

PANTRY POWER

Creative & Budget-Friendly Ways to Utilize Pantry Staples

Keeping your pantry stocked with healthy canned and dry foods means always having economical and versatile meal options. They last a long time and can be as nutritious as fresh options because they are usually packaged at peak freshness. Check out these creative uses for your pantry staples to add variety and flavor to your plate!

Protein

Peanut Butter

- Spread it on bread with sliced bananas.
- Dip apples, carrots or celery in it for a snack.
- Use in sauces, dips or soups.

Beans

- Add to salads, casseroles, soups and chili.
- Add to ground meat to extend the dish and add nutrition.

Canned Salmon, Chicken, Beef and Pork

- Use in soups, sauces, tacos, pizzas, stir-fry, sandwiches or casseroles.

Canned Beef Stew or Chili

- Serve over pasta or rice with a vegetable.
- Use in casseroles or soups.
- Top a baked potato.

Cheese

- Melt on toast.
- Serve with fruit as a snack.

Vegetables

Canned Vegetables

(drain and rinse before using)

- Use in soups, stews, casseroles, salads, stuffing, pasta and rice dishes.
- Mix one or more vegetables such as tomatoes, green peppers, or onions.
- Add flavor to canned spinach with garlic, pepper, lemon juice or Parmesan cheese.

Canned Tomatoes

- Add flavor by seasoning with garlic, pepper, or herbs like dried basil or rosemary.
- Use in soups, casseroles, stews, vegetable side dishes, rice, pasta and main dishes.
- Combine with garlic and cooked, chopped green pepper for an easy pasta topping (make sure to drain).

Tomato Juice

- Serve warm or chilled as a beverage or snack.
- Use to make vegetable soup.



Fruits

Canned Fruit

- Bake cobblers or crisps.
- Cut up and use in smoothies or add to salads.
- Make fruit salsa to eat on fish or chicken.
- Repeat layers of fruit and yogurt in a tall glass.
- Add to plain or sparkling water to add flavor.

Applesauce

- Top pancakes or waffles or meats.
- Substitute half the amount of fat or oil in a recipe with applesauce when baking cakes, muffins and breads.

Fruit Juice

- Mix ½ cup juice with ½ cup seltzer or sparkling water to make a sweet fruity beverage.
- Blend apple juice with yogurt, fruit, and ice for a smoothie.
- Freeze juice in ice cube trays with toothpicks for a quick and easy popsicle treat.

Milk

Evaporated and Instant Dry Milk

- Use as a substitution for cream in sauces, soups, and gravies.
- Use in recipes such as breads, muffins, soups, sauces, mashed potatoes, and pudding.

Grains and Starchy Foods

Dry Cereal

- Mix with yogurt and fruit.
- In recipes, use crushed cereal in place of bread crumbs.
- Add trail mix with raisins and nuts.

Corn Grits

- Corn grits make a great side dish for fish, poultry and meat dishes.
- Mix with garlic and cheese to add flavor.

Pasta

- Top with a tomato or meat sauce, oil and garlic, cheese, and vegetables.
- Use in recipes for soups, casseroles, or salads.
- Combine with eggs, fish, poultry, vegetables, or meat.
- Toss cold, cooked pasta with chopped vegetables, oil and vinegar for an easy pasta salad.

Oats

- Cook oats with chopped fruit and milk for a filling breakfast instead of water.
- Use to make baked goods such as cookies, muffins, breads and desserts.
- Use in place of bread crumbs in meatloaf, or in chicken and fish patties.

Rice

- Flavor with garlic, onions, peppers and spices.
- Use in recipes for soups, casseroles, stews and pilaf.
- Use in dessert recipes, such as puddings or breads.

Canned Potatoes

- Heat in a skillet with chopped onions for a quick side dish.
- Use in soups, salads, casseroles, stews, vegetable side dishes and main dishes.

Canned Sweet Potatoes

- Serve canned sweet potatoes heated, or use in various soups or baked goods like pies, cookies, breads, and muffins.
- Add flavor to canned sweet potatoes by mixing with grated lemon or orange peels, raisins, canned pineapples (drained) or nuts.

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Information adapted from the American Diabetes Association “What Can I Eat” handout.