

You're tired. You're cranky. Most importantly, you're hungry. You come home, look through the fridge, nothing. You look in the cupboard, nothing. Freezer, nothing. Why is there never anything to eat around here?

The fact of the matter is, there probably is something to eat, just nothing that appeals to you at that moment. And, if there's nothing good to eat, then it means that you don't know how to stock your kitchen pantry so that there is always something fast, easy, and tasty ready to be made. Let's look at what is in a well-stocked pantry:

ESSENTIALS

These are items you should always have on hand

- Cooking and salad oils
- Butter or margarine
- Vinegar (red wine and apple cider)
- Spices and herbs, flavorings (vanilla), salt and pepper
- All-purpose flour
- Sugar, granulated and brown
- Baking powder and baking soda
- Dry pancake mix
- Condiments (ketchup, mustard, pickles and/or pickle relish)
- Salad dressing (2 kinds)
- Coffee and/or tea
- Peanut butter and jam/jelly/honey
- Dry pasta (preferably whole wheat)
- Rice (preferably brown or brown basmati)
- Canned beans
- Canned tomatoes, tomato sauce, and tomato paste
- Parmesan cheese
- Bouillon cubes
- Potatoes
- Onions

HEALTHY SNACKS

Quick things to sate your appetite

- Crackers
- Cold and hot cereals
- Cheese
- Sliced/deli meats
- Yogurt
- Power bars
- Dried fruits
- Nuts
- Pita and sliced bread (preferably whole grain)
- Popcorn
- Frozen fruit bars

FAST MEALS

When you're too busy to cook (no more than 2X a week)

- Boxed or frozen macaroni and cheese
- Hot dogs/sausages (can be frozen)
- Canned soups
- Individually-wrapped frozen chicken breasts
- Individually-wrapped hamburgers
- Fish sticks or fish filets
- Flash frozen meatballs
- Frozen stir-fry dinners
- Frozen dinners
- Frozen vegetables