Guide to Off-Campus Food

Transitioning to living off-campus can be tricky, especially if you started off in the dorms with a meal plan. Grocery shopping, meal planning, budgeting, and cooking can be challenging to balance with the demands of being a student. We hope that this guide will give you the tools that you need to find affordable, healthy, and sustainable food near you and help you make informed choices about your food.

Happy eating!

This guide is sponsored by the University of Michigan Sustainable Food Program. To learn more, visit umsfp.com. To suggest an addition or a correction to this guide, email us at umsfp.comm@umich.edu.

We value your input and feedback!
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Cooking for yourself gives you more control over what you eat. You decide which ingredients to purchase and where to purchase them from. Home-cooked meals also tend to be cheaper and healthier than restaurant or store-bought meals. Cooking can be a great social activity: make dinner together with your roommates or invite your friends over for a potluck!

If you aren’t the most experienced or well equipped cook, don’t fret! There are lots of resources that share simple, low cost recipes (requiring few ingredients and few utensils) that are manageable for busy college students. To get started, check out Easy Student Recipes, Student Recipes, and BBC’s Student Recipes Collection. Beyond these, there are many food blogs and recipe websites dedicated to helping you eat the way you want to. The resources below are only a taste of what is out there!

MHealthy Recipe Finder - The University’s health and wellness initiative has over 300 simple and healthy recipes for you to peruse. You can even find recipes that will take less than 15 minutes to prepare!

The Stone Soup - Healthy recipes that require 5 ingredients or less and can be made in just minutes!

Supercook - This website will generate recipes for you based on ingredients you already have in your fridge.

Budget Bytes - Incredibly cheap recipes that still use healthy ingredients. The price of each meal is already calculated for you.

Nutrition Stripped - This blog is run by a nutritionist who shares simple, delicious, and healthy recipes.

The Minimalist Baker - This website shares simple and delicious recipes that require 10 ingredients or less, one bowl, and 30 minutes or less to prepare.

Michigan Sustainable Foods Initiative - Though this student organization is no longer active, their blog has many step-by-step tutorials that show you how easy it can be to cook from scratch and make your own staple foods. They also have many posts about other sustainable food issues!

Deliciously Ella - The recipes on this blog are based on whole, plant based foods. There are many recipes for healthy versions of typically unhealthy dishes!

A Couple Cooks - A blog with healthy vegetarian and whole foods recipes that can help you make home cooked meals a part of your lifestyle.
**Sprouted Kitchen** - Simple recipes that incorporate seasonal ingredients and natural foods.

**Food For Thought** - Run by the group Student Advocates for Nutrition at the UM School of Public Health, this blog has a variety of simple and healthy recipes.

**The Post Punk Kitchen** - Lots of vegan cooking and baking recipes! They also had a TV show, and old episodes can be viewed on their website.
Eating healthily in college is something we all struggle with. For many of us, this is the first time we have to make our own daily decisions about what we’re eating. Planning for balanced, nutritious meals can be frustrating and time-consuming, but luckily there are a lot of resources you can use to make it easier.

**MyPlate** - This nutrition guide run published by the USDA comes in the form of an icon that shows a place setting with a plate and cup divided into five groups to indicate the balance of food groups that should be included in your meals. The website [www.choosemyplate.gov/](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/) offers information on which foods belong to which food groups, which foods to avoid, physical activity information, a calorie and activity tracker called SuperTracker (which can also be used via the MyPlate app) and more.

**Nutrition Facts Labels** - If you are completely new to understanding nutrition, the FDA has a great resource that thoroughly explains how to understand the many components of food product nutrition labels: [http://www.fda.gov/Food/IngredientsPackagingLabeling/LabelingNutrition/ucm274593.htm](http://www.fda.gov/Food/IngredientsPackagingLabeling/LabelingNutrition/ucm274593.htm)

**MyFitnessPal** - This app allows you to track both food and physical activity. Its database contains full nutrition information on over 5 million products, including grocery items and meals from specific restaurants that probably aren’t going to have the full nutrition facts listed on their menu. The app also shows the distribution of macronutrients you have eaten that day (carbs, fat, protein) in a pie chart, and lists the amount of micronutrients. You can also set a weight loss goal and get caloric and nutrient recommendations based on that goal. There is also the option to connect with friends if you want motivation from others, or keep it private if you would rather do it on your own.

**MyNutrition** - A great resource for those on a meal plan is the MyNutrition tool provided by U of M Housing. You can access it on the housing website [http://nutrition.housing.umich.edu/NetNutrition/1](http://nutrition.housing.umich.edu/NetNutrition/1) or through the University of Michigan app (free download from the app store!). It lets you plan meals based on which dining hall you plan to eat at with specific nutrition and allergen information.
Looking for ways to get involved in food on campus? There are many student groups that deal with all different parts of the food system; whether you want to grow food, eat food, prevent food waste, or sell food, there’s a group for you!

**The Ann Arbor Student Food Co.** hopes to bring healthy wholesome food to the University of Michigan community and promote discussion and food education. They sell their produce Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10:30am-4pm in Mason Hall at the Posting Wall! Website: [http://www.studentfoodco.com](http://www.studentfoodco.com)

**Friends of the Campus Farm** is a group of students that empowers students to create a healthy future through sustainable food education and practice at the newly established campus farm and more broadly by working with the UM Sustainable Food Program. Students meet at the Ginseng Center on 4 pm on Fridays to carpool out to the Botanical Gardens. There, they weed, plant, and harvest food. Volunteers get to take home free produce! Contact [farm.core@umich.edu](mailto:farm.core@umich.edu) for more information!

Ever notice the garden at the corner of Hill and East University? That’s the **Cultivating Community** garden! Another group where you can
volunteer for a couple hours and then go home with some fresh-picked produce, Cultivating Community exists to empower and educate University of Michigan students to become leaders in the area of community food systems through hands-on organic gardening, community outreach, and volunteer activities. Email mbgna.cc@umich.edu for more information.

Of course, if you need food but don’t have the time to volunteer, there’s the MAIZE & BLUE Cupboard (U of M Food Pantry). They give away free bags of produce, bread, and dry goods to students. Their location for the 2016-2017 school year will be in the Trotter Multicultural Center. Follow them on Facebook for regular updates and when their monthly distributions (open to anyone and everyone) are!

Check out more food groups, subscribe to food-related newsletters, and find out more about the on-campus food movement on the UM Sustainable Food Program website, umsfp.com.
If you’re new to cooking, having someone teach you basic skills and methods can be helpful before you start taking on recipes. If you have a friend of family member who is a skilled cook, ask them to help you get started! There are also many resources around campus and online for beginner cooks. There’s no substitute for hands-on experience, so we have some local cooking classes and online resources to help you with that!

**Cooking Classes**

- **MHealthy Chef Demonstrations**:
  - Learn easy and delicious recipes for free! Either in person or on-line videos.
  - Sponsored by the University of Michigan, Aramark, and Picasso Executive Chefs.
  - Demonstrations include recipes, free samples, and healthy eating tips!
  - [https://hr.umich.edu/benefits-wellness/health/mhealthy/physical-well-being/nutrition/chef-demonstrations](https://hr.umich.edu/benefits-wellness/health/mhealthy/physical-well-being/nutrition/chef-demonstrations)

- **Meishi Chinese Gourmet Cooking Series**
  - Focused on simple & healthy Chinese cooking
  - Only open for undergraduate-resident hall student registration. If interested, register by emailing confucius@umich.edu with "Meishi Class Registration" in the subject line.
  - Sponsored by the Confucius Institute and Arts in Residence from UMich.

- **Ann Arbor Community Rec & Ed Pioneer Classes**
  - Local cooking classes taught by cooks of a wide variety of backgrounds. If you want something more specialized, this might be for you.

**Online Tutorials**

There’s a wide variety of cooking tutorials online. Some are tailored to be cost-effective, some focus on healthy eating, and some are meant for aspiring professionals. Here are some that might be more relevant to students:

- **Craftsy** - There are a lot of well made tutorials on this website, but not all of them are free. Free lessons include:
  - [Cooking Mistakes](https://www.craftsy.com/courses/cooking-mistakes)
  - [Complete Knife Skills](https://www.craftsy.com/courses/complete-knife-skills)

- **Reddit** - This website has a surprising number of sections dedicated to life skills. The
quality of information varies so you may have to search to find the best tutorials. Consider:

○ reddit.com/r/budgetfood
○ reddit.com/r/Cheap_Meals
○ reddit.com/r/collegecooking
○ reddit.com/r/EatCheapAndHealthy

● **BBC Cooking Techniques** - Whether you want to start with the basics (like cooking rice or scrambling eggs) or are looking to develop more advanced skills, this site has free tutorials for you. [http://www.bbc.co.uk/food/techniques](http://www.bbc.co.uk/food/techniques)

● **Texas A&M Dinner Tonight** - This is a recipe bank with short video demonstrations accompanying each recipe. [http://dinnertonight.tamu.edu/recipes/](http://dinnertonight.tamu.edu/recipes/)
Most students are familiar with Meijer and Kroger, but there are many more grocery options in the Ann Arbor area. There are also grocery stores within walking distance of campus, but those tend to be more expensive than ones further away. To give you a better idea of what your grocery options are, how the prices vary, and how you can get there, we have included short profiles of most grocery stores within 3 miles of campus. We also took note of special discounts, nearby landmarks, and other information you should know before heading to these stores. The stores were evaluated based on the following characteristics:

**Walkability** - Stores within 0.8 miles of campus are were considered to be walkable (it is indicated below whether North or Central Campus is the reference point).

**Bikeability** - This was judged based on the safety of roads, availability of bike racks or things to which you could lock your bike, and distance from campus.

**Bus Access and How to Use Google Maps** - You can take the bus to any grocery store that’s far from campus, but your trip may require a little bit of quick research first. We looked at whether or not you could board the bus at CC Little, or the Central Campus Transit Center, or if you should board the bus at the Blake Transit Center instead. However, there may be stops closer to your house that are more convenient for you. Here’s how to find out:

- Go to www.google.com/maps. Select this icon 🗺 to indicate that you need directions and not just an address. Put your school address or any other starting location on the top line, and put the name or address of your destination on the next line. You can select your mode of transportation as well. In the example to the right, the Union is the starting location, Lucky’s Market is the destination, and they are traveling by bus. Google Maps shows that bus route 36 will arrive at the Michigan Union at 8:08, and that it will be a seven minute ride to the store. Once you’ve figured out how to get there, click on the arrows ⇧ next to the addresses for directions on how to get home.

**Price** - Grocery stores are given a price rating of 1 if they are inexpensive, 2 if they are mid-range, and 3 if they are expensive relative to the whole set of stores surveyed.
Local and Organic Options - Stores are given rating of "none," "few," "some," or "many" based on the availability of local or organic alternatives for typical grocery items.

Stores within walking/biking distance from Central Campus

**Ann Arbor Farmer’s Market**, 315 Detroit Street  
Recommended mode of transit: Walk or Bike  
Price Range: 3 (expensive)  
Local/Organic options: Many  

The farmer’s market is an outlet for local farmers to sell their food to the greater Ann Arbor community. While the fresh food and produce that is sold is seasonal and you may not be able to find everything that you want, the food is extremely sustainable and your purchase supports local businesses. Additionally, the location is very convenient, seeing as it’s only a five minute walk from N. State Street.

**Argus Farm Stop**, 325 W Liberty  
Recommended mode of transit: Walk, Bike, or Bus (from CCTC)  
Price range: 3 (expensive)  
Local/Organic options: Many  

Argus Farm Stop is less a grocery store and more an indoor farmer’s market. All their goods come from Michigan, and the vast majority of them come from within a 20-mile radius. In warmer months, they even carry produce grown by UM students at the Campus Farm! You might not be able to find everything you need for cooking, especially during the winter. That said, they care deeply about the local community, which shows from their outdoor seating area to the fact that they invite students from the school of music to come perform there every Tuesday.

**Babo**, 403 E 4th Washington Street  
Recommended mode of transit: Walk or Bike  
Price Range: 3 (expensive)  
Local/Organic options: Many  

This store has a large selection of local and organic options and is located on the 1st floor of Sterling 411 Lofts. The food is high quality, and is priced at a premium because of that. Babo offers cold-pressed juices, freshly prepared foods, and a range of bulk
choices. There is also a location in Nickel’s Arcade and a location further off-campus, near the intersection of State and Eisenhower.

**By the Pound,** 615 South Main Street
Recommended mode of transit: Walk or Bike, Bus (from BTC)
Price Range: 2 (mid-range)
*Not a full grocery store*
Local/Organic options: Many

This store is located very close to the Big House. If you ever need anything in bulk, this is the place for you to go! From four different types of rice to chocolate melting wafers, you can buy anything “by the pound.” Additionally, there are various sustainable options, priced at a lower cost than other markets. They source most of their foods from local farmers and vendors, and offer frequent discounts to move their inventory.

**Lucky’s Market,** 1919 S Industrial Hwy
Recommended mode of transit: Bike or Bus (from CCTC)
Price range: 2 (mid-range)
Local/Organic options: Many

Lucky’s Market is located just south of the U of M golf course, and is near another grocery store, the Produce Station. It’s easy to get there, and the selection of sustainable options is impressive. One fun fact about Lucky’s is that it has weekly deals that start and end on Wednesday. If you show up on Wednesday, you get to take advantage of both the deals from the previous week and the week to come!

**People’s Food Co-op,** 216 N 4th Ave
Recommended mode of transit: Walk or Bike
Price Range: 3 (expensive)
Local/Organic options: Many

This store has a large selection of bulk, local, and organic items. It is located close to the Ann Arbor Farmers Market. They offer student discount days approximately once every 3 months (advertised through Groundcover News). You can become a member for a one time payment of $60 to enjoy additional discounts and other benefits.
The Produce Station, 1629 S. State
Recommended mode of transit: Bike or Bus (from CCTC)
Price range: 2 (mid-range)
Local/Organic options: Many

The Produce Station not only carries produce, but it also supplies other grocery items, prepared foods, and some gardening supplies. Since it’s just down State St, past the Big House, you could easily get there by bus or by bike, but be aware that they don’t have bike racks. They have a variety of local options, especially for artisan products like breads and cheeses.

Replenish, 619 E. University Ave.
Recommended mode of transit: Walk
Price Range: 3 (expensive)
Local/Organic Options: Few (some local)

This small store is very close to campus (located underneath Zaragon Place Apartments) and carries most staple food items. They have a loyalty card that is tied with Revive, the restaurant next door, and try to source from local companies when possible.

Sgt Pepper, 1028 E University Ave
Recommended mode of transit: Walk
Price Range: 3 (expensive)
*Not a full grocery store
Local/Organic Options: None

This convenience/liquor store has very few affordable, healthy, and sustainable options. It does not carry fresh produce.

Sparrow Market, Kerrytown Market & Shops, 407 N. 5th Avenue
Recommended mode of transit: Walk or Bike
Price Range: 3 (expensive)
Local/Organic options: Many

This market is located very close to the Ann Arbor Farmer’s Market. While the food is more expensive, all of the meat is sourced from free-range farms and is very sustainable.
Strickland Market, 1352 Geddes Ave
Recommended mode of transit: Walk
*Not a full grocery store
Price Range: 3 (expensive)
Local/Organic Options: None

This convenience/liquor store has very few affordable, healthy, and sustainable options. It does not carry fresh produce.

Student Food Co, Mason Hall (On Central Campus)
Recommended mode of transit: Walk or Bike
Price Range: 2 (mid-range)
*Not a full grocery store
Local/Organic Options: Some (some local, few organic)

Student Food Co. is a non-profit service run by students, open every Wednesday and Thursday from 10:30am-4pm. The produce they have in stock varies weekly, but they always have a good variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. They try to source from the Campus Farm when possible. This stand only sells produce, so you will have to shop elsewhere for other food items.

Ugo’s, Michigan Union
Recommended mode of transit: Walk, Bike, or take a blue bus
*Not a full grocery store
Price Range: 3 (expensive)
Local/Organic options: Some

The Union Ugo’s does not have a large selection of food. Ugo’s contains a lot of processed and packaged foods, but does have some hidden gems, such as Bizzy Lizzy flourless baked goods. The University is attempting to promote more local and sustainable options, some of which you can find here.

Stores within walking/biking distance of North Campus

Kroger, 2641 Plymouth Rd.
Recommended mode of transit: Walk, Bike, or Bus (from CCTC)
Price Range: 1 (inexpensive)
Local/Organic options: Some (many organic, limited local)
If you’re going to be shopping at Kroger, getting a Kroger Plus card (it’s free!) is a must. There are always deals that can end up saving you a lot of money, but only if you have the card. It is a pretty standard supermarket, with a huge selection of products (name-brand and otherwise), and lots of organic options. The store is located in the shopping center across the street from Northwood IV and the North Campus Research Complex (NCRC).

**Ugo’s, Pierpont Commons**  
Recommended mode of transit: Walk or Bike  
Price Range: 3 (expensive)  
*Not a full grocery store*  
Local/Organic Options: Some

This on-campus convenience store has pre-packaged and bulk snacks, prepared meals, baked goods, and pizza. There are a few local options, such as Ann Arbor Tortilla Factory chips, and a few organic frozen meals and snacks. They do not sell fresh produce. There is no sales tax for students.

**Way 1 Supermarket, 2789 Plymouth Rd.**  
Recommended mode of transit: Walk or Bus (from CCTC)  
Price Range: 1 (inexpensive)  
Local/Organic options: Few to none

Most of the products here are very inexpensive, notably the produce, meat, and grains (rice). Because this is an Asian grocery store, many items are not labeled in English, but there are many specialty items. The store is located in the shopping center across the street from Northwood IV and the North Campus Research Complex (NCRC). Parking is fairly difficult, so driving isn’t recommended.

**Stores further from campus**

**Aldi, 2340 Dexter Road**  
Recommended Transportation: Bus (from BTC)  
Price Range: 1 (inexpensive)  
Local/Organic Options: Few

Aldi is one of the most economical options in town. There are local and organic options for standard options (such as lettuce and tomatoes), but its main draw is its prices. Inventory is small and lacks specialty items. It can take a long time to travel there, so be sure to take that into consideration when planning your trip. Also, you will need to bring a quarter if you would like to use a shopping cart! A grocery
store nearby is Plum Market.

**Arbor Farms Market**, 2013 Stadium Blvd  
Recommended mode of transit: Bus (from BTC)  
Price range: 2 (mid-range)  
Local/Organic options: Many

Arbor Farms Market is easily accessible by bus, and it even has a covered bus stop next to it. It’s a smaller grocery store that tries to support local farmers and artisans, so you can easily find nut butters made by Michiganders, or breads and pastries from Zingerman’s and Crust. You may not be able to find more conventional, name-brand products, but in terms of ingredients, they’ll have what you need!

**Busch’s Fresh Food Market**, 2240 South Main Street  
Recommended Transportation: Bus (from CCTC)  
Price Range: 2 (mid-range)  
Local/Organic Options: Some

Busch’s is a standard supermarket. Their selection is diverse, they provide bike racks, and have a parking spot reserved for expecting mothers. It is located just past the U of M golf course.

**Hiller’s Market**, 3615 Washtenaw Avenue  
Recommended Transportation: Bus (from CCTC)  
Price Range: 2 (mid-range)  
Local/Organic Options: Some

Hiller’s has very easy bus access and a great breadth of item diversity, including many specialty items that are hard to find in other stores. They offer discounts for bringing bags, and a student discount for purchases greater than $25. It is located in the Arborland Shopping Center.

**Kroger**, 400 S Maple Rd  
Recommended mode of transit: Bus (from BTC)  
Price range: 1 (inexpensive)  
Local/Organic options: Some

Kroger is one of the most affordable grocery stores in the area, but make sure you get a free Kroger card to access their deals! You can find everything you need there, including
Meijer, 3145 Ann Arbor-Saline Rd.  
Recommended mode of transit: Bus (from BTC)  
Price Range: 1 (inexpensive)  
Local/Organic options: Some (many organic, limited local)

Meijer always has a lot of sales, and you don’t need to have a store card to take advantage of them, although joining their MPerks program will save you even more. It is a department store, so in addition to its huge selection of food products, there are also clothes, toiletries, cleaning supplies, and pretty much everything else you can think of. There is even an optical department, beauty salon, pharmacy, and Starbucks, among other things. One thing to note is it usually very busy and checkout lines can get long, especially in the afternoon. Meijer is close to Target and the Eisenhower location of Whole Foods. And now, CSG offers free shuttle service to Meijer on Sundays from 12am-4:30pm! Details on this FaceBook event: https://www.facebook.com/events/1764041710581856/

Plum Market - 375 North Maple Road  
Recommended Transportation: Bus (from BTC)  
Price Range: 3 (expensive)  
Local/Organic Options: Many

Plum Market is a small store with mostly organic and many local options. They also carry other eco-friendly products. There is a Zingerman’s Coffee House in the store, and coupon books distributed in the front. Another grocery store nearby is Aldi.

Target, Oak Valley Shopping Center, 2000 Waters Rd.  
Recommended mode of transit: Bus (from BTC)  
Price Range: 2 (mid-range)  
Local/Organic options: Few (some organic)

The grocery department here is fairly limited, especially in terms of fresh items like produce and meat. It is a department store and thus the grocery section is better if you are looking for a snack while shopping or a few miscellaneous items. Meijer is right across the street.

Trader Joe’s, 2398 E. Stadium Blvd  
Recommended mode of transit: Bike or Bus (from CCTC)  
Price Range: 2 (mid-range)  
Local/Organic options: Many
Although it’s a little bit out of the way, Trader Joe’s offers an enjoyable shopping experience with friendly employees, appealing displays, and samples! There are many healthy and organic options for very reasonable prices, and a wine and beer selection that is also extremely cheap. Though they lack big name brands, you should be able to find most ingredients here.

**Whole Foods, 990 W Eisenhower Pkwy**
Recommended mode of transit: Bus (from BTC)
Price range: 3 (expensive)
Local/Organic options: Many

If you are looking for local, organic, and other sustainable food options, you will find them here. While not as expensive as stores within walking distance of campus, it is pricier than other grocery stores and economical shopping can be difficult. This Whole Foods isn’t far from campus, but the bus ride might be a little long. Whole Foods has two locations near campus, so use Google Maps to determine which is closest to you.

**Whole Foods, 3135 Washtenaw Avenue**
Recommended Transportation: Bike or Bus (from CCTC)
Price Range: 3 (expensive)
Local/Organic Options: Many

If you are looking for local, organic, and other sustainable food options, you will find them here. While not as expensive as stores within walking distance of campus, it is pricier than other grocery stores and economical shopping can be difficult. The store is just a short bus or bike ride from campus. Whole Foods has two locations near campus, so use Google Maps to determine which is closest to you.
As college students, we know that the act of going to the grocery store and taking the time to sift through the store and shop for food takes a lot of time. With hectic class schedules, there are grocery delivery options that you can take into consideration.

**Delivice**
Delivice was founded in February 2014 and boasts that their mission is to “bridge convenience and accessibility by bringing quality groceries from local stores that you know and trust right to your doorstep” (Delivice). The website is very easy to use and they buy all of the groceries at Kroger’s in Ann Arbor. Furthermore, no matter how large your order is, the delivery fee is a flat $2.99. Their hours are Monday-Sunday from 9:00 AM - 9:00 PM, and they promise same-day-delivery before 5:00 PM. The two items that they will not deliver are alcohol and tobacco products.

**Wolverine Grocery**
Wolverine Grocery is similar to Delivice in that you can choose what groceries you receive online. This delivery service has a minimum order amount of $30.00 and orders need to be placed by 11:00 PM the day before your requested delivery date. Much like Delivice, the delivery fee is $2.99 for all deliveries under $100, but the fee is waived for orders over $100 (Wolverine Grocery). Another thing to note is that you have to be home when at the time you have requested to have your groceries delivered, you will be charged a $15 re-delivery fee.

An awesome feature of Wolverine Grocery is their Loyalty Program. The company rewards customers for repeat purchases, so when you have 5 orders under $100, you receive $5; when you have 5 orders over $100, you receive $10. The only downside to this program is that the rewards go into your account on the site and you cannot cash the money out to your bank account. Thus, Wolverine Grocery is encouraging you to purchase through their site more.

**Door to Door Organics**
Door to Door Organics offers a variety of delivery options of organic, sustainable, healthy foods. You can either choose to shop like you would at the grocery store, selecting individual items at your own discretion or choose to order one of their pre-made boxes. There are four sizes of pre-made boxes: bitty, small, medium, and large. They are priced at $24.99, $35.99, $42.99, and $59.99, respectively. Of all of the sizes, you can choose for your box to be fruits, vegetables, or a variety of the two. When you sign up and order these boxes, the site shows you what specific fruits or vegetables come in the package. You can swap things that you do not want, also. Furthermore, if you order four or more boxes to your house to share with friends, you can form a co-op with your friends and receive discounts.
Ann Arbor offers a wide selection of specialty grocery stores all over the city. Whether you are looking for a store that carries food you’re familiar with or you are looking to experiment with some culturally diverse products, these are some great places to start.

AFRICAN:
- Kasoa African Market - 3980 Platt Rd

ASIAN:
- Dong Yu China Market - 2767 Plymouth Rd
- Galleria Asian Market - 3111 Packard Rd
- Golam Produce Market - 3150 Packard Rd
- Hua Xing Asia Market - 2867 Washtenaw Ave.
- Hyundai Asian Market - 3893 Platt Rd
- Makkara Sushi & Japanese Grocery - 3014 Packard Rd
- Tsai Grocery - 3115 Oak Valley Dr
- Way 1 Supermarket - 2789 Plymouth Rd
- Manna International Foods & Gifts - 1149 Broadway St

EUROPEAN:
- Euro Market - 3108 Packard St

INDIAN:
- Bombay Grocers - 3022 Packard St
- Foods of India - 1143 Broadway St
- Om Market - 2713 Plymouth Rd
- Patel Brothers - 3426 Washtenaw Ave

LATIN:
- Brazamerica - 619 S Main St

MEDITERRANEAN:
- Mediterranean Market - 4019 Stone School Rd
- Aladdin’s Market - 3188 Packard St

MEXICAN:
- Tienda de La Libertad - 2231 W Liberty St

MIDDLE EASTERN:
- Jerusalem International Market - 1713 Plymouth Rd

COMBINATION/OTHER:
- ZZ’s Produce - 4092 Packard St
If you’re looking to get to a grocery store but you don’t have a car, don’t worry! There are two bus stations nearby where you can board a bus to a local grocery store, and you can swipe your MCard on any city bus for free fare! You can get to many of the area grocery stores by boarding at the Central Campus Transit Center at CC Little. However, all routes pass through the Blake Transit Center, which is located at 328 S 5th Ave, right across from Ann Arbor’s public library. Both bus stops are within comfortable walking distance of campus.

To plan your trip online, you can use Google Maps or the AATA Website. When you use Google Maps, be sure to select the bus icon! The plus side of using Google Maps is that it will tell you how long your trip will take, which parts of the trip you’ll need to walk, and which route to take. If you were going to the Kroger on Plymouth Road, for example, and searched for directions from CCL, Google Maps would tell offer you the option of taking one of the M Buses or AATA Route #2.

You can also use the AAATA (Ann Arbor Area Transit Authority) website (http://www.theride.org/). In the schedules, maps, & tools tab, you can find a trip planning tool and maps for every route the AAATA offers. It’s a little less easy to use than Google Maps, but either will provide you with reliable information on which buses to take to which grocery stores, how long the ride will take, and where to go to get on the bus. Just don’t forget your MCard!

Some, but not all, of the bus trips can get a little long. Consider bringing class readings on the bus to kill time, or go with a friend to make the trip more enjoyable.

Zipcar is another great option for transportation. The membership fee is $7 per month, with gas and car insurance included in the program. There are 16 locations on the University of Michigan campus that hosts Zipcars; a map of the locations is shown below. The rates for driving the car vary by day length, but
if you only need the Zipcar for a few hours, rates vary from $8-10 per hour.

**Ride-Sharing** is another great option to consider when you’re going shopping for food. People are extremely willing to let you ride along to the store if they are already going. Also, if you have a car, reach out to your roommates and friends to see if they would like to go with you!
Saving Money on Food

- **Make a budget** for yourself at the beginning of each month. Decide how much money you want to spend on food, and try your best to stick to it!
  - A useful personal budgeting tool: [https://www.mint.com/](https://www.mint.com/)
- If you really want to be strict about how much you spend on food, **withdraw a fixed amount of cash** and leave your credit/debit cards at home before heading to the grocery store.
- **MAIZE & BLUE** Cupboard gives out free bags of fresh produce and bread. Follow them on Facebook to stay up to date with their distribution dates and locations.
- **Eat out less.** Home-cooked meals are much cheaper and usually healthier than restaurant meals. A fast food meal is about 3 times more expensive than a healthy, home cooked meal. Cooking for yourself allows you to choose cheaper, healthier, and more sustainable ingredients, and learning to cook is a rewarding lifelong skill.
- Plan ahead with your roommates to **buy food in bulk** and split the cost.
- **Eat in season!** Food grows best during specific times of the year in different regions. When you buy fruit and vegetables that are grown locally, they will be cheaper, fresher, and have a lower carbon footprint than ones that have been flown in from around the world. Find out what’s in season in Michigan!
- When you buy produce in season, **freeze some to save for later.** Many fruits and vegetables can simply be frozen in ziploc bags and incorporated into recipes at a later date. You’ll avoid paying a higher price for out-of-season food. If you’re adventurous, you can learn how to can your food too! Here are directions for preserving food!
- You can **pick your own produce** when it is in season, usually for a lower price than you would pay at the grocery store. Here are participating farms in SE Michigan.
- **Cook meals in big batches when you can.** You can freeze the extra food and save it for later. These home-cooked frozen meals will be far cheaper and healthier than store bought frozen dinners. You can heat up small portions later when you’re in a hurry!
- **Eat less processed food.** Whole, raw foods like fruits, vegetables, dried grains, and legumes pack in more nutrition for the price. When you buy packaged foods like cereals or chips, you’re paying more for the processing.
- **Eat less meat.** Animal products require many more resources to produce (land, water, fossil fuels) and these costs get passed on to you. Adding in just a few vegetarian meals per week will save you a lot of money and do some good for the planet.
- **Don’t waste food!** Plan your meals so you only buy the food you need and can use the ingredients before they spoil. Find creative ways to incorporate your leftovers into new meals using resources like Big Oven.
- **Make things yourself.** If you’re willing to learn, many store-bought staples can be made at home for a fraction of the price. Yogurt, salad dressings, granola, and soup stocks are all cheaper when made at home.
● **Getting a deal while eating out does not save money.** If you get a $5 deal for lunch during the week, that adds up quickly and is $25 out of your grocery budget. Now, think about the savings if you packed a lunch. You could bring leftovers, make a sandwich, or have some fruit and a granola bar. That might cost you less than $5 for the entire week!

● If you are still looking for housing, consider the **Inter Cooperative Council**, which offers affordable housing with food costs included in the rent. Co-op members share all household responsibilities, including meal planning, grocery shopping, and cooking. Many houses are committed to purchasing sustainable, healthy, and affordable food! Visit their website to learn about co-op options!

● If you are passionate about supporting local farmers, consider signing up for a CSA! CSA stands for **Community Supported Agriculture**, and is a program where customers pay an upfront fee to farmers at the beginning of the growing season to support farm operations, and in return, receive a box of produce every week (big enough for at least 2 people to share)! Although the upfront cost can be high, the cost per week is cheaper than buying those local vegetables individually at the farmer’s market. Read more about CSAs and learn about the CSA options in Ann Arbor [here](#).
The information that we have provided for this guide is a lot of content to sift through and understand. From our research, we have discovered a lot of quick tips for planning for food, shopping for groceries, and just for food in general.

- When you’re only buying groceries every few weeks, or maybe every month, a good thing to know is how long produce lasts and when you should throw it away.

### Quick Tips for Food Planning & Grocery Shopping

According to the [Natural Resources Defense Council](https://www.nrdc.org/), "40% of food in the United States is wasted."

![produce shelf life & care guide](image)

- **Don’t waste food.** According to the [Natural Resources Defense Council](https://www.nrdc.org/), "40% of food in the United States is wasted."
Humans are basically wasting 40% of their grocery bill by not eating that food. Before you go shopping, take a look in the back of your fridge at the items that need to be used soon. Get creative with leftovers and look up recipe ideas on Pinterest. You could also make a weekly plan so you only buy what you’re going to eat!

- **Eat outside of the aisles.** When you’re at the grocery store, try to stay outside of the center aisles and focus on the produce section and the exterior walls. By doing this, you will avoid processed, packaged foods, and still get everything you need for a healthy diet!
- **Make a list and don’t go grocery shopping on an empty stomach.** When you make a grocery list, you will stay on task and avoid impulse buys. Furthermore, when you go shopping hungry, you will be tempted to buy unhealthy, unsustainable foods that you normally wouldn’t have bought. There are some really cool apps like MyList that help you make lists, categorize them by food group, and let you share your list with other people!
- **Don’t shop in a hurry.** Give yourself ample time to read labels and compare prices when you go shopping so that you get the best deals and know what you will be eating.
- **Don’t be tempted by sales or coupons.** Stick to your list if you have one and avoid buying sale items just because they are a good deal. Think to yourself, *am I actually going to eat this?*
- **Eat beans for protein.** Beans are a great source of protein and last much longer and are much cheaper than meat. There are often awesome deals for family size portions, so it’s easy to portion at home, then freeze the beans for later.
- **Buy frozen vegetables.** They are nearly as nutritious as fresh vegetables, but cost less and last longer.
- **Look for “day old” bread.** Most bakery sections of grocery stores (including Jimmy Johns) sell their day old bread at an extremely low cost, while the bread is still safe to eat.
- **Read nutrition labels.** Make use of the nutrition facts labels when you are grocery shopping. Compare the statistics between brands so that you know that you’re getting the best nutrition for the money. Look for foods with lower fat, cholesterol and sodium and pick nutritious foods with high fiber content.