

Fresh Out of Fresh

By Alexandra Turnbull, RDN, LD

Despite the numerous benefits of fruits and vegetables, only 1 in 10 Americans consume recommended amounts¹ due to factors like accessibility, affordability, time constraints, and picky eating. **The Fresh Out of Fresh guide offers creative solutions for incorporating affordable fruits and vegetables**, even when out of season or expensive. Explore alternative options like frozen, canned, dried, and 100% juice for cost-effective nutrition.



On sale /
in season



Canned



Frozen



Dried



Freeze
Dried



100%
Juice

What counts as 1 cup of fruit²

- 1 cup fresh, canned, or frozen
- 1/2 cup dried or freeze-dried
- 1 whole fruit — depending on size
- 1 cup (8 oz) 100% fruit juice

What counts as 1 cup of vegetables³

- 1 cup fresh or cooked
- 2 cups fresh leafy greens
- 1 cup (8 oz) 100% vegetable juice

What's in season?⁴



Strawberries



Kiwi



Broccoli



Asparagus



Avocado



Blueberries



Cantaloupe



Cucumber



Zucchini

SPRING

FALL



Bell Peppers



Carrots



Mangoes



Kiwi



Pears

SUMMER

WINTER



Potatoes



Apples



Pineapple



Brussels
Sprouts



Winter Squash

Overcome Common Barriers



Access

Transportation, food costs, seasonality, cooking skills, and limited equipment can hinder access to fruits and vegetables. Fortunately, numerous shelf-stable options are available at the grocery store.

- Pick in-season fruits and vegetables
- Shop items on sale or with coupons
- Keep canned varieties on hand
- Buy frozen options
- Look for 100% juice



Affordability

Incorporating different forms of fruits and veggies not only saves money but also encourages dietary variety. Fresh isn't the only source of essential nutrients.

- Buy fresh produce in season or on sale
- Opt for canned fruits in 100% juice or water
- Choose dried fruits with “no added sugar”
- Choose frozen items with “no added sugar” or sauces
- Opt for 100% juice like Tropicana's fortified with Calcium and Vitamin D



Time Constraints

Prepping fresh fruits and veggies requires some effort. Save time by planning ahead or opting for nutritious convenient varieties.

- Plan meals weekly using existing ingredients
- Steam frozen vegetables for quick, flavorful sides
- Make smoothies with fresh or frozen fruit and 100% juice
- Prep fresh produce at the start of the week
- Stock up on dried, freeze-dried, pouches and 100% juice for fast grab and go options



Picky Eaters

Picky eaters may struggle with the varying textures and flavors of fresh fruits and vegetables. Offer easier-to-chew options alongside fresh produce to accommodate their preferences.

- Offer tiny portions
- Incorporate their favorite food
- Get creative with presentation
- Have fun and give fruits and veggies superpowers based on the color
- Ask questions about the fruit or vegetable
- Pair with dips and condiments

References:

1. https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/sites/default/files/2020-12/Dietary_Guidelines_for_Americans_2020-2025.pdf
2. <https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/fruits>
3. <https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/vegetables>
4. <https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/resources/nutrition-education-materials/seasonal-produce-guide>