



**20** NEW  
RECIPES

Designed to feed  
you and your family  
on a budget.

# BUDGET-FRIENDLY MEALS FOR GROWING FAMILIES

A wide-range of recipes created to feed your family, with a selection perfect for ages 0-5 to help encourage healthy eating habits for life from an early age. Created by Women's Voice's CIC from Longsight supported by a local Specialised Paediatric Dietitian.



Department  
for Education



MANCHESTER  
CITY COUNCIL



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**\* Note: all recipe suggestions serve 4, unless stated, and have been based on guidance around appropriate portion sizes.**

Shopping list prices updated & correct January 2025. Where alternative options are provided for recipe ingredients, we have included the price range per meal.

## LOCAL FAMILIES FIRST

**Manchester City Council remains dedicated to tackling the cost-of-living crisis, supporting thousands of families through challenging times, and building on our ongoing efforts to reduce inequality across the city.**

To create a fairer Manchester, we must ensure no child goes hungry, particularly during school holidays.

Through our Holiday Activity & Food Programme, we continue to invest millions in supporting local families, providing nutritious meals, and delivering engaging activities for children. In collaboration with over 350 Manchester-based clubs and organisations, we made a meaningful impact last year—offering free activities to 29,000 children and serving 153,000 nutritious meals during school holidays.

By making healthy, budget-friendly cooking more accessible and sharing affordable recipes, we empower families to make nutritious meals without stretching their budgets. Together, we're helping to turn 'unhealthy holidays' into opportunities for well-being and enjoyment.

A fairer Manchester starts with nourishing our communities. Because every family deserves access to good food and a healthier future.



Councillor Julie Reid

Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People, Manchester City Council

## HOLIDAY ACTIVITY & FOOD (HAF) PROGRAMME

**Hello and welcome to the HAF family recipe booklet.**

Who and what is HAF, you ask? The acronym stands for Holiday Activities and Food. This programme was established in 2018 to provide support to children who receive free school meals during school holidays.

The national HAF programme offers free holiday clubs that positively impact local children and young people. Attending our programmes ensures children eat healthily, stay active during school holidays, and participate in engaging activities that foster resilience, character development, well-being, and overall educational attainment.

Our sessions also provide a safe space for children to avoid social isolation, connect with schools and local services, and gain valuable knowledge about health and nutrition.

We aim to empower participating families by fostering a deeper understanding of nutrition and food budgeting. This booklet offers a collection of twenty-one nutritionally balanced recipes featuring meat, vegetarian options, and fish. These low-cost recipes are designed for you to cook at home with your family, promoting further education and understanding of healthy eating habits for everyone.

We want to demonstrate that delicious and varied meals can be prepared, cooked, and enjoyed without placing additional strain on your household budget.

We hope you enjoy cooking and savouring all of our recipes.

# FOOD FACTS

## PORTION SIZES

### What is a portion of food?

A portion is the amount of a food that you eat at one time, for example how much food you put on your plate at a meal or how much is in a packet.

### Why are portion sizes important?

The key to eating a balanced diet is to eat a wide variety of foods in appropriate amounts.

Making healthier choices and choosing to eat some foods more often, and in larger amounts, than others.

It is important to be aware of portion sizes, as eating too much or not enough of any type of food can increase your risk of health problems. This is because your body may be getting too much or too little of what it needs to stay healthy.

As every person is different, the recommended number of portions for each food will vary according to age, sex, size, health and other factors.



For more information and guidance on your recommended daily allowance, visit: [www.bda.uk.com/resource/food-facts-portion-sizes.html](http://www.bda.uk.com/resource/food-facts-portion-sizes.html)

## SUGAR

**Sugar is a type of carbohydrate, which provides calories (energy). In general, we eat too many free sugars in our diet, with sugar-sweetened drinks being one of the biggest concerns. Too many free sugars in our diet are linked to obesity and tooth decay.**

Sugar found naturally in milk, fruit and vegetables isn't classed as free sugar and therefore we don't need to limit the amount we eat. You should always read food labels and aim to eat food and drinks which are classed as low in sugar (some products will provide a traffic light summary, and a product which is 'red' should be eaten with caution and less often).

If you choose to eat sugary food or drinks, it's best to have them at mealtimes. Fresh fruit in between meals is a nutritious snack.

The free NHS food scanner app can help, you can scan your food and it can advise if high sugar and what to swap it with!



For more information visit: [www.bda.uk.com/resource/sugar.html](http://www.bda.uk.com/resource/sugar.html)

## HOW CAN I REDUCE MY SUGAR INTAKE?

- 1 Stop sugary breakfast cereals and choose something simple instead like Weetabix, porridge oats with fruit, a piece of toast, an omelette or Shreddies
- 2 Stop sugary drinks – this should be an easy one! Swap to water or milk
- 3 Try to eat fruit instead of having it in juices and smoothies
- 4 Watch out for packaged sauces, try to make your own using fresh ingredients (such as chopped tomatoes and vegetables) as this will be lower in sugar
- 5 No more sugary snacks such as sweets, cake, sugary yogurts and chocolate – choose fruit, natural yogurt topped with fruit, vegetables and dips, or wholegrain crackers instead as these will keep you fuller for longer



## SALT

### How much salt is it recommended we have in our diet?

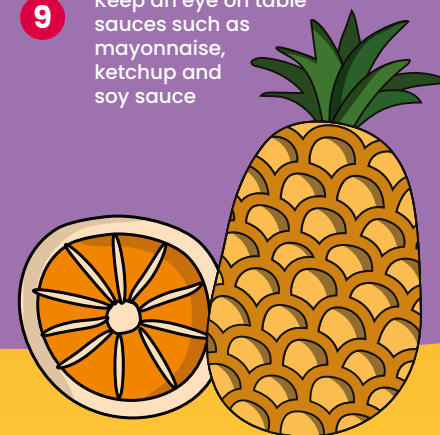
This is less than 1 teaspoon per day (5g). It is recommended that children do not have any added salt in their diet.

### Why?

Too much salt in the diet raises our blood pressure and can increase risk of heart disease and stroke. It is estimated that adults in the UK consume on average 9-12g of salt, which is over the recommended intake.

## HOW CAN I REDUCE MY SALT INTAKE?

- 1 Do not add salt when boiling pasta or vegetables
- 2 Choose 'no added salt' or 'reduced salt' tinned baked beans, stock cubes and soups
- 3 Try to use herbs and spices instead to strengthen the flavour in your food
- 4 Always taste food before adding any salt – you may find that you don't need it
- 5 If buying beans in salted water, rinse them before adding to your food
- 6 Reduce your intake of fast food, or ready meals and try to cook from fresh
- 7 Take the salt shaker off the table to stop you feeling tempted
- 8 Limit consumption of salty snacks (salted nuts or crisps). Try lightly salted or buy plain
- 9 Keep an eye on table sauces such as mayonnaise, ketchup and soy sauce



For more information visit: [www.bda.uk.com/resource/salt.html](http://www.bda.uk.com/resource/salt.html)



## HOW TO SHOP ON A BUDGET

Below we have provided a few top tips for shopping and cooking on a budget.

- ✓ Make a meal plan at the beginning of the week, use this to make a shopping list to make sure no food is wasted
- ✓ Batch cook and freeze extra portions so you can avoid convenience foods on a busy day
- ✓ When using meat, use half of the tray and add tinned beans to keep the protein (and fibre) content high and to make it go further
- ✓ Have some vegetarian days, vegetables tend to be lower in price than meat
- ✓ Frozen and tinned vegetables are just as nutritious as fresh!
- ✓ Be freezer smart – if buying meat or fish in bulk; freeze portions you won't use before the use-by date
- ✓ Tinned fish is cheaper than fresh fish and can be a nutritious addition to a meal

Are you skipping meals to make the weekly shop go further or so the kids can eat? Help is available.

**Call the free Cost of Living Advice Line on 0800 023 2692 (open Mon–Fri 9am–4.30pm)**

or find your local food bank or community grocer at [www.manchester.gov.uk/helpinghands](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/helpinghands)



## SHARIFA'S STIR-FRIED BROCCOLI

### Ingredients

1 onion, finely chopped  
2 tbsp oil  
Green chillis \*optional  
2 large tomatoes, diced  
¼ tsp turmeric  
330g frozen broccoli  
330g frozen cauliflower  
1 tin green lentils OR  
1 tin chickpeas  
200g rice

### Price

11p (frozen LIDL)  
2p (ASDA, ALDI or LIDL)  
11p for 3 (LIDL)  
33p (ASDA, LIDL)  
1p (Worldwide Foods)  
40p (LIDL)  
32p (ALDI)  
49p (ASDA, ALDI, LIDL)  
45p (ASDA)  
10p (LIDL)

### TOTAL

**£1.89, 47p per portion with lentils**  
**£1.99, 50p per portion with chickpeas**



### METHOD

1. Add finely chopped onion to a pan with a little oil and cook until softened
2. Add tomatoes, turmeric and green chilli if using
3. Add cauliflower and broccoli – it is likely that some water will come out of the vegetables, then put the lid and allow to steam until tender. If using fresh broccoli and cauliflower you will need to add 2 tablespoons of water before putting the lid on
4. Then, add chickpeas or lentils and stir through
5. Serve with rice



## SAUSAGE & STUFFING PIE

### Ingredients

½ pack stuffing mix	22p (LIDL)
1 onion, finely chopped	11p (frozen LIDL)
Splash of oil	1p (ASDA, ALDI or LIDL)
Sausages or veggie sausages, chopped into bitesize pieces (If using frozen veggie sausages, you will need to chop them after they have defrosted in your pan)	£1.49 for 8 (ASDA) £1.47 for Quorn frozen (ASDA)
320g frozen peas	35p (ASDA)
2 carrots, diced	22p (ASDA, ALDI or LIDL)
1 tbsp gravy granules	10p (ASDA)
Ready rolled puff or shortcrust pastry	79p (LIDL)

### Price

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£3.29 for pork sausages, £3.27 if using veggie – 82p per portion</b>
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### METHOD

1. Preheat oven to Gas Mark 4 / 180°C
2. Make the stuffing as per pack instructions, leave to soak on the side while cooking the filling
3. Add onion to pan with a splash of oil. Once translucent, add sausages
4. Stir constantly until the sausages start to brown. Then, pour the peas and chopped carrots over along with 300ml of gravy (made to a consistency you like)
5. You can either make one big pie (which is messier to serve) or use small individual pie cases
6. Put the filling in your desired dish, then, either crumble the stuffing over the top, or roll it into balls and place on the top before laying the pastry over and jabbing it a couple of times to create vents
7. Use two fingers and your thumb to 'crimp' the edges or a fork too squash the edges down – feel free to be creative!

## CHEESE & PEA MUFFINS

### Ingredients

400g potatoes, chopped into chunky chips	12p (ASDA)
4 eggs, beaten	72p (LIDL)
25ml milk	3p (ALDI, ASDA or LIDL)
320g frozen peas	32p (ASDA)
300g ham, chopped (optional) OR ½ bag cherry tomatoes ½ red pepper, thinly sliced	£1.69 (LIDL) 34p (ALDI) 16p (LIDL)
75g cheese, grated	41p (ASDA, ALDI, LIDL)
½ lettuce, sliced	47p (ALDI, ASDA or LIDL)
½ cucumber, sliced	47p (ALDI, ASDA or LIDL)

### Price

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£4.23, £1.06 per portion with ham £3.04, 76p per portion for veggie option</b>
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### METHOD

1. Preheat your oven to Gas Mark 4 / 180°C
2. You will need a muffin tray for this, preferably non-stick. If you don't have one you could use muffin cases, either paper or silicon would work fine. This recipe makes 8 muffins
3. Add your chips to a pan of water on the hob, bring to the boil for 8-10 minutes until it is tender but not quite ready to eat. Then spread them out on a baking tray and put in the oven. These will take about 20-25 minutes to cook so should be ready at the same time as your muffins
4. Beat eggs with milk in a jug
5. Share the peas and either ham or pepper and tomatoes out across the muffin cases and sprinkle cheese over the top. Then, pour the egg mixture over it
6. Put in the oven for around 15 minutes (6-7 minutes in the airfryer) or until the egg is set and golden on top and your chips are nice and crispy





## SHARIFA'S FISH SALAD

### Ingredients

400g boneless white fish fillets (e.g. cod / hake / basa), defrosted overnight and cut into bitesize pieces

½ tsp turmeric

4 large tomatoes, chopped

Lettuce, shredded

½ cucumber, cubed

1 onion (white or red), finely chopped

Green chillis, chopped finely  
\*optional depending on taste preference

Bunch of fresh coriander, shredded

Pinch of salt

200g rice OR wholemeal pitta to serve

Pinch of lemon and drizzle of oil to serve optional

Pinch of lemon and drizzle of oil to serve optional

### TOTAL

### Price

£1.92 (LIDL frozen)

3p (Worldwide foods)

49p (ALDI or ASDA)

79p (ALDI)

45p (ALDI, ASDA, LIDL)

11p (frozen LIDL)

11p for 3 (LIDL)

52p (ALDI or LIDL)

1p (ASDA)

10p (LIDL)  
33p (LIDL, ASDA, ALDI)

10p (LIDL)  
33p (LIDL, ASDA, ALDI)

11p (ALDI, LIDL, ASDA)

**£4.53 (£4.76 if you use pitta)**  
**£1.13 per portion (£1.19 with pitta)**



### METHOD

1. Coat the fish in turmeric (you can do this by putting the turmeric on a plate and then laying each fillet in it to coat), then pan fry or air fry it until cooked through and flakey. This will take about 7-8 minutes
2. Add tomatoes, onion, lettuce, chillis and cucumber to a bowl and toss with coriander. Season with salt to your taste
3. Add the fish to the vegetables and serve with your choice of pitta or rice

## ONE POT LASAGNE

### Ingredients

1 onion, finely chopped

Splash of oil

250g beef mince OR 250g turkey mince  
OR 250g plant-based mince

2 peppers, diced

1 tin chopped tomatoes

1 tin chickpeas

300g lasagne sheets

75g cheese, grated

### Price

11p (frozen LIDL)

1p (ASDA, ALDI or LIDL)

£1.25 ASDA OR £1.25 ASDA  
OR £1 ASDA

64p (LIDL)

39p (LIDL)

49p (ALDI, ASDA, LIDL)

45p (LIDL)

41p (ASDA, ALDI, LIDL)

### TOTAL

**£3.74, 93p per portion meaty**  
**£3.49, 87p per portion veggie**



### TOP TIPS:

Warming meal!

Children will love to SNAP those lasagne sheets!

Can swap beef mince for chicken, turkey or vegetarian

### METHOD

1. Fry onion with a splash of oil in a pan, once translucent add your mince and break up with the side of your spoon
2. Once it starts to brown, add the chopped peppers and your tin of chopped tomatoes. Allow to simmer for 20 minutes or until the peppers are soft and the mince is cooked
3. Then, snap the lasagne sheets in half and submerge in the meat sauce. Keep doing this until you have used up all your lasagne sheets
4. Cover the pan with a lid (or foil if you don't have a lid) and leave to simmer for 10 minutes
5. Once the lasagne sheets are cooked, sprinkle cheese over the top and replace the lid until it has melted
6. Serve with a side of peas, if you like

## EVERYTHING FRIED RICE

### Ingredients

200g rice

Splash of oil

1 onion, finely chopped

3 cloves garlic, crushed

Ham, chopped OR  
Bacon, chopped OR  
Tofu, squashed and diced

320g frozen peas

320g frozen sweetcorn

2 eggs, beaten

### Price

10p (LIDL)

1p (ASDA, ALDI or LIDL)

11p (frozen LIDL)

8p fresh (ALDI, LIDL)  
5p frozen (ASDA)

£1.69 for ham (LIDL)  
£1.45 for bacon (ASDA, ALDI, LIDL)  
£1.75 for tofu (LIDL)

32p (ASDA)

32p (ASDA)

36p (LIDL)

### TOTAL

**£2.99, 75p per portion ham**  
**£2.84, 71p per portion bacon**  
**£3.05, 76p per portion tofu**



### METHOD

1. Cook the rice as per packet instructions
2. While it is cooking, heat a small amount of oil in a pan and add onion and garlic. Once softened add bacon, ham or tofu
3. Wait until it has crisped up before adding the frozen peas and sweetcorn, and then the drained cooked rice
4. Once the veggies are cooked – this should only take a few minutes, stir the beaten egg through the rice
5. Serve!



**TOP TIP:**  
Excellent snack,  
lunchbox  
or a weaning  
food to make  
with the  
whole family

## FAHIME'S MANTU (DUMPLINGS)

### For the dough:

Ingredients	Price
200g plain flour	11p (ASDA, ALDI, LIDL)
1 tsp salt	1p (ASDA)
Water	-
1 egg	18p (LIDL)

  
**1 PORTION  
OF PLANT  
PROTEIN**

### METHOD

- Put the flour and salt in a large bowl
- Beat the egg in a cup, add a splash of water. Make a well in the centre of the bowl of flour and add the egg and water mixture. Bring it together using a knife (or your hands if children are involved!)
- You may need to add some more water to form a firm dough
- Roll out thinly on a floured surface and cut into around 15 x 9-10cm squares

### For the filling:

Ingredients	Price
350g minced meat (lamb / beef / plant based)	£3.49 for lamb (ALDI) £1.74 beef (ASDA) £1.40 plant based (ASDA)
1 onion, finely chopped	11p (frozen LIDL)
2 cloves garlic, crushed	6p fresh (ALDI, LIDL) 3p frozen (ASDA)
Black pepper to taste	1p (Worldwide Foods)
1 tsp coriander	5p (Worldwide Foods)
Pinch salt	1p (ASDA)

  
**2 OF YOUR  
5 A DAY**

### METHOD

- Fry the meat with garlic and onion for 3 minutes in an oiled pan until golden. Then add all spices and continue to stir until the meat is cooked
- Then, add 1 tablespoon of the meat mixture to the centre of each of the dough squares. Use a mug of water on the side to wet the tip of your finger and run it around the edge of the dough, then bring the corners up together to form a dumpling. Traditionally these must be square shaped to be able to have the name 'mantu'. Squeeze tightly to prevent any of the filling escaping
- Steam for 6-7 minutes until piping hot in the centre

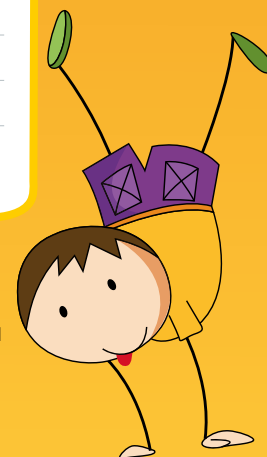
### For the sauce:

Ingredients	Price
1 onion, finely chopped	11p (frozen LIDL)
3 cloves garlic, crushed	9p fresh (ALDI, LIDL) / 5p frozen (ASDA)
Pinch pepper	1p (ASDA)
Pinch of salt	1p (Worldwide Foods)
½ tsp chilli powder	3p (Worldwide Foods)
1 tsp turmeric	5p (Worldwide Foods)
1 tin green lentils, drained	49p (ASDA, ALDI, LIDL)
1 tbsp tomato purée	4p (LIDL)
<b>Total</b>	<b>Dumplings (inc. beef filling): £2.34 Sauce: 63p = £2.97, 74p per portion</b>

**TOP TIP:**  
This is  
traditionally  
served on  
top of yogurt

### METHOD

- Fry onion and garlic together
- Add spices and stir constantly for 2-3 minutes, before stirring in the lentils, tomato purée and a splash of water
- Allow it to simmer until the dhal is tender, you may want to add more water if you would prefer a thinner sauce, or not if you like your dhal thick







## BUTTERNUT SQUASH & FETA PASTRY PARCELS

**TOP TIPS:**  
A lovely recipe to cook with children & good for lunchboxes to be eaten cold



Ingredients	Price
½ 500g bag frozen diced butternut squash	49p (ALDI)
2 peppers, diced	64p (LIDL)
1 tbsp pesto	15p (ALDI, ASDA, LIDL)
Ready rolled puff or shortcrust pastry	79p (LIDL)
100g / Half block of feta cheese, crumbled	45p (ASDA, ALDI, LIDL)
½ lettuce, sliced	47p (ALDI, ASDA or LIDL)
½ cucumber, sliced	47p (ALDI, ASDA or LIDL)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£3.46, 87p per portion</b>

### METHOD

- Preheat the oven to Gas Mark 4 / 180°C
- In a pan, put your butternut squash and frozen diced peppers. Stir while it defrosts and once it starts to sizzle add the spoon of pesto and a couple of tablespoons of water
- Let the water evaporate as the veggies become nice and soft. Once done, allow this filling to cool – if you add warm filling to your pastry it will melt
- When your veggies are cooled, roll your pastry out on a floured surface until it is a little thinner and big enough to cut into 8 portions. Use a knife to cut in half, and then each half into 4
- Then, put 2 tablespoons of the veggie mixture into one half of each pastry square, crumble the feta over the top and then fold the pastry over to make a parcel – you can make any shape you like
- You could use water to help the edges stick together, press gently with a fork to give them an attractive pattern and brush them with milk so they go golden when cooked
- Put in the airfryer for around 10–11 minutes, or the preheated oven for 15–20 minutes or until the pastry is cooked and golden brown. You may need to do them in batches in your airfryer
- Serve with salad

## TUNA & BROCCOLI PASTA BAKE

Ingredients	Price
600ml milk	39p (ASDA, ALDI or LIDL)
Pinch of black pepper	1p (Worldwide Foods)
40g butter	32p (ASDA or LIDL)
40g plain flour	2p (ASDA, ALDI or LIDL)
75g cheese, grated	41p (ASDA, ALDI, LIDL)
300g pasta	25p (LIDL)
330g frozen broccoli	40p (LIDL)
2 tins tuna, drained	£1.30 (LIDL)
2 large tomatoes, sliced	33p (ASDA, ALDI)
<b>Total</b>	<b>£3.43, 86p per portion</b>



### METHOD

- Preheat oven to Gas Mark 4 / 180°C
- Add the milk, pepper, butter, flour and grated cheese (saving 1 tbsp of the cheese) to a pan over a low heat. Continuously stir this with either a whisk or a fork to stop any lumps forming. Milk burns easily so keep an eye on this
- In a large baking dish, pour the pasta and broccoli, spreading the broccoli out evenly. Then flake the tuna over the dish of pasta
- Once the cheese sauce has thickened, pour it over the pasta in the dish. Add the sliced tomatoes in any pattern you would like, then sprinkle the remaining cheese on top
- Put in the oven until the pasta is cooked through – around 20 minutes, and the top is bubbling and golden

## SHARIFA'S YOGURT CHICKEN SALAD

Ingredients	Price
Chicken breasts, chopped into bitesize pieces	£1.70 (ASDA, frozen)
3 large potatoes, chopped into bitesize pieces	15p (ASDA)
½ cucumber, sliced	45p (ALDI, ASDA, LIDL)
1 onion, finely chopped	11p (frozen LIDL)
2 carrots, diced	22p (ASDA, ALDI or LIDL)
4 large tomatoes, chopped	66p (ASDA, ALDI)
½ tsp cumin	2p (ASDA)
½ tsp chilli powder	3p (Worldwide Foods)
1 tin chickpeas	49p (ASDA, ALDI, LIDL)
Pinch of salt	1p (ASDA)
4 tbsp natural yogurt	51p (ASDA)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£4.35, £1.08 per portion</b>



**DID YOU KNOW:**  
Swap the chicken in this high in fibre meal, for an extra tin of beans to make a tasty vegetarian option

### METHOD

- Bring 2 pans of water to the boil. Put the potatoes in one and the chicken in the other. Cover and bring both down to a simmer – leave until chicken cooked (around 15 minutes or until white all the way through) and the potatoes are tender (10–15 minutes)
- Meanwhile, put all vegetables in a large bowl and add spices, chickpeas and salt to taste
- Once cooked, drain both the chicken and the potatoes and add these to the bowl of vegetables along with the yogurt, stir until all coated in the yogurt mixture – you can add milk to loosen if too thick
- Serve!



## YASMIN'S BLACK CHICKPEAS

Ingredients	Price
300g black chickpeas, soaked overnight OR 2 tins of chickpeas	75p (ASDA) 90p (ASDA, ALDI, LIDL)
1 tbsp oil	1p (ASDA, ALDI or LIDL)
1 onion, finely chopped	11p (frozen LIDL)
4 cloves garlic, chopped	12p fresh (ALDI, LIDL) 7p frozen (ASDA)
1 tsp ginger and garlic paste	2p (Worldwide Foods)
2 large tomatoes, chopped	33p (ASDA, ALDI)
¼ tsp turmeric	1p (Worldwide Foods)
½ tsp coriander powder	2p (Worldwide Foods)
½ tsp cumin	2p (ASDA)
½ tsp chilli powder	3p (Worldwide Foods)
2 large potatoes, cooked (can be microwaved for around 7-8 minutes and left to cool)	3p (Worldwide Foods)
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1.56, 39p per portion</b>

### METHOD

1. Drain your soaked chickpeas and then put in a large pan of water. Bring to the boil and simmer them with the lid on until plump and tender (this can take 1-2 hours)
2. If you haven't got time to soak and boil your chickpeas you can always use the tinned variety that are already cooked – although black chickpeas are harder to find!
3. Heat oil in a pan, add onion and garlic until brown
4. Add ginger and garlic paste, plus tomatoes and all the spices. Cook together until the oil rises to the surface of the pan
5. Add chickpeas to pan and cover, leave for 6-7 minutes
6. Break up potato (can use a knife or bare hands to crumble it – this is a good step to involve children in cooking!)
7. Serve with rice or salad for a smaller meal



## KABULI PULAO

Ingredients	Price
1 tbsp oil	1p (ASDA, ALDI or LIDL)
500g lamb chunks	£3.99 (ASDA)
2 onions, finely chopped	22p (frozen LIDL)
1 tsp garam masala	5p (ASDA)
2x Yakhni pulao cubes/stock cubes	37p (Worldwide Foods)
Pinch of salt	1p (Worldwide Foods)
1 tbsp sugar	2p (ALDI)
200g rice	10p (LIDL)
2 carrots, cut into thin sticks	22p (ASDA, ALDI or LIDL)
50g raisins	12p (ASDA)
<b>Total</b>	<b>£5.11, £1.27 per portion</b>

### METHOD

1. Heat oil in a pan, add the lamb and one of the chopped onions and stir for 2-3 minutes until browned. Then add spices, break up the Yakhni pulao cubes up into the pan and pour over 1 full kettle of boiling water. Cover and leave for 1 hour
2. Once the meat is cooked, fry the other onion in a pan. Remove the meat from the pan of water (but save the water on the side for now)
3. Add the meat to the pan with the onion, along with a pinch of each salt and sugar
4. Stir until golden brown
5. Then add water from side and bring to the boil, add rice and cover
6. Raisins and carrot sticks can be fried in a separate pan and once cooked and crispy sprinkle over the lamb and rice, serve

## ZAINAB'S PULAO CHICKEN

Ingredients	Price
1 tbsp oil	1p (ASDA, ALDI or LIDL)
4 onions, finely chopped	44p (frozen LIDL)
400g chicken, chopped	£1.83 for fresh drum fillets (ALDI)
1 ½ tbsp garam masala	20p (ASDA)
1 tbsp cumin	12p (ASDA)
1 tbsp coriander	10p (Worldwide Foods)
200g rice	10p (LIDL)
320g frozen peas	32p (ASDA)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£2.79, 70p per portion</b>

### METHOD

1. Fry onion in oil until golden brown, you may need to do this in batches as there will be a lot! Add chopped chicken and stir until all browned. Then add spices and cook for 5 minutes
2. Add a kettle of boiling water, rice and cover. Leave to cook
3. Add peas, stir through
4. Once the rice is cooked and tender, and the peas are warmed through – serve!

**TOP TIP:**  
This warming meal can also be served with salad if you like

**1 OF YOUR 5 A DAY**

## NAZIA'S WARJALAY (GREEN RICE)

### Ingredients

1 tbsp oil	1p (ASDA, ALDI or LIDL)
2 onions, finely chopped	22p (frozen LIDL)
Green leafy vegetables, shredded: 450g frozen spinach Mustard leaves Fresh coriander	47p (ALDI) £1.25 (Worldwide Foods) 52p (ALDI or LIDL)
1 tsp garam masala	5p (ASDA)
2 x Yakhni Pulao cubes / stock cubes	37p (Worldwide Foods)
200g pudding rice	56p (ASDA)
1 tbsp double cream	6p (ALDI or LIDL)

**Total**

**£3.51, 88p per portion**



### METHOD

1. Fry onions in a little oil until golden brown
2. Add all the greens and stir, add a splash of water
3. Add spices and Yakhni pulao cubes, break up into the water
4. Once the water starts to boil and the oil rises to the surface, add the pudding rice and simmer on a low heat for 20 minutes, stirring every now and again
5. Once the water is absorbed and the rice is cooked, put into bowls to serve and add a tablespoon of double cream to stir through

## SHARIFA'S LENTIL SOUP

### Ingredients

1 mug of lentils – red or yellow (soaked in water overnight) OR use 2 tins precooked lentils or chickpeas – drained	1p (ASDA, ALDI or LIDL)
2 tbsp oil	2p (ASDA, ALDI, LIDL)
1 onion, finely chopped	11p (frozen LIDL)
8-9 cloves garlic, crushed	24p fresh (ALDI, LIDL) 15p frozen (ASDA)
1 pinch turmeric	1p (Worldwide Foods)
Sprinkle of salt	1p (ASDA)
½ tsp chilli powder	3p (Worldwide Foods)
½ tsp coriander	2p (Worldwide Foods)
½ tsp cumin	2p (ASDA)
330g broccoli OR 330g frozen mixed veg	40p (LIDL) 33p (ASDA, ALDI, LIDL)
Bread	2p per slice (ALDI or LIDL) 17p for 2 slices each

**Total**

**£1.85, 46p per portion if using tinned lentils**



Full of fibre,  
warming  
meal

### METHOD

1. If using dried lentils or chickpeas, after soaking them overnight (or for 2-3 hours) add them to a large pan and cover with 2 mugs boiling water. Bring to the boil over a medium heat until softened. If using tinned, then this step can be skipped
2. Heat oil in pan, add chopped onion and garlic. Fry together until translucent
3. Add spices and continue to stir constantly to make sure they don't stick
4. Add broccoli or mixed veg and mix. Cover with water
5. Once the lentils are softened, tip into the pan with vegetables and cover for 4-5 minutes.
6. Serve with bread



## GRATED TOFU RICE LETTUCE WRAPS

### Ingredients

200g rice	10p (LIDL)
1 onion, finely chopped	11p (frozen LIDL)
1 tbsp oil	1p (ASDA, ALDI or LIDL)
200g block tofu, grated	87p (LIDL)
1 tsp paprika	5p (ALDI or LIDL)
½ tsp chilli powder	3p (Worldwide Foods)
½ bag frozen peppers (300g approx.)	80p (ASDA)
1 tin kidney beans, drained	33p (LIDL)
1 tin chopped tomatoes	39p (LIDL)
Lettuce	42p (ASDA, ALDI, LIDL)
75g cheese, grated	41p (ASDA, ALDI, LIDL)
4 tbsp natural yogurt	51p (ASDA)

**TOTAL**

**£4.03, £1 per portion**



### METHOD

1. Cook the rice as per packet instructions, whilst preparing the rest of this dish
2. Fry the onion in a little oil, add the tofu and stir until it starts to catch and go a little crispy. Then, add half of the spices, stir for 5 minutes more before putting in a plate on the side. Then, tip the frozen peppers into the pan and add the remaining spices, stir until the peppers have started to sizzle
3. Add the kidney beans and pour the chopped tomatoes over the top. Allow to simmer while all the flavours develop
4. Once the sauce appears thick, add the cooked rice, tofu and stir it through
5. This can be served as it is, with a spoonful of yogurt and cheese on top or you can use lettuce leaves as 'wraps' – which is an excellent way to encourage children to eat their greens!





## ROASTED VEGETABLE & BEAN PESTO PASTA

Ingredients	Price
1 onion, sliced	11p (ASDA, ALDI)
½ bag frozen peppers (300g approx.)	80p (ASDA)
2 tbsp pesto	16p (ASDA, LIDL or ALDI)
1 tin chopped tomatoes	39p (LIDL)
1 tin cannellini beans, drained	49p (ASDA, ALDI, LIDL)
300g pasta	25p (LIDL)
75g cheese, grated	41p (ASDA, ALDI, LIDL)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£2.61, 65p per portion</b>

### METHOD

- Preheat oven to Gas Mark 4 / 180°C
- Put onions and peppers into a baking dish and shake from side to side to ensure spread out evenly
- Put in the centre of the oven. After 10 minutes add the pesto and stir through
- After a further 10 minutes add the beans and chopped tomatoes and stir through
- Then, boil the pasta as per packet instructions. Once cooked, drain and then add into the roasting dish and stir through until the pasta is coated with the tomatoey sauce
- Serve with grated cheese on top, if you like!



## SHARIFA'S WHITE FISH IN SPINACH

Ingredients	Price
Splash of oil	1p (ASDA, ALDI or LIDL)
1 onion, finely chopped	11p (frozen LIDL)
3 cloves garlic, crushed	16p (ASDA, LIDL or ALDI)
1 tsp coriander	39p (LIDL)
½ tsp turmeric	49p (ASDA, ALDI, LIDL)
½ tsp chilli powder	25p (LIDL)
Boneless white fish fillets (e.g. cod / hake / basa), defrosted overnight and cut into chunks	41p (ASDA, ALDI, LIDL)
½ bag frozen spinach (approx. 450g)	47p (ALDI)
200g rice	10p (LIDL)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£2.61, 65p per portion</b>

**TOP TIPS:**  
Swap your fish to chickpeas if you are a vegetarian

This is an excellent weaning food (if you reduce the chilli) as it is so important to introduce vegetables as early as possible to children

### METHOD

- Add oil to a pan on a medium heat, add the chopped onion and garlic and stir until translucent
- Add the spices and continue to stir to ensure doesn't stick
- Add fish to pan and 2 tablespoons water. Cover with lid for 3 minutes
- Add spinach to pan and replace lid allowing it to cook down to produce a green sauce. This may take around 15-20 minutes, you can continue to add water if it looks like it is drying out
- Once cooked, serve with rice







## FRUITY MILK JELLY



Ingredients	Price
300g frozen berries of your choice	£1.42 (LIDL)
285ml milk	19p (ASDA, ALDI, LIDL)
135g jelly cubes	85p (ALDI)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£2.46, 62p per portion</b>

### METHOD

1. Arrange your berries in your jelly mould(s)
2. Put your jelly cubes in a jug, pour 285ml boiling water over them and stir until melted. Leave to the side until it is completely cool (or the milk will curdle)
3. Once cool, add the jelly slowly to your milk
4. Stir, pour over your berries and put in the fridge to set!

• Please note, acidic fruits such as pineapple and orange will cause the jelly not to set



## BANANA BREAD (SERVES 8)

**TOP TIP:**  
A fun simple recipe to cook with children

Ingredients	Price
140g butter, softened	£1.75 (ALDI or LIDL)
140g sugar	15p (ALDI, LIDL)
2 eggs, beaten	36p (LIDL)
2 ripe bananas, mashed (save a few slices for decoration)	31p (ALDI)
140g self-raising flour	7p (ASDA, ALDI or LIDL)
Splash of milk (if needed)	2p (ASDA, ALDI or LIDL)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£2.64, serves 8</b>

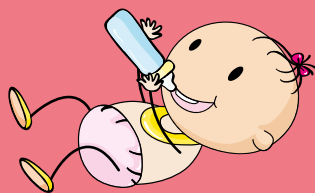
**TOP TIP:**  
You could add chocolate chips or raisins, if you have them

### METHOD

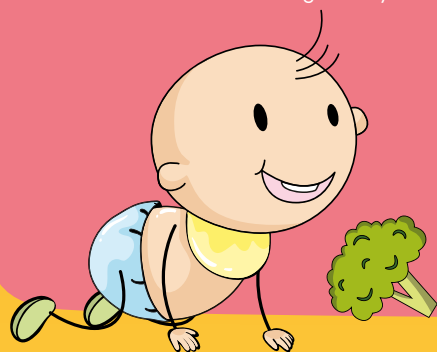
1. Preheat the oven to Gas Mark 3 / 160°C
2. Beat together the butter and sugar until pale and fluffy
3. Add the beaten eggs and the mashed banana followed by the flour. If the mixture at this point is stiff and difficult to stir, you can add a splash of milk to loosen it up. You might not need to do this if your bananas are big!
4. Pour into a small loaf tin. Bake in the oven for 35-40 minutes or until a knife comes out clean and the top is springy and golden
5. If you saved some slices of banana for decoration, place these on the top of the cake once it has been in the oven for around 10 minutes



# WEANING TOP TIPS



- ✓ It is recommended to wait until 6 months to commence solids with your baby, try to wait until they are at least 17 weeks old and can sit supported with good head control
- ✓ Stay calm! Try to keep mealtimes a positive experience to spend time with your baby. Making positive eating noises can help to encourage them to eat - 'yum!'
- ✓ If your baby is having 500ml of formula milk they do not yet need to have a multivitamin, breastfed babies require a vitamin D supplement every day that should continue throughout weaning
- ✓ Don't worry if most of it ends up on your baby's face (and the floor!) to start with, the early weeks of weaning are all about exploring tastes and textures. Try to resist the urge to wipe their face too often and let them explore at their own pace
- ✓ Introduce green vegetables and savoury flavours as early as possible to prevent fussy eating. Soft boiled broccoli makes an excellent finger food
- ✓ Praise your baby for all interaction with food (licking, sniffing, touching, tasting) and try to ignore any negative behaviour at the table
- ✓ Initial weaning foods tend to be fruits and vegetables that don't have a lot of energy in them, so try to keep your baby's milk intake the same by offering a few tastes of food 1-2 times a day when they aren't tired, hungry or upset. Remember the first experiences of food should be kept as positive as possible
- ✓ Keep mealtimes to 20 minutes or less, even if they haven't finished their meal - this prevents meals becoming stressful for both you and your baby
- ✓ Try to eat as a family, young children learn by copying and will follow your lead. You will often find that appetite increases once starting nursery
- ✓ When they get a little older, involving children at mealtimes - even if simply putting the cutlery on the table or stirring the meal - can encourage a positive relationship with food and a healthy appetite
- ✓ Always put vegetables on your child's plate. Even if they do not always eat them, repeated exposed can encourage them to eventually try them
- ✓ No force feeding - this can cause a feeding aversion



# FUN, FREE OR LOW-COST WAYS TO KEEP YOUR LITTLE ONE ACTIVE AND ENGAGED

**Manchester is packed with exciting opportunities for families with children aged 0-5 to move, play and explore together.**

From toddler-friendly cycling sessions and buggy-friendly walking routes to BMX, park play sessions and early years running events, there's something for every family.

Whether you're discovering your local green space, joining a parent-and-child class, or simply getting outdoors for a stroll, our activities are designed to support physical development, spark curiosity and encourage healthy habits from the very start.

To find out what's happening near you and start your active family journey today, visit:

**[mcractive.com/0-5s/](http://mcractive.com/0-5s/)**



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# LOW-COST & FREE ACTIVITY FINDER



**Manchester Active is dedicated to making our city a thriving, healthier and more active place.**

We want to encourage every Mancunian to move more and give things a go. Ensuring access to free and low-cost opportunities to be more active is available to all. It's important to so many people and families across our city that we make it easier for everyone to get involved, regardless of age or income.

MCRactive.com offers a variety of affordable options to get your heart rate up.

You can explore classes, walking & cycling, sports, swimming, outdoor activities, health and wellbeing, events and much more – all designed to fit your budget and lifestyle.

We believe that everyone deserves the opportunity to participate in physical activity. Our free and low-cost programs promote a healthy lifestyle and a sense of community, making Manchester a vibrant and active place to live.

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## 2024 HAF IN MANCHESTER



**29,000 KIDS**  
ENJOYING FREE SCHOOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITY

**153,000**  
**HOT MEALS**

DELIVERED TO  
LOCAL KIDS  
DURING THE  
HOLIDAYS



**3,900**  
**FREE**  
**ACTIVITIES**  
ACROSS MANCHESTER

WORKING WITH  
**110**  
**ACTIVITY**  
**PROVIDERS**



# ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Thousands of  
**FREE**  
BENEFITS-RELATED  
KIDS' ACTIVITIES  
IN MANCHESTER

**Eligibility checks have changed and the registration system now automatically recognises those who are eligible for benefits related free school meals.**

Currently all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 can get free school meals whatever your income. But, if you receive one of the qualifying incomes (see below) you will need to register for benefit related free school meals in order for the booking system to recognise that your child is eligible.

**Your child may qualify for free school meals if you get any of the following:**

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- The guaranteed part of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (if your annual gross income is £16,190 or less and you don't get Working Tax Credit)
- Working Tax Credit run-off after you come off Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit that you applied for on, or after, 1 April 2018. As long as your household income is less than £7,400 a year after tax, not including any benefits
- You may also qualify if you are an asylum seeker, or if a child receives any of these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian

## HERE'S WHAT TO DO NEXT:

- 1 Register for benefits-related free school meals
- 2 Create a family MCRactive Go account
- 3 Find and book a session on the activity finder



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BENEFITS-RELATED  
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SCHOOL MEALS

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DOWNLOAD THE APP





## ABOUT THE RECIPE CREATORS



Lucy is a highly Specialised Paediatric Dietitian with nearly a decade of experience working in the NHS. Although she began her career with adults at Salford Royal Hospital, her focus quickly shifted to paediatrics, where she has developed a particular passion for working with children and families. She is currently based at the largest children's hospital in the UK, supporting parents to ensure their children meet their growth and development potential.

In her previous role setting up the dietetic service for Ardwick and Longsight Primary Care Network, Lucy worked across ten GP practices to support residents to make changes to their diet, one positive step at a time. During this period, she also created accessible, nutritious recipes for local food banks. This experience reinforced her dedication to making healthy eating affordable and achievable for everyone, regardless of budget or cooking ability.

Though Lucy's expertise spans from clinical dietetics to community-based nutrition, she is particularly passionate about the weaning period. She sees this as a critical time for children to develop a positive relationship with food that will support healthy habits throughout their lives. Her recipes reflect this focus, with practical tips on which dishes are most suitable for weaning babies and which ones are fun to cook with children.

This recipe book combines Lucy's professional knowledge with her love for cooking, providing easy-to-follow meals that are both nourishing and delicious. Using these recipes, every meal is an opportunity to nurture not only the body but a lifelong love of food.

**Lucy Blackstone**  
Specialised Paediatric Dietitian



## WOMEN'S VOICES CIC

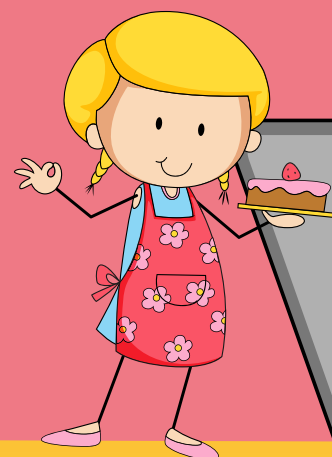
Women's Voices is a not-for-profit organisation based in the Longsight area of Manchester. We work with women seeking asylum, refugees, and other vulnerable women from diverse backgrounds by providing a platform for them to meet in a safe and accessible environment.

Women's voices offer training and activities to the women to enable them to learn and develop skills, to build up their resilience and confidence, and to encourage their independence.

Their mission is to enable women to achieve empowerment, equality, and inclusion, bringing them together in safe and non-judgemental spaces to build strong relationships that help them grow in confidence and engage more fully in community life.

Women's voices aim to break the cycle of deprivation amongst Black, Asian, Minority, Ethnic, Refugee (BAMER) women, to challenge the barriers that prevent them from reaching their full potential, and change the way that women are viewed within their own communities, and in wider society; to achieve empowerment, equality and inclusion in society.

The organisation offers a range of activities and training opportunities, full details of which can be found on their website [womensvoices.org.uk](https://www.womensvoices.org.uk)





## NOTES / IDEAS



## NOTES / IDEAS

DON'T FORGET  
TO SHARE YOUR  
CREATIONS  
WITH US!



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