

Stocking Your Pantry

Keeping your pantry stocked with a few basic food items will allow you to cook a simple, healthy meal at a moment's notice. Once your pantry is equipped with the essentials, you can simply buy fresh items from the grocery to cook with your stocked items.

When we think of our pantry, we tend to first think about canned or boxed goods. Suggestions for your pantry include canned fish such as tuna, salmon, and sardines; canned beans such as black, kidney, garbanzo, cannellini, and chickpeas; and canned vegetables such as tomatoes, spinach, corn, or beets. Other items to consider are broth or stock, peanut butter and other nut butters, and salsa. There are several options for rice and grains including brown rice, whole-grain pasta, couscous, rolled oats, and breadcrumbs.

Common oils, vinegars, and condiments can add flavor in a pinch. Think about adding extra virgin olive oil, balsamic vinegar, red wine vinegar, mustard, hot sauce, or Worcestershire sauce. Additional ways to add flavor include seasonings like salt and pepper, and spice blends like chili powder and Italian seasoning. Stocking up your herbs and spices cabinet is also a great way to be prepared for putting together quick meals with lots of flavor. Common herbs and spices you should include might be bay leaves, parsley, cumin, oregano, paprika, rosemary, thyme, cinnamon, ginger, and nutmeg.

Building your pantry does not happen overnight. It is important to slowly build up your inventory as needed. Many of these foods are shelf-stable for several months and can be purchased in bulk or on sale.

Source:

Heather Norman-Burgdolf, Extension Specialist for Nutrition and Health;
Claire Crosby, Human Nutrition Student

Social media post:

A fully stocked pantry can really come in handy for preparing a healthy meal on the fly. We have some ideas for slowly building your stockpile of staples.