cost staples, planned leftovers, and repeated ingredients. Cooking oil, salt, pepper, and basic seasonings are assumed to be on hand.

Your 7-Day Meal Plan

Day	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Monday	Banana peanut butter oats	Lentil soup + toast	Sheet-pan chicken, potatoes & carrots
Tuesday	Egg + toast	Leftover lentil soup	Chicken fried rice with frozen vegetables
Wednesday	Banana oats	Peanut butter banana sandwich	Black bean potato bowls
Thursday	Egg + potato hash	Leftover black bean bowl	Tomato lentil pasta
Friday	Peanut butter oats	Leftover tomato lentil pasta	Chicken rice bowls with vegetables
Saturday	Egg + toast	Lentil rice bowl	Loaded baked potato with beans
Sunday	Banana peanut butter toast	Leftover soup or grain bowl	Vegetable egg fried rice

How the plan stays on budget

- Repeat affordable breakfasts instead of buying seven different options.
- Cook dinner in larger batches so lunch is already planned.
- Use rice, lentils, beans, potatoes, oats, and eggs as the foundation.
- Choose store brands and compare unit prices. Substitute sale items when needed.

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Estimated discount-store prices in the continental United States

Item	Est. price
☐ Rolled oats, 18 oz	\$3.00
☐ Bananas, 7	\$2.00
☐ Eggs, 1 dozen	\$3.00
☐ Whole-wheat bread, 1 loaf	\$2.50
☐ Peanut butter, 16 oz	\$2.50
☐ Rice, 2 lb	\$2.50
☐ Dry lentils, 1 lb	\$1.50
☐ Black beans, 2 cans	\$2.00
☐ Pasta, 1 lb	\$1.25
☐ Pasta sauce, 24 oz	\$1.75
☐ Frozen mixed vegetables, 2 bags	\$2.50
☐ Carrots, 1 lb	\$1.50
☐ Onions, 2 lb	\$1.50
☐ Potatoes, 5 lb	\$2.50
☐ Chicken thighs, about 1.5 lb	\$4.50
☐ Milk, 1/2 gallon	\$2.50
Estimated total	\$35.00

Simple prep plan

- Cook a pot of rice and lentils on Sunday.
- Roast the chicken, potatoes, carrots, and onions together.
- Freeze one portion of soup if you will not eat it within four days.
- Use leftover rice only after cooling it quickly and refrigerating it safely.

Budget and nutrition note

Prices are estimates, not advertised prices or a guarantee. Costs vary by location, store, package size, sales, taxes, and substitutions. This is an extremely limited challenge budget and may not meet every person's calorie, nutrition, allergy, cultural, or medical needs. Adjust portions and ingredients for your household. Food prices at home are forecast to rise in 2026, so use local prices as the final guide.

Source context: USDA Economic Research Service, Food Price Outlook, June 2026. Plan and estimates created by iGrowthWisdom; not endorsed by USDA.