



BULK BIN BASICS

BULK BIN HOW-TO

Step One

Get to know the bulk aisle. What grocery items that you normally buy packaged can you replace with bulk?

Step Two

Prepare before shopping. Plastic bags are provided in the bulk aisle, but collecting and reusing bags from other trips gives you the satisfaction of further reducing packaging waste. Try keeping a stash of reusable jars, containers or plastic bags inside your cloth grocery sacks so they're always on hand. It's also helpful to keep a running list of items you're out of. If you're shopping for a specific recipe, be sure to jot down the amounts you need before you go to the store.

Step Three

Before you start filling your empty container, use the digital scale provided to find out its tare (empty) weight, then write it down on a label and place it on the container. That way, when you return to the register with filled containers, you pay only for the weight of the product itself. If you are using a dispenser be sure that your bag is in the right place to catch the product. Then, pull the lever gently for a slow release. Finally, use a pen to write the product number (PLU) of the item you have chosen so the checkout clerk will know what item to charge.

THE BENEFITS OF BUYING BULK

Savings

Perhaps the biggest advantage to shopping bulk is a lower grocery bill. Bulk items are cheaper per ounce than their prepackaged counterparts. Spices are particularly good buys. You can purchase just about any spice at a fraction of the price it would cost bottled. If you need just one tablespoon of a spice you'll use only once, you can buy just the right amount rather than purchasing a whole bottle.

Variety

You'll find a wide variety of items in bulk. Alternative grains are available in bulk for people who desire a wheat-free diet. You will also find specialty items in the bulk section: beans and legumes; flours; grains; pastas; sweeteners; nuts and seeds; dried fruits; oils; vinegars; nut butters; herbs and spices; teas and body care products.

Quality

The majority of bulk products are identical to their packaged counterparts. Bulk products are sold so quickly that freshness is the same if not better than in the package. Bins that use scoops aren't refilled until empty so there's never any old product sitting on the bottom. Other bins fill from the top and dispense through the bottom, so that older product is sold before newer product.

Earth Friendly

For many environmentally conscious shoppers, the most important benefit of shopping bulk is the reduction in packaging waste. Despite the dramatic increase in the amount of recyclable food packages during the last few decades, packaging is still a significant contributor to the planet's landfills. Think about all the boxes and cartons in the grocery aisles that are thrown away once they are used. Also, recycled or not, the manufacturing of packaging uses a lot of resources and energy.

STORAGE

- Grains, legumes and flours store best in jars with tight-fitting lids kept in a cool, dry, dark place. Stored this way they will last for several months or more.
- The refrigerator can be a good place to store dry bulk items, especially in warmer weather, but make sure to seal jars tightly in order to prevent moisture, odor and other flavors from seeping in.
- For long term storage, the freezer is the best place to store dry food items. Storing dry bulk items this way will double their life expectancy and ensure optimum freshness.
- To discourage insects from setting up home in your grains and legumes, drop a dried chile pepper or bay leaf into each jar. These colorful plants are nontoxic and have natural insect-repelling properties. Change them out every few months or once they lose their pungency.
- Freezing grains immediately after purchase for four days is also a sufficient way to kill any pantry pests' eggs. Microwaving the grains for five minutes will likewise get the job done.

Source: www.healthwell.com/delicious-online



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DRY MIX ITEMS

DIY RECIPES

EXPLORING BULK

Couscous

- 1) To make 1 c. couscous, stir $\frac{1}{2}$ c. dry couscous into $\frac{3}{4}$ c. boiling water.
- 2) Cover and let stand 5 minutes.
- 3) Fluff with fork before serving.

Split Pea Soup

Add $\frac{1}{2}$ c. soup mix to $\frac{2}{3}$ c. boiling water.

Multi-Grain Pancake Mix

Pancakes: Combine $\frac{3}{4}$ c. mix, $\frac{1}{2}$ c. water and $\frac{1}{2}$ T. vegetable oil.

Waffles: Combine $1\frac{1}{2}$ c. mix, 1 c. water, 1 T. vegetable oil and 1 egg.

Curry Lentil Soup

Combine $\frac{1}{2}$ c. soup mix with $\frac{1}{2}$ c. boiling water.

Vegetarian "Chicken" Broth

Add 1 t. powder to 1–2 c. boiling water to taste.

Original Hummus

- 1) Place 1 c. hummus mix in a bowl.
- 2) Add $1\frac{1}{2}$ c. water and 3 tablespoons of olive oil.
- 3) Stir with a whisk or fork until evenly blended.
- 4) Chill for 5 minutes.

More tasty snack recipes are at www.sacfoodcoop.com



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High Energy Snacks

$\frac{1}{2}$ c. toasted sunflower seeds
 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. toasted chopped walnuts
 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. chopped dried apricots
 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. raisins
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. almond butter
3 T. honey
 $\frac{1}{2}$ t. sea salt
Zest of 1 orange
Shredded coconut

1) Mix all ingredients except coconut in a bowl until incorporated.

2) Roll into 1-inch balls, roll in shredded coconut and enjoy! Store in a tight container in the refrigerator for up to a week.

Variations: Use any dried fruit, nuts and seeds, making sure to keep them all one size. You can also add tasty herbs, chia seeds, hemp seeds and ground flax seeds for extra nutrient value.

Harissa Paste

This spicy North African condiment has an unlimited amount of uses:

- Use it in place of ketchup in meatloaf, spreads and dips
- Toss with roasted veggies
- Add to scrambled eggs
- Include in soups and sautés

Makes about 1 c.

2 oz. assorted dried chile peppers (in Produce Department)

4 cloves garlic, peeled
1 t. caraway seeds, toasted
1 t. cumin, toasted
1 t. coriander, toasted
 $\frac{1}{2}$ t. salt
Extra virgin olive oil

1) Soak chiles in warm water for about 30 minutes until softened.

2) Drain, and blend in a food processor with garlic, spices and salt. Drizzle in olive oil to make a paste.

3) Store in a container topped with olive oil in the refrigerator for up to 3 weeks.

Over 700 Items

There are lots of grains, cereals, snacks, coffees, teas, herbs and spices to try. Shopping in the Bulk Department can be an adventure.

- Get creative in the kitchen with new herbs and spices.
- A variety of nuts, seeds and dried fruits is available for DIY trail mix.
- Supporting local growers is easy! We have local granola, honey, olive oil, rice, nuts, locally roasted coffee and more.
- Freshly ground nut butters are available with the flip of a switch. Watch how peanuts turn into peanut butter right before your eyes—with nothing else added!

Bulk Herbs & Spices

Over 200 herbs and spices to choose from for your cooking, baking or wellness needs. Bulk tea is less expensive than bagged tea, and you can combine herbs for custom herbal infusions.

Beyond the Bulk Aisle

There are lots more bulk items at the Co-op outside of the Bulk Department. Look for these around the store:

- Watershed water – if you fill your own bottles, you can buy filtered water for pennies a glass.
- Local eggs – if you only need one or two eggs, no need to buy a dozen.
- Doggy treats at the front of the store.
- Dried chiles, sun-dried tomatoes and dried mushrooms in Produce.
- Laundry soap and dish soap in Wellness.
- Body lotions, bath salts and Dr. Bronner's soaps in Wellness.
- Tinctures like Echinacea, Ginkgo and St. John's Wort in Wellness.
- An assortment of pickles, olives and more at the Olive Bar