

# Nutrition On Your Own



## Smart Shopping Saves Money Using Unit Price Labels

Grocery shopping is a hard job. You have to provide healthy foods that your family likes, find the time to shop and prepare the foods, and stay within a budget. Wow! That's a lot to think about.

Using the unit-price label can save you a few cents on each item. This can add up to big savings on your total food bill.

For example:

If you saved 7¢ on every ounce of cereal you bought, and you bought a 24-ounce box of cereal each week, you would save \$87.36 a year just on cereal!

$7¢ \text{ savings per ounce} \times 24 \text{ ounces of cereal} \times 52 \text{ weeks per year} = \$87.36 \text{ saved per year}$

If you think about it, we use unit pricing all the time. For example, we decide where to buy gasoline based on the price *per* gallon, we buy produce based on the price *per* pound, and fabric is purchased based on the price *per* yard. These are all unit-priced items.



# A Closer Look

So, where are unit-price labels found? Unit-price labels are usually found on the store shelves below the food items. A unit price makes it easier to compare prices to find the best buy. It also makes it easier to compare the cost on different size packages.



Take a close look at the unit-price label below:

This is the unit price. Use this number to compare food items and determine the best buy. The lower the unit price, the more you get for your money.



**Unit Price**  
**10¢ per oz.**

This is the name of the item.



**Blue Bird Rice**

**Total Price**  
**\$.60**  
**6 oz.**

This is the total price of the item.





This is the size of the item.



# Let's Go Shopping

Let's do some shopping using the unit-price label. Compare the two unit-price labels below.

<b>Unit Price</b> <b>13¢ per oz.</b>	<b>Total Price</b> <b>\$3.12</b> <b>24 oz.</b>
 <b>Snappy Rice</b>	

<b>Unit Price</b> <b>20¢ per oz.</b>	<b>Total Price</b> <b>\$2.40</b> <b>12 oz.</b>
 <b>Crackly Rice</b>	

Look at the unit price. Snappy Rice costs 13¢ per ounce and Crackly Rice costs 20¢ per ounce. That means if you buy Snappy Rice instead of Crackly Rice, you will save 7¢ on each ounce of rice. Therefore, Snappy Rice is the better buy or value.

But, if Snappy Rice is a better buy, why does it cost more than Crackly Rice?

Even though the total price of Snappy Rice is more than the total price of Crackly Rice, you get twice as much rice when you buy the box of Snappy Rice. Notice that Crackly Rice is a 12-ounce box and Snappy Rice is a 24-ounce box.



# Questions

Unit Price 6¢ per oz.	Total Price <b>\$1.08</b> 18 oz.
	
Cowboy Macaroni	

Unit Price 6¢ per oz.	Total Price <b>\$1.44</b> 24 oz.
	
Viking Macaroni	

Unit Price 9¢ per oz.	Total Price <b>\$1.80</b> 20 oz.
	
Pilgrim Macaroni	

Unit Price 8¢ per oz.	Total Price <b>\$.96</b> 12 oz.
	
Acme Macaroni	

To answer questions #1 and #2, use the following four unit-price labels.

1. Which macaroni is the best buy or value? (Hint: compare the unit prices)
  - a. Cowboy Macaroni
  - b. Cowboy Macaroni and Viking Macaroni
  - c. Acme Macaroni
2. Which box of macaroni costs the least?
  - a. Viking Macaroni
  - b. Pilgrim Macaroni
  - c. Acme Macaroni

Check your answers at the bottom of this page.

## Happy Shopping!

**Answers**

1. b — Cowboy Macaroni and Viking Macaroni are the best deals. In other words, you get the most ounces of macaroni for the money you spend when you buy either Cowboy or Viking. Cowboy Macaroni is cheaper than Viking Macaroni because it is a smaller-sized package not because it is not a better value.

2. c — Acme Macaroni — The total price of Acme Macaroni is only 96¢. This is less than the other three brands. Acme Macaroni costs the least because it is the smallest package, not because it is a better buy or value.

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Texas Department of Health. Bureau of Nutrition Services.

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