

The Scratch Kitchen™—The Primer

Starter Shopping Lists

1. YOUR \$50 SHELF-STABLE STARTER PANTRY (CORE STOCK-UP)

Use this list to get started. Listed prices are 2026 national average so may vary; however, because we are base level you should still have room in your budget to adjust. Shop generics and sales to stay under budget!

First Staple Shopping List (Basic Items)

Category	Item	Approx. Size/Quantity	Estimated Cost	Why It's a Hero (Quick Tip)
Fats & Oils	Neutral oil (canola/veg)	48 oz bottle	\$4–6	Base for cooking; lasts forever
	Olive oil (optional upgrade)	16 oz bottle	\$5–7	Flavor boost for dressings
Acids	White vinegar	32 oz	\$2	Cleaning + bright tang in dishes
	Lemon juice (bottled)	32 oz	\$3	Acid punch when fresh is out
Tomatoes	Canned diced tomatoes	6–8 cans (14.5 oz each)	\$6–8	Sauce base for endless meals
	Tomato paste	2–3 small cans	\$2	Deep flavor concentrator
Aromatics	Dried minced onion	Small jar	\$2	No-chop base for everything
	Garlic powder	Small jar	\$2	Quick garlic hit
Grains/Carbs	All-purpose flour	5 lb bag	\$3–4	Bread, thickener, batter magic
	White rice	5 lb bag	\$4	Fast side or bowl base
	Pasta (spaghetti/elbow)	3–4 boxes	\$4	10-min meals
Proteins	Dry beans (pinto/black)	2–3 lb bags	\$5	Cheap protein; soak overnight
	Peanut butter	Large jar	\$4	Spread, sauce, snack
Sweeteners	Granulated sugar	4 lb bag	\$3	Baking + balance in savory
Leaveners	Baking powder & soda	Small cans each	\$2	Quick breads rise easy
	Active dry yeast	Small jar/packets	\$2	Homemade bread in hours
Spices (Start Simple)	Salt (iodized)	Large container	\$1	Essential seasoning
	Black pepper	Small grinder/jar	\$2	Basic heat
	Chili powder	Small jar	\$2	Warm spice for beans/rice
	Italian seasoning	Small jar	\$2	Herb mix for pasta/tomatoes
Total	Your Core Foundation	Lasts months!	~\$50	Mix & match for 20-min wins!

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2. BI-WEEKLY PERISHABLES (~\$20 TRIPS) – FRESH ADD-ONS FOR THE MONTH

Grab these every 1–2 weeks to keep things exciting. Columns show priorities: Trip 1 (essentials first), Trip 2 (replenish/variety), or Both (high-use items). These are starting suggestions to get you going.

Bi-weekly Perishable Shopping List

Item	Approx. Quantity	Estimated Cost per Trip	Trip 1	Trip 2	Both	Quick Fun Idea (Rules of Three Style)
Eggs	1–2 dozen	\$4–6	Yes		Yes	Protein boost; fry, boil, or scramble
Onions	3–5 lb bag	\$3–4	Yes		Yes	Aromatic base; caramelize for depth
Potatoes	5–10 lb bag	\$4–5	Yes		Yes	Core starch; mash, roast, or hash
Bananas/ Seasonal Fruit	Bunch or 5–10 pieces	\$3	Yes		Yes	Sweet flavor; snacks or dessert
Carrots/Celery	Bunch or bag	\$3		Yes		Crunchy flavor; soups or snacks
Milk (or alt)	1 gallon	\$3–4	Yes		Yes	Creamy layer; drinks or sauces
Cheese (block)	8–16 oz	\$4		Yes		Melty/umami; grate over everything
Bread (or make your own)	1–2 loaves	\$3–4	Yes		Yes	Quick sandwich core
Total per Trip	Mix for variety	~\$15–20				Keeps meals fresh & under 20 mins!

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3. EXTRA \$50 UPGRADE RECOMMENDATIONS (MIX STAPLE & PERISHABLE FOR MAX FUN)

Prioritize 5–8 items that excite you – focus on versatile heroes for speedy recipes (e.g., oats + peanut butter + banana = breakfast win). Column marks Staple (long-lasting pantry) or Perishable (fresh/frozen, buy as needed). This list is mostly for those past the first month and moving into growth. Our base recipes will still focus on the first two lists while advanced recipes will add these and much more.

Bonus Round: Add-ons if you have the budget to spare

Item	Approx. Size/Quantity	Estimated Cost (2026)	Staple or Perishable	Why It's a Hero (Quick Fun Idea)
Rolled oats	Large canister (42 oz)	\$4–6	Staple	Breakfast base; overnight oats or cookies in minutes
Dry lentils	1–2 lb bag	\$3–5	Staple	Quick protein; soup or tacos (cooks faster than beans)
Canned tuna (in water)	4–6 cans	\$6–8	Staple	Fast salads or melts; protein punch without cooking
Cornmeal	2–5 lb bag	\$3–5	Staple	Cornbread or polenta; easy side in 20 mins
Soy sauce	Bottle (10–15 oz)	\$3–5	Staple	Umami boost; stir-fry rice or beans instantly
Ground cumin	Small jar	\$3–4	Staple	Warm depth; chili or bean bowls go global
Paprika (smoked or sweet)	Small jar	\$3–4	Staple	Color & flavor; sprinkle on potatoes or eggs
Frozen mixed vegetables	2–3 bags (16 oz each)	\$6–9	Perishable (freezer)	No-chop stir-fry add; keeps months, zero waste
Butter (unsalted)	1 lb (4 sticks)	\$5–7	Perishable	Richness; sauté onions or bake quick breads
Block cheddar cheese	16 oz	\$5–7	Perishable	Melty magic; grate over everything for comfort
Chicken (thighs or drumsticks)	3–5 lb pack	\$8–12	Perishable	Roast or skillet; protein upgrade for family feasts
Apples or cabbage	5 lb bag or head	\$4–6	Perishable	Fresh crunch; snacks, slaw, or sauté sides
Total	Pick your mix!	~\$50		More layers, more joy – remix Rules of Three!