

\$45–\$50 Starter Pantry List

Grains & Starches (foundation + filling)

- Long-grain brown rice (5 lb) – ~\$5
- Old-fashioned oats (42 oz) – ~\$4
- Whole grain Pasta (2 lb) – ~\$3
- Whole Grain flour (5 lb) – ~\$3
- Quinoa (2 lb) – ~\$3

Subtotal: ~\$17

Proteins (budget-friendly & versatile)

- Dry beans (pinto or black, 2 lb) – ~\$3
- Dry lentils (1 lb) – ~\$2
- Canned tuna or salmon (2 cans) – ~\$3
- Peanut butter or sunflower seed butter – ~\$3

Subtotal: ~\$11

Vegetables & Fruits (shelf-stable)

- Canned tomatoes (2 cans) – ~\$3
- Canned corn or green beans (2 cans) – ~\$2
- Applesauce or canned fruit (1 large can) – ~\$2

Subtotal: ~\$7

Fats, Flavor & Essentials (small amounts = big impact)

- Cooking oil (olive) – ~\$4
- Smoked Paprika – ~\$1.25
- Black pepper – ~\$1.25
- Garlic powder or onion powder – ~\$1.25
- Soy sauce or vinegar – ~\$1.25

Subtotal: ~\$11

Estimated Total

\$46–\$50, depending on store and brand choices.

What This Pantry Can Make

- Rice & beans (multiple styles)
- Lentil soup or stew



- Tuna pasta or patties
- Oatmeal (sweet or savory)
- Flatbreads or simple baked goods
- Tomato-based sauces and soups

\$15 Fridge Add-On Essentials

Item	Est. Cost	Why It Matters
Eggs (1 dozen)	~\$3	Affordable, complete protein for any meal
Milk or plant milk (½–1 gallon)	~\$3	Calcium, vitamin D, cooking + drinking
Carrots (2 lb bag)	~\$2	Long-lasting, sweet, versatile
Onion (3 lb bag)	~\$2	Flavor base for nearly every dish
Cabbage (1 head)	~\$2	Extremely budget-friendly, lasts weeks
Frozen spinach or mixed veg (1 bag)	~\$3	Nutrient-dense, no spoilage

Estimated Total: ~\$15

How This Elevates the Pantry

- Turns rice, beans, and lentils into **complete meals**
- Adds **fresh texture and micronutrients**
- Extends meals without increasing cost
- Supports **heart health, digestion, and fullness**

Teaching Kitchen Notes

- **Cabbage + onion + oil** = instant base for soups, stir-fries, or skillet meals
- **Eggs + rice + frozen veg** = 10-minute protein meal
- **Carrots** double as snacks, soup starters, or roasted sides

“Your fridge doesn’t need to be full—it needs to be intentional.”