

Strategies Applied:

Maximize your time, here! See hints above on how to speed things along!

- **Zucchini:** A common garden vegetable, zucchini can be expensive at the store. Watch for specials, look at Aldi. 3 were \$1.68 at Aldi, 56 cents a piece.
- **Carrots:** An inexpensive item even not on sale – but it keeps so well I buy a couple of packages if it is cheaper. \$1.00 a pound is standard in our area, but the larger packages of 5 pounds are often on sale for \$2.50 – that’s 50 cents a pound, or about 10 cents for two. Carrots will keep longer if you rotate the package, which is so often on the bottom of the drawer, so they don’t sit in condensation.
- **Frozen Corn and Peas:** Fresh corn is best in the summer, when sales run around 17 to 20 cents an ear, but in the winter frozen is reasonable. Fresh peas are often expensive and hard to find. Buy frozen on sale with a coupon - mine was free, but 30 cents a pound is not unreasonable. Left over corn or peas will be just fine if you have it. Even just on sale, a cup of the basic frozen will run you about 30 cents each, total 60 cents.
- **Bell Pepper:** There are two types of sales, per pound or per pepper. I usually look for the per pepper pricing; in my area it’s generally cheaper – I’ll then buy the biggest, most gorgeous ones I can find. The peppers are often bagged and sold by a unit price, too. A really good price in our area is about a fifty to seventy cents a pepper for the red, yellow or orange ones, and 40 to 75 cents for the green bell. This is one item I seldom buy at Aldi unless I can't get a better price at my store. Cost at Aldi 89 cents, half is 45 cents.
- **Mushrooms:** They are often on sale at my grocery for about 1/2 price, especially around holidays. I pick them up when they run 89 to 99 cents a package. I've seen them at Aldi for about the same price. Turns out, according to the World’s Healthiest Foods, the [simple button mushroom](#) has as many good qualities as it’s more expensive siblings! Go underdog! 98 cents.
- **Green Onion:** I try to buy on sale for about 50 cents a bunch (usually during Holidays) then put the white tips in a jar of water in a sunny window to regrow. Kids love taking ownership of the project. I only need to replenish every few months. Cost is so minimal that I don't even count it.
- **Russet Potatoes:** Potatoes are dirt cheap - look for a great sales price of \$1.99 for 10 pounds in the fall and winter; regular sales price is \$1.99 for five pounds in my area. Store in a cool dry area, not near your onions - I like to store in a loosely closed paper bag.
- Don't know what to do with a large bag? Make what recipes you'd like to, then make [Freezer Twice Baked Potatoes](#) with the rest. I often pick out the smaller, misshapen potatoes for mashing and save the more regular sized ones for baking or other recipes. Whenever possible, I scrub and keep the skins on, even though they may not be shown that way in a recipe...cost for 2, about 12 cents.
- **Eggs:** Stock up on eggs when they’re inexpensive, normally during Holiday weeks. Low prices in my area range from free (often with other purchases) to anywhere from \$1.89 for 18 eggs. They last for weeks in the fridge – The date on the container is a ‘buy’ date, and you can expect them to last a good six weeks past that date. If you pick up two or three packages when they’re

at their low, you'll rarely need to pay full price.

- Refrigerate right away and never store in the door; eggs keep best in a colder part of the refrigerator, in their own box. (Then put your partially used vegetables in the door where you'll see them and remember they need to be used ASAP – the half a bell pepper or onion, etc.) In doubt about an egg? If it floats in water, discard, just to be on the safe side. If they float, it means the egg inside is drying out, not that it is bad in any way. Cost for 8 cents.
- **Panko Bread Crumbs:** I generally just use [homemade](#) (which I keep in my freezer) but Panko is a larger, very crisp bread crumb and is quite a bit crisper than, say, Progresso. I do find coupons every now and then for Panko, and it does go on sale, quite often when other Asian items do - stock up on things like Soy, etc. after the US New Years when the Chinese New Year is coming up. On sale, a box of Panko ran \$1.99, a cup 50 cents.
- **Brown Rice:** Really look for coupons and sales – and stock up when both are available. It's worthwhile to get a good brown rice – don't be fooled by the instant or quick cooking varieties or the ones that just look like brown rice. Riceland often has coupons available – check their site – I count on about 20 cents a cup. If I don't have a coupon, I'll buy a larger bag (cheaper per ounce.) Remember, though, brown rice is only marginally better than white rice – a few trace minerals and a smidge more fiber – but it is fantastic when cooked right. Cost 10 cents.
- **Barley:** Barley comes in different types and you'll find it in different areas of the store. It may be near the oats in the cereal aisle - hunt high and low, and may be in the bulk aisle. Generally a small box runs about \$2.50 but a little goes a long way. One cup yields about 3 1/2 cups cooked. Cost about 15 cents.
- **Olive Oil:** I have a little strategy for buying [olive oil](#) – using coupons and sales to lower the price, so click on the link. I also look for new brands and stock up - heavy competition means that when a new brand comes to the store, it is often at a fantastic price for a few weeks, then settles in at around the same price as the others. I think it's important to use olive oil as opposed to many others – the health benefits outweigh a bit more extra cost, and it can be had at a very reasonable price. I also like the fact that Olive oil contains no hidden trans fats like Canola or Vegetable oil. Cost for this recipe: 8 cents.