

36 Butcher's Suggestions For Cutting Meat Bills

1. Buy a good cookbook. Familiarize yourself with lower priced meat cuts.
2. Have at least one meatless day each week - serve alternatives like salad, breads and pasta.
3. Trade budget-stretching meat recipes with friends, neighbors and relatives.
4. Avoid expensive canned and frozen "convenience" meats. (tuna, chicken, etc.)
5. Watch ads and stock up on genuine meat bargains. Keep your freezer full. Full freezers save energy.
6. Buy meats in economy "family-packs" when possible. Divide and freeze for specific uses.
7. Stretch hamburger meat by adding bread crumbs, chopped onion, egg and seasonings. Shape into patties and grill or store in freezer.
8. Buy beef by the "half" or "quarter." Have it professionally cut and store it in your freezer. Sell to or trade excess supplies with your neighbors.
9. To avoid excessive shrinkage and waste, slow-cook meat over low or medium heat, or in 325 degree oven.
10. Use a meat thermometer to determine when meat is done. This prevents the meat from over-cooking, shrinking and drying out.
11. Well trimmed meat weighs less, costs less. Shop around and find the markets known for good work.
12. Extend meat loaf and other ground-beef dishes with mixed vegetables, mashed white or sweet potatoes, rice or pasta.
13. Reduce the amount of meat used in recipes for stews, casseroles, chili and spaghetti sauce. Increase vegetables and sauce.
14. For freshest meats, shop early on days when stores are busy - generally middle to end of the week. Try to avoid mornings after long weekends.
15. Stir-frying is quick and makes meat supply last longer. It's easier to cut partially frozen meats into into thinnest strips. Stir-fry with round steak or flank steak.
16. Use "chunky" style soups over potatoes or pasta in place of meat.
17. Substitute small bone chuck steak in place of sirloin or top round. Sprinkle with meat tenderizer before broiling or barbecuing.
18. Rush purchased meat to your refrigerator or freezer. Unfrozen meat will spoil quickly on hot days.
19. Avoid wasting hamburger - wrap and freeze it as patties instead of keeping it in the original package.
20. Save tough rinds from ham, bacon or hocks. Tuck them into potato, rice or noodle casserole - bake for a meaty flavor. Discard them before serving.
21. Unless you want the ham bone for soup, a boneless ham costs less.
22. Save and freeze all meat bones and trimmings. Use them in soups and stews.
23. Buy large cuts of meat (chuck and pork roasts; thick steaks and ham) when on sale - cut them up for a variety of uses.
24. Marinade, tenderize or braise any of the less tender cuts of meat before cooking.
25. Try less expensive "organ" meats: liver, heart, brains, kidney, tripe. See if you can sample them.
26. Buy your luncheon meats in unsliced chunk form. Save money by cutting them yourself before use.
27. Buy bacon ends in economy sizes; divide and freeze. Cook, then combine with scrambled eggs. It's costs less than perfectly sliced bacon and tastes just as good.
28. Get acquainted with your market's butcher. He can alert you to unadvertised specials and give you good cooking hints and saving tips.
29. Slice roasts and ham into thin strips. Two thin slices look like more on a plate than one thick one.
30. You'll use less ground-meat mixture per serving if you use it to stuff tomatoes, green peppers, cabbage leaves and any type of squash.
31. To avoid "freezer burn," which dries out and toughens meat, rewrap all market-packaged meats in airtight freezer wrap or zip-lock freezer bags (which cost a little more but are well worth it).
32. Save cooking liquid from New England boiled dinner, smoked pork shoulder or brisket. Use for lentil, pea, potato or barley soup.
33. Save all scraps of meat leftovers. Grind or chop them and mix with salad dressing, relish, celery and onion for sandwich spreads and dips.
34. Make gravy from drippings. Serve on biscuits, toast, pasta, rice, etc.
35. Dice cooked meat leftovers, mix with barbecue sauce and serve in your favorite buns.
36. Save money on "outdated" meats, but freeze or serve as soon as possible. Ask meat clerk first.

NOTE: Some of these suggestions will become more clear provided you do as #1 recommends.