

SIMPLE MEALS

BAKED POTATO



0.43

CREAMY SOUP PASTA BAKE



0.43

HOOPS (OR BEANS) ON TOAST



0.10

NOODLE STIR FRY



0.55

How To Eat On \$2 A Day



Delicious, easy and cheap costed recipes for
The \$2 A Day Challenge and beyond...

1 LARGE POTATO	0.15
1/2 AN ONION	0.10
1 STOCK CUBE	0.05
OIL / MARG	
PINCH OREGANO	
GARLIC	
SLICE OF BREAD (OPTIONAL)	0.02
TOTAL	0.36
PER PORTION	0.18

Potato and Onion Soup

Soup is a wonderful and versatile food, and amazingly easy to make! This recipe can be easily adapted for any kind of soup you can think of: tomato, carrot, chicken, noodle, or a hot soup with chilli and ginger. All cheap, and very filling. The recipe makes two generous portions, so you can put leftovers in a container in the fridge (especially a pint glass) and microwave in a bowl the next day for a quick lunch.

Take your onion, peel it, cut off the top and bottom and then dice it into small pieces. Take the potato and cut it into roughly one cm cubes. If you want garlic as well, peel one clove, and mash with a fork. And that's all the preparation done!

The basis of any soup is the stock, and we are going to use a stock cube from the spice pack for this. Making stock is really easy; just pop on the kettle, fill a mug with boiling water, and crumble the stock cube in it. Stir it a little to help it dissolve, and it's done!

Put a small splash of oil, or a big tablespoon of margarine in the pan and fry the onions for about 3 minutes, stirring a little until they start to go a gorgeous golden brown. Add a pinch of oregano and the mashed garlic. Now put in the potato, and stir it all up to coat the potatoes in all the flavours.

Pour in the stock, stick on a lid, and let it all simmer away for about 20 minutes.

Ok! It should now be getting thick and creamy, if it looks too thick for your liking, just add a bit more water. Done!

If you like smooth soup, without chunky bits in, you can use a hand mixer right in the pan to wizz it all up a bit, or mash the bits with a wooden spoon.

Soups can be made with all kinds of vegetables and flavours, so don't be afraid to experiment! The method is exactly the same for all root vegetables, if you want a tomato based soup, just use a can of chopped tomatoes, stock and onion... The possibilities are endless! And always very cheap. Try adding croutons (grilled buttered toast) or noodles to make even more filling.

2 EGGS	0.25
PINCH OF OREGANO	
PINCH OF BASIL	
SPLASH OF OIL	
WHATEVER IS LEFTOVER!	0.??
TOTAL	>0.40
PER PORTION	0.40

Spanish Omelette

My dad calls this recipe a Spanish Omelette, but I don't know what Spaniards would make of that... It is basically anything you have left in your fridge or cupboard, mixed in a light fluffy omelette. Quite cheap, and good at the end of the week to use up any bits of veg you have lying around.

Almost anything will go in an omelette, things like peppers, cheese, tomatoes, ham, pre-cooked potatoes, onion, mushrooms, basically anything you have a little bit left of. All these ingredients just need to be chopped up into small pieces.

In a bowl, crack open the eggs, add a pinch of salt and the herbs, and if you have any milk a little splash really helps the omelette be extra light and fluffy.

Now using a whisk if you have one or a fork if you don't, whisk up the eggs for solid minute to get a bit of air in the mixture. This is what makes it light and melt in the mouth.

Get the oil frying in a really hot pan, and fry your chopped up ingredients for a few minutes, then pour over the egg mixture. After it has sat for a little while, it should start to go brown at the edges. Just push the edges in a little to let more liquid get to the pan.

Swirl the pan around a little and push the spatula underneath so the omelette doesn't stick.

After about two or three minutes comes the fun part, the flipping! Don't worry if you aren't feeling that brave, you can always cut the omelette in half and flip over each side with a spatula.

Cook for another minute or two on the other side, until it is just starting to turn brown, and all the egg is solid. Flip again and serve! Ole!

Eggs can be the basis for other cheap meals: a fried egg with toast for big breakfasts, or just a boiled egg with toast soldiers to dip in! Relive your childhood breakfasts and eat cheap at the same time :)

50G TVP	0.20
1 CAN TOMATOES	0.20
1 CAN KIDNEY BEANS	0.15
1 CLOVE GARLIC	
PINCH OREGANO	
DRIED CHILLI	
100G RICE	0.09

TOTAL PER PORTION 0.64
0.37

Cowboy Chilli

Similar to the bolognaise recipie, but with beans and rice, so doubly filling! Control the heat of the chilli by varying the amount of chilli pepper you put in, a pinch is enough for most people, but remember if it's not hot enough you can always add more, but you can't take it out! If you can't find the value cans of beans, big packs of dried beans are really cheap, but you need to boil them for 2-3 min, then let soak for an hour before use.

Dice a whole onion, and fry in a healthy quantity of oil for a few minutes. Chop about 1/5th of a dried red chilli into little pieces, and add to the onion. If you like it hotter, add more! You can also use paprika.

Now add the tvp mince, stir and fry a little, and add a small wine glass of water to rehydrate it. Now put in some oregano, and the can of tomatoes. Bung on a lid, and stir occaisionly for 10 minutes.

Rice is easy to cook, basmati rice is the best, and not too costly. One portion is slightly less than half a mug, so stick this much in a pan and follow it with a full mug of water. That's the trick - just over twice as much water as rice, cover with a lid, and boil until all the water has evaporated. Don't need to stir, in fact it works best if you don't take the lid off. Easy!

Get your can of beans almost all the way opened, and use it as a hinge to drain the contents, fill with cold water and rince a few times till the water comes out clear. Then mush up the simmering tomato mix a little, and add the beans.

Thats all there is to it, turn the chilli down really low till the rice is done, and serve! Very easy, but tastes compleetely different to the bologaise. Save half the chilli and tomorrow just cook some fresh rice and microwave your left overs for 3-4 minutes.



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200G OATS	0.30
100G SUGAR	0.15
200G MARG	0.15
50G RAISINS	0.10

TOTAL PER PORTION >0.70
0.07

Rockafella Flapjacks

Finding something to snack on, especially when out and about is the sometimes the hardest bit of the \$2 a day challenge, but these flapjacks are so cheap you can easily have one or more a day. Needs an oven and baking tray though, although you can make a good enough tray thing out of foil or a muffin tin. Oh yeah, and they taste just scrummy!

This will make 10 munch size slices or blobs :) Start off by setting your oven to 160 degrees C.

Next you need to melt your margarine. The laziest way is just to bung it in a bowl in a microwave for about 20 seconds, and swill it all around to melt the little lumps. Easy!

In a pretty big bowl put the oats and sugar, brown sugar works best, but caster sugar is ok if you are on a budget like we are! Also a couple of tablespoons of golden syrpy is a luxury extra you might want to remember for when the challenge is over...

But raisins you really do need, so mix them in and add the melted butter. Stir until it is all well mixed, and it should stick together if pushed tightly. If it seems a bit dry, don't be afraid to add a splash of water or a little more melted marg - sometimes the oats can be powdery and absorb more water.



Now grease the inside of a muffin tin, a yorkshire pudding tin, a deep baking tray by getting a bit of marg on the paper towel, and then smearing the tray or tin. Pack the mixture tightly into the tin, and put in the oven for about 10 - 15 minutes, until it has just gone brown.

When done, let sit for 10 minutes before trying to take the flapjacks out with a spoon or knife, otherwise they will all crumble apart. Wrap in foil, or put in a plastic container and they will keep all week... if you can stop eating them!

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2 MUGS PASTA	0.05
1/2 CAN TOMATOES	0.10
PINCH OREGANO	
PINCH BASIL	
DRIED CHILLI	

TOTAL	0.15
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Cheap 'n' lazy pasta

Ridiculously cheap and easy to make, this pasta takes just 15 minutes and makes a good filling meal for just 15p. Use for lunch, or cheap enough for a big snack to quench your rumbling tummies... Doesn't taste quite as good as a slow cooked sauce used in the bolognese recipe, but much quicker and cheaper. A little bit of chilli gives gentle warmth.

Easy-peasy this one, first get a pan and add your pasta and a bit of salt. Pour over twice as much boiling water from a kettle (4 mugs worth). The twisty kind of pasta is my favourite, it's really good at sticking sauce to it.

Bring up a little of heat on the stove and let the pasta simmer with a lid on for 10 minutes. Properly cooked, pasta should be 'al-dente' which means if you try one it should still have a little bite to it. Personally I like it really soft, so I leave it in a bit longer - it's up to you.

When done to your taste, drain the water and put the pan back on the heat and put in half a can of chopped tomatoes in with the pasta. If you have whole plumed tomatoes, use a knife to chop them up a little in the can.

Add the oregano and basil and a few thin slices of dried chilli, and let the whole shin-dig simmer on a low heat.

Stir often, and after five minutes you're done! If you have any cheese you can grate a little on the top, but could add 20p to the cost... A slice of bread is a good idea to soak up the juices and only adds a few pence.

This recipe can also be adjusted to make a stunning pasta bake. Just double the amount of pasta (and water when you cook it) and use a whole can of tomatoes. When cooked pour the whole lot into a ceramic or glass dish, and you might want to add other goodies, like chopped sausages, mushrooms and onion...

Grate cheese to coat the top and put in an oven for about 30 minutes at 180 degrees until the top starts to go brown. You can make a really big cheap pasta bake that you can reheat to make three or four meals.

100G SPAGHETTI	0.05
1 CAN TOMATOES	0.20
1/2 ONION	0.10
50G TVP	0.20
PINCH OREGANO	
PINCH BASIL	

TOTAL	0.55
PER PORTION	0.30

Spaghetti bolognese

This recipe is based on an amazing ingredient called TVP vege-mince which you can buy from health food shops, or many organic stores. It's made of dried soya beans, and when it's cooked up tastes just as good as real mince with all the protein and none of the fat, and is a very cheap alternative. In short, it rocks!

Making spaghetti bolognese is very easy. Cut up the onion into little cubes, and in a pan heat up the oil for a minute or two, then bung in the spices and onion. Stir and fry the onion for about 4 minutes until it just starts to go golden brown.

Now put in about 3/4 of a mug of the TVP mince stuff and fry for just a minute stirring into the onion. Add half a mug of water, and the mince will soak it all up. Stir for another minute and pop in the can of tomatoes. Keep stirring every now and then for 10 minutes on a low heat, but try to keep the tomatoes whole, the sauce will not be so bitter if they are mashed after 10 minutes.

Now get the kettle boiling, and set a pan on to cook the spaghetti. Take 100g of spaghetti and put it in the pan with a splash of water and a pinch of salt. Pour over boiling water and get the hob going on a medium setting.



The spaghetti won't all fit in the pan, but don't worry, as the bottom gets soggy, it will curl up and after a few minutes you can push the rest in. If you are super lazy or in a rush you can just snap the spaghetti in half and throw it in, but you don't get the long stringy fun later when eating it!

Once boiling the spaghetti should cook in about 10 minutes, and the sauce should be done at the same time, just keep stirring. Now it's all done stick on a plate and eat! There should be enough bolognese sauce for two portions, so only serve half. Serve with a flourish and a fake Italian accent! Voila!

2 MEDIUM POTATOES 0.15
 1/2 AN ONION 0.06
 1/2 PACK OF TOFU 0.40
 1/2 CAN BEANS 0.05
 SLICE OF BREAD 0.02
 SPLASH OF OIL
 PINCH OF SAGE

TOTAL 0.36
 PER PORTION 0.18

Vegan Cooked Breakfast

Not many people have tried tofu before, and I confess, I used to hate it before I found out the secret to great tofu... This is a cool introduction to a versatile food - an alternative to scrambled eggs. This full breakfast will keep you going all day, it includes tofu, toast, hash browns and beans! For just 68p! Great for brunch.

Okay, the secret to tofu is to squeeze all the water; a bit of a hassle, but gives a much better texture. Cut the tofu longways into 3 thin slices and lay them next to each other wrapped in plenty of paper towels.

The next bit is fun, put a tray or plate on top of the tofu and put lots of heavy cans and bottles on the tray to weigh it down. After 10 minutes this will squeeze all the water out and stop the tofu being all rubbery.

While this is going on, peel the potatoes and with a cheese grater grate them into a bowl, and cover with water. That is all hash browns are: grated potato, soaked and fried!

Slice the onion into rings and fry them in some oil with salt, pepper, oregano, and a pinch of sage. This is the secret ingredient and makes it taste all meaty and filling :)

Now take the potato which has been soaking in the water and drain it carefully, and push them tightly to form a few small burger shapes. Carefully put them in the pan to fry with the onion. Don't worry if they fall apart a little when turning them over, they'll still taste just as good!

Tofu time! Rip it all up into small thumb sized pieces and add to the mixture in the frying pan. Cook all of this for about 10 minutes, turning every now and then until the tofu starts to go a little brown.

This mixture tastes good with a diced tomato if you have one, especially some salsa (after the \$2 a day week of course!)

Serve with a slice of toast and half a can of baked beans, should take just 3 minutes in the microwave, stirring half way through. Good enough for breakfast and lunch? Try it out!

2 MED POTATOES (OR) 0.15
 1 CAN CHICK PEAS 0.40
 1 CAN TOMATOES 0.20
 1 ONION 0.15
 1 MUG OF RICE 0.15
 1 TEASPOON CUMIN
 PINCH CORRIANDER, OIL
 1 TEASPOON GINGER
 PINCH DRIED CHILLI
 1 TSP CURRY POWDER

TOTAL 0.90/0.65
 PER PORTION 0.45/0.32

Chick pea or potato curry

Curry is really easy and cheap to make, it's basically just stew with the right spices in it. This recipe can work to make potato or chick pea curry, and definitely makes enough for two meals, so save for dinner the next day. When reheating the rice (either by frying or microwave) just make sure it is steaming hot all the way through to kill any germs.

Start by dicing the onion and the potato (if you are using it). In a pan heat up a generous amount of oil and a pinch of salt, then stick in the coriander seeds and heat for a few minutes with the lid on... they should start to pop! Ground coriander is ok, but not as fun :) Then put in the onion, cumin seeds and dried chilli, and fry for a few minutes on a medium heat until the onions go golden, stirring often.

Now shove in the chick peas, draining the can first and rinsing, or the chopped potato, and get the whole caboodle mixed together well before dumping in the whole can of tomatoes. Add the curry powder and ginger and simmer on a low heat for about half an hour, stirring every now and then and watching to make sure the curry doesn't burn and go brown. The best thing is cooking curry makes your kitchen smell exotic and aromatic for days!

The next thing to do is the rice, this takes about 25min, so start about 5 minutes after the curry is bubbling away. Rice isn't too hard to do, put two mugs of water with one mug of rice in a pan, add a pinch of salt, stick a lid on and bring to a gentle boil. When all the water has evaporated, it's done! Poke around with a fork to fluff it a bit, and you will have lovely steamed rice for your curry.

Don't be afraid of overcooking the curry either, as long as it's stirred: the longer the curry sits, the more flavour gets absorbed. So the half you eat tomorrow will taste even better after sitting in a fridge for a day! Weird. Keep testing it as it cooks and add more chilli and spice to get it as hot as you like.

Serve half the rice and half the curry, and put the rest in the fridge.

Shepherds Pie

A traditional British meal made cheap with the amazing TVP vege-mince! This recipe makes three generous portions to help spread your money. Just keep the left-overs in the fridge and microwave the next day for 4 minutes, stirring halfway through. Hearty and VERY filling.

Basically, shepherds pie is just a thick bolognese sauce with mashed potato on the top, but represents all the essential food groups and nutrients in one meal! Yay!

Chop up your onion and courgette into small cubes and fry in a little oil for 6 minutes. Add basil, oregano and salt to taste. Now put in a mug of TVP and fry for another 2 minutes adding a small glass of water. When the mince has soaked up some of the water, put in two cans of tomatoes and leave to simmer.

Remember to stir the tomatoes every now and then, and set your oven to 180 degrees C.

To make the mashed potato topping, wash and chop the potatoes into small chunks as this helps them cook faster. Peel if you like, but the skin is where all the nutrients are!

Boil the potatoes for about 15 minutes until you can stick a fork in a bit of potato and it will slide off.

Drain the potatoes and mash with a potato masher or a fork. While mashing add about half a mug of milk, but watch the consistency, you don't want it to be runny or too dry. It should pack to a solid form, a bit like play dough. Add salt and garlic if you like (with a bit of cheese this awesome mash can be a meal on it's own!)

In a big ceramic oven dish pour out all the tomato and mince mixture: it shouldn't be too runny, otherwise cook for another 5 minutes or so. Then carefully spread the mashed potato over the top, and garnish with a handful of grated cheese and more oregano.

It should cook in the oven for about 30-45 minutes, take a look every now and then, when the cheese has gone a deep golden brown, it is ready to eat! Leave the leftovers to cool before sticking in the fridge.

100G TVP	0.40
5 MEDIUM POTATOES	0.30
2 CANS TOMATOES	0.40
1 ONION	0.15
1/2 COURGETTE	0.20
50G CHEESE	0.20
100ML MILK	0.10
OREGANO + BASIL	
SPLASH OF OIL	

TOTAL 1.75
PER PORTION 0.58

Cougette Pesto

Jars of ready made pesto are so expensive, but this makes a surprisingly delicious nutty alternative, that even people who hate courgette seem to love! Quick to make, and an interesting alternative to tomato based sauce on pasta all the time. Cheese, bread to mop up the pesto and a mushroom can be added for variety.

200G PASTA	0.05
1/2 A COURGETTE	0.20
1/2 AN ONION	0.10
GRATED CHEESE	0.20
(OPTIONAL)	
SLICE OF BREAD	0.03
(OPTIONAL)	
OIL	

TOTAL 0.58

From chopping board to table in less than 15 minutes: that's the target!

First off, chop half and onion into small pieces, you can do this on the plate you eat off later if you are feeling too lazy to wash up a chopping board as well...

Chop off the wooden stump of the courgette and grate roughly half of it. In a small saucepan heat a generous amount of oil until it is hot enough that a piece of onion will sizzle when put in. Now throw in the grated courgette and onion, and stir well so it all gets a bit of the oil. Put in quite a lot of basil and oregano, about two or three pinches of each. A clove of garlic might not go amiss either...

Now here's a tip to cook pasta faster and save energy, rather than boiling the water on the stove, heat it up in the kettle first. This is quicker and uses less energy than using a gas or electric hob to boil the water.

So put two cups of pasta in a pan with a little splash of water and some salt, and four mugs worth of water in the kettle. Get the hob heating the pasta gently right away, and once boiled add the rest of the water from the kettle. Put a lid on the pan and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring the pesto mix occasionally on a medium heat. The pasta only needs to be stirred once, it sticks when it first gets wet, but is fine after that.

Now drain the pasta, and pour all the pesto mixture into the pan with the pasta and add the grated cheese. This is the real Italian way to do sauces, add the pasta to the sauce and cook for a little bit, not the other way around!

Mix well for a minute and serve, but eat quick because it gets cold quickly! If you still aren't full by the end of this use a slice of bread to mop up all the left over oil from the bowl, it's the tastiest part ;o)