

Frugal Living Without A Big Pantry



By Susanne Myers - The Hillbilly Housewife

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Good Morning ...

I got up early this morning, make a cup of coffee and since it was so nice and quiet in the house, I thought I'd take advantage of that and get a little writing done. (It's sometimes hard to hear myself think once everyone is up and asking me questions every 5 minutes).

Over the past few weeks, you've heard me talk a lot about making the most of your pantry and freezer. You can take advantage of big sales, and simply store the food until you are ready to eat it.

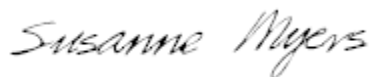
But what do you do when you don't have a lot, or hardly any storage room? That's exactly what a Hillbilly Housewife Newsletter reader asked me a few days ago. And that's what today's short report is all about.

I took a few days to think a bit "outside the box" to come up with a few ideas to live frugally without having to buy in bulk and store your food. Some of my advice will be very obvious, but I also have some ideas you may not have thought about yet. Either way, I encourage you to read through it and ask yourself, is this something I'm doing right now? If not, should I be doing this?

Not every tip and strategy will apply to you, so simple pick and choose from what will work for you and your family.

Let's dive right in and of course you are welcome to email me at susanne@hillbillyhousewife.com with any questions or comments. If you have a great frugal recipe I would love to know about it as well.

Let's get cooking.



Susanne Myers – The Hillbilly Housewife

www.Hillbillyhousewife.com

P.S. I would like to invite you to learn more about frugal homemaking and connect with me and other like-minded women in the Hillbilly Housewife Club. Join us today at

<http://www.hillbillyhousewifeclub.com>

Plan Your Meals Head Of Time

My first suggestion when someone asks me how to save on groceries is always “Plan Your Meals” it is amazing how much food is thrown out on a daily basis. Take a look at the picture below.

Into the Trash It Goes

A federal study found that 96.4 billion pounds of edible food was wasted by U.S. retailers, food service businesses and consumers in 1995 — about **1 pound of waste per day** for every adult and child in the nation at that time. That doesn't count food lost on farms and by processors and wholesalers.

For a family of four people, that amounted to about **122 pounds of food thrown out each month** in grocery stores, restaurants, cafeterias and homes. Here is a depiction of that family's monthly share, the sum of waste in eight different food groups as detailed in the study.



Source: United States Department of Agriculture, Census Bureau

BILL MARSH AND KAM HASKELL/THE NEW YORK TIMES; PHOTOGRAPH BY TONY CENCOLA/THE NEW YORK TIMES

I don't know if you can see the words on the graphic, but it says:

“A federal study found that 96.4 billion pounds of edible food was wasted by U.S. retailers, food service businesses and consumers in 1995 – about 1 pound of waste per day for every adult and child in the nation at the time. That does not count food lost from farms and by processors and wholesalers.”

Quite shocking, isn't it. Just think about how much money you end up throwing in the trash right along with all that rotting food.

Meal planning will help you buy only the food you need, so you actually get a chance to use it before it starts to go bad.

With meal planning you simply sit down each week (I usually do this on Sunday night) and figure out what you are going to cook each day of the week. Then you write your grocery list based on what you decided to cook.

It's a great habit to get into. Unfortunately it's also pretty easy to get back out of that habit and just "wing it". If that's you, I encourage you to get back into meal planning.

If you are new to meal planning and don't quite know where to start, I have a few resources for you.

Menu Planning Made Easy

The first is an article about meal planning here:

<http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com/menuplanning.htm>

It goes over all the basics, the different ways to go about menu planning and even includes a sample menu.

Menu Planning Ebook

The next resource is my meal planning ebook. I go into a little more detail on exactly how I plan my menus and I've included 6 weekly menus as well. You could easily rotate through those for most of the year and never get bored.

You can order the meal planning ebook here:

<http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com/ebooks/mealplanning.htm>

Menu Planning Central

Last but not least, you may want to take a look at what my friend Christine is doing at Menu Planning Central - <http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com/mpc>

She creates 4 different frugal menus for you, including a frugal one. I also like her meal planning software that allows you to create menus based on what your family likes. It's well worth the \$20 per month to become a member.

<http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com/mpc>

Plan Your Meals Around Sales At The Store

In addition to planning your meals, pay attention to what's on sale that week. Base your meals around those items for even bigger savings. This way you can still take advantage of sales and coupons but since you'll be eating the food right away, there's no need to store it.

Look at what's on sale that week. I find some of the biggest savings are in the meat and produce departments. I start by looking what cut of meat is on sale that week and then plan my meals around those. If it's a larger cut of meat (like a roast or a whole chicken), I plan 2 or 3 meals around it.

For example, if pot roast is on sale, I will cook the roast with root vegetables and potatoes and serve that for dinner the first night. The next night, I make either stew out of it, or stew pot pies. Depending on the size of the roast, I may even do both. By day 3 most of the veggies are usually gone. I'll shred the rest of the meat, stir in some BBQ sauce and serve it on buns with a side salad or some fresh fruit.

You can start by looking at grocery store sales flyers. Some stores will also post their sales in the window at the front of the store, but the flyers make it easy to plan meals at home. If you are getting a newspaper, those should be delivered to your home in the paper, several times a week (usually on Sunday's and Wednesdays).

If you don't get a paper, ask a family member or neighbor who does to save the grocery store flyers for you. You can also stop by your local library. Most libraries have several copies of the local paper.

I usually just go online to find them. You can either do a Google search, or go to the websites of your local grocery stores.

Here's an extensive list of websites for some of the most common grocery chains in the US.

US Grocery Stores

- [99 Ranch Market](#)
- [A&P Super Foodmart](#)
- [Acme Markets](#)
- [Adams Super Food Stores](#)
- [Acme Fresh Market](#)
- [Affiliated Foods](#)
- [AJ's Fine Foods](#)
- [Albertsons](#)
- [Aldi](#)
- [Amazon Groceries](#)
- [Amigos United](#)
- [Andy's Market](#)
- [Andronico's](#)
- [Associated Supermarkets](#)
- [Avanza Supermarkets](#)
- [Bailey's](#)
- [Baker's](#)
- [Balducci's](#)
- [Basha's](#)
- [Beavers Market](#)
- [Bel Air](#)
- [Best Yet Market](#)
- [Big Y World Class Market](#)
- [biggs](#)
- [BiLo Foods & Riverside](#)
- [bloom](#)
- [Breax Mart](#)
- [Bristol Farms](#)
- [Brookshire Brother's](#)
- [Brookshire's](#)
- [Bruno's](#)
- [Budwey's Supermarkets](#)
- [Butera Market](#)
- [C-Town Supermarkets](#)
- [Capitol Centre Foods](#)
- [Carrs](#)
- [Cash Wise](#)
- [Central Market](#)
- [Citarella](#)
- [Coborn's](#)
- [Coles](#)
- [Community Markets](#)
- [Compare Foods Supermarkets](#)
- [Copps](#)
- [Costco](#)
- [County Market](#)
- [Country Mart](#)
- [Country Mercantile](#)
- [Cropper's Market](#)
- [Cub Foods](#)
- [D & W Fresh Market](#)
- [D'Agostinos](#)
- [Dan's Supermarket](#)
- [DeCA](#)
- [Dierberg's](#)
- [Dillon's](#)
- [Dominicks](#)
- [Doug's Supermarket](#)
- [Driskill's](#)
- [Duane Reade](#)
- [Econo Foods](#)
- [Family Thrift Center](#)
- [Farm Fresh](#)
- [Farmer Jack](#)
- [Felpausch](#)
- [Festival Foods](#)
- [Fiesta Mart](#)
- [Fine Fare Supermarkets](#)
- [Food 4 Less](#)
- [Food Basics](#)
- [Food Bonanza](#)
- [Food City](#)
- [The Food Emporium](#)
- [Foodland](#)
- [Foodland Stores](#)
- [Food Lion](#)
- [Foodmaxx](#)
- [Food Pride](#)
- [Food Town](#)
- [Food World](#)
- [Fred Meyer Stores](#)
- [The Fresh Grocer](#)
- [The Fresh Market](#)
- [Fry's Food](#)
- [Fulmer Community Markets](#)
- [G & G Market](#)

- [Gelson's - The Super Market](#)
- [Genuardis.com](#)
- [Gerbe's](#)
- [Giant](#)
- [Giant Eagle](#)
- [Giant Food](#)
- [Gooding's Online](#)
- [Great Scot](#)
- [Gristedes](#)
- [Grocery Outlets](#)
- [Hannaford Supermarkets](#)
- [Harris Teeter](#)
- [Harveys Supermarkets](#)
- [H.E.B. - Here Everything's Better](#)
- [Hen House Markets](#)
- [Hilander](#)
- [Homeland](#)
- [Hornbacher's](#)
- [Hy-Vee](#)
- [IGA](#)
- [Ingles Markets](#)
- [Jerrys Foods](#)
- [Jewel/Osco](#)
- [Jubilee Foods](#)
- [Jungle Jim's](#)
- [Key Food](#)
- [Kash 'N Karry](#)
- [Key Food](#)
- [King's Country Market](#)
- [King Kullen](#)
- [King Soopers](#)
- [Kroger](#)
- [Landis Supermarket](#)
- [Longo's](#)
- [Lowe's Foods](#)
- [Lunds](#)
- [\(Central Co-ops\) Madison Market](#)
- [Marc's](#)
- [Mariposa Food Co-op](#)
- [Market Basket](#)
- [Market Street United](#)
- [Mars Supermarkets](#)
- [Marsh Supermarket & Pharmacy](#)
- [Martins Food Markets](#)
- [McCaffrey's](#)
- [Meijer](#)
- [Met Foods](#)
- [Metropolitan Market](#)
- [Minyard Food Stores](#)
- [Nob Hill Foods](#)
- [Olympia Food Coop](#)
- [Our Family Foods](#)
- [Owen's](#)
- [P&C Foods](#)
- [PCC Natural Markets](#)
- [PDQ Food Stores](#)
- [Pathmark](#)
- [Pavilions](#)
- [Pavilions *Brown & Coles*](#)
- [Pay Less](#)
- [Pick 'N Save](#)
- [Pierce's Markets](#)
- [Piggly Wiggly](#)
- [Pioneer Supermarkets](#)
- [Prarie Market](#)
- [Price Chopper](#)
- [Publix](#)
- [QFC](#)
- [Quality Markets](#)
- [Rainbow Foods](#)
- [Raley's](#)
- [Ralph's](#)
- [Randalls](#)
- [Red Apple Markets](#)
- [Redner's Warehouse Markets](#)
- [Resers Fine Foods](#)
- [Reid's Fine Foods](#)
- [Ridley's Family Markets](#)
- [Riesbecks Food Markets](#)
- [Rincon Market](#)
- [Riverside Markets](#)
- [Roche Brothers Supermarkets](#)
- [Rosauers](#)
- [Roth's® Fresh Markets](#)
- [Royal Farms](#)
- [Sack 'N Save Supermarket](#)
- [Safeway.com](#)
- [Santoni's Super Market](#)
- [Sav-A-Center](#)
- [Save a Lot](#)
- [Schnuck's](#)

- [Scolari's](#)
- [Scott's Food & Pharmacy](#)
- [Sedano's](#)
- [Sentry Foods](#)
- [Sevananda Natural Foods](#)
- [Shady Maple Farm Market](#)
- [Shaw's](#)
- [Shop 'n Save](#)
- [ShopRite](#)
- [Shoppers Food & Pharmacy](#)
- [Smart & Final](#)
- [Smiths Food and Drugs](#)
- [Spartan Stores](#)
- [Sprouts Farmers Market](#)
- [Stater Brothers](#)
- [Stew Leonard's](#)
- [Stop & Shop](#)
- [Sullivan's Foods](#)
- [Sunflower Farmers Market](#)
- [Sunmart Foods](#)
- [Sunset Foods](#)
- [Super 1 Foods](#)
- [SUPER fresh](#)
- [Super VALU](#)
- [Sweetbay Supermarket](#)
- [Thriftway Shop N Bag](#)
- [Times Supermarket](#)
- [Tom Thumb](#)
- [Tops](#)
- [Top Food & Drugs](#)
- [Treasure Island](#)
- [Trader Joes](#)
- [Ukrop's](#)
- [Ultra Food & Drug](#)
- [United Supermarkets](#)
- [United Supermarkets \(OK\)](#)
- [Vons.com](#)
- [waldbaum's](#)
- [Wally's Market](#)
- [Wayfield Foods](#)
- [Wegman's](#)
- [Weis Markets](#)
- [Western Beef](#)
- [Wheatsville Food Coop](#)
- [Whole Foods Market](#)
- [Wholesale Food Outlet](#)
- [Willy Street Coop](#)
- [Wild Oats Marketplace](#)
- [Wilson Farms](#)
- [Winco Foods](#)
- [Winn Dixie](#)
- [Woodmans Food Market](#)
- [Yokes Foods](#)
- [Zuppardo's](#)

Don't be afraid to change your meal plan around a little bit if you come to the store and find an even better deal on something else. I always carry my meal plan and a pen with me to make adjustments as needed.

Choose Your Grocery Store Carefully

Prices for regular items can vary quite a bit and a lot of what you buy on a weekly basis will not be on sale. Go take a look at the various grocery stores in your area and compare prices. The price book I mentioned before is a great way to do this.

Your goal is to find the grocery store that has the lowest prices for most of the items you buy on a regular basis. For me, that store is Aldi (and by quite a wide margin). If you're not familiar with these stores, here's a blog post I wrote a while back.

A Quick Guide To Shopping At Aldi:

<http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com/blog/?p=130>

There are a few items I can't get there, that I pick up at Super Wal-mart. I also take a look at the sales flyer for Food Lion since it's right across the street from me and I can quickly run in there on the way back from an errand.

A Word Of Caution

It's easy to get carried away with this deal finding. You don't want to end up running all over town, going to 4 or 5 different grocery stores each week. Pick one main store and maybe one or two that you frequent if there's a good deal to be had.

Remember gas costs money and your time is valuable. Don't spend hours upon hours running from store to store to save \$2. This is particularly true when you don't have a lot of room to store food or paper goods or cleaning supplies. The savings just won't add up. Keep it simple and stick to the one store that gives you the most consistent savings for all the things you buy most often.

By Generic Most Of The Time

Most stores offer a generic version of a lot of popular products. Most of the time they are (almost) as good as the brand version. Stick to the generic option unless the brand version is on sale. It's a good compromise that works for our family and saves us quite a bit throughout the year without having to stock up on a lot of the brand items when they do come on sale or I happen to find a coupon for them.

Stick To Frugal Staples

When you plan your meals, remember to stick to some frugal staples. Include some bean dishes or make a quick soup or stew from canned goods. Rice is another frugal staple at our house. It stretches a lot of meals, tastes good and is very filling. Add it to soups, casseroles or as a side.

You can read more about my frugal kitchen staples here:

<http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com/frugalstaples.htm>

Make The Most Of The Storage You Have

Even the smallest of spaces has some sort of storage. Get creative and make the most of it. Take a look at the image on the first page of this report for example. It's nothing more than a small shelf with some glass jars on it. This can easily fit above and on your kitchen counter and can store quite a bit of food. Look through your kitchen and see if you can't find a little nook here or there where you can store some food and take advantage of sales.

You also don't have to have a huge chest freezer to take advantage of meat and produce sales. The freezer above your fridge is a good start. Toss that old carton of ice cream no one is going to finish and rearrange the rest. You'll be amazed at how much you can actually fit in there when you try. Don't use plastic freezer containers. Stick with bags instead and lay them flat. You can stack quite a few of them on top of each other.

If you need more freezer space, take a look at some of the smaller freezers available and see if you can't fit one of those somewhere (in your kitchen, the pantry or even the laundry room).

This also means figuring out what "deal" or "sale" saves you the most. Don't stock up on items that only save you a few cents over what you would usually pay. Instead, stock up on items where you can save at least several dollars.

An easy way to accomplish this is with a price book. I carry around a tiny little notebook that easily fits in my purse. In it I write down all the various items we buy on a regular basis. I set up several different sections (i.e. meats, dairy, canned goods, drinks, cleaning supplies etc.) to make it easy to find what I'm looking for.

Next to each item, I write the current regular price in pencil. Using a pencil makes it easy to erase and change should the price of an item go up (or down).

With this price book, I can quickly see at a glance how much I am saving with a sale, or coupon. It makes it simple to decide if this sale really is a good deal or not.

That's it.... My family is getting up and I better start making some breakfast. I hope you have enjoyed this short little report and more importantly have found it helpful.

Susanne Myers

P.S. I also have an invitation for you. I'd love to share more frugal homemaking ideas with you inside the [Hillbilly Housewife Club](#). Scroll down to learn more...

An Invitation to the Hillbilly Housewife Club

I would like to personally invite you to join the HBHW Club. I would love to get to know you better in the member area and share the following with you:

- ✓ **A Step-by-Step Action Plan on a Money Saving Or Homemaking Topics.** - April's Report is all about Getting Out Of Debt For Good. This will be delivered in a meaty pdf report that you can download, print, scribble all over, throw in your purse, and read on the go - or study it while you're snuggled up in front of the fire with your cat.
- ✓ Tried and true frugal recipes from me and other club members. If you like what you've seen on my main website -- you're going to LOVE this!
- ✓ **Be inspired by women with the same goals and value that you hold dear.**
- ✓ Additional strategies to simplify your busy day, cook delicious meals and frugal tips you may not have heard about. This will grow into a HUGE resource as I will be adding articles each and every month.
- ✓ **Help to stay positive and motivated throughout your busy day.**
- ✓ Plus I'll have a few extra surprise bonuses for you down the road. (Audios, videos, interviews, guest experts... just you watch!)

And to make the Club even better, I decided at the last minute to include just one more bonus for you ...

As an extra bonus, I set up **forums** in the Hillbilly Housewife Club Members' Area. **The forums are what truly make this an exceptional community.**

And, you can get it all and much much more at
www.HillbillyHousewifeClub.com