

# Free Food

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## General Guide

Until several days without food it's difficult to really understand what hunger means. You get faint and weak, unable to concentrate, and your reactions will be slow. As you go longer, you feel an ache below your heart. You may fantasize about food and how to get some. You will feel cold in bad weather no matter the clothing or bedding you pile on, and weak and drained in hot weather.

Many will steal. Hours pass and it feels like your soul is being cut with knives. When you are starving, it is easy to hate fat, well dressed people in warm, air conditioned houses.

Let's make this clear - Corporate government really does not care about who is eating properly, that is your problem. In a 2006 pamphlet distributed to its laid-off employees, Northwest Airlines once advised its newly impoverished former workers to strongly consider rifling through trash for suitable food! Wage slaves like nurse aides typically feed their residents three meals plus a snack a day while having a sneak to eat or only affording one meal a day. Even fast food, hotel, and restaurant jobs can have unreasonable meal plans. Your need to feed yourself is considered disgusting (and cuts into profits!)

Yet Amerika is the most wasteful nation on Earth, consuming the most food per person in the world and throwing it away. Country club members graze daily on huge brunch buffets, only taking what they are in the mood for. Huge conventions throw away massive amounts of food in order to offer choices the upper middle class may or may not want. Even grocery stores throw away much edible food.

We may not have a right to food in America, but surviving is important! So how do we eat?

## Blood and guts

Picky Americans throw away lots of good meat that everyone else considers to be delicacies. Things like hearts, kidneys, livers, stomachs and lungs can all be had for cheap, if not free, and are not only nutritious, but also delicious if prepared properly. Although some people eat them, it's wise to avoid brains due to all the diseases they can carry.

This is especially noticeable in areas with lots of hunters. After they bag bambi, most hunters will only take the loins and some ground meat for their troubles, leaving lots of perfectly good meat available just for the asking.

Even blood (assuming it's fresh, NEVER use old blood) can be turned into food. It can thicken soups, make sausages and can be even used in pancakes.

In the rest of the world, this is haute gourmet. So why not use it to make 5 star meals for growing revolutionaries?

## Dumpster Diving

No discussion of free food would be complete without talking dumpster diving, but remember that you can score great bike parts, computers, weird electronics, clothes, toys, paperback books, etc. Anything you can get through the front door usually comes out the back door and into the dumpster at some point.

Look through a phone book or tour the neighborhood on your bike to see what grocery stores, restaurants, and food services are nearby and check their dumpsters when no one is outside. It may take a few days to learn when the trash pick-up day is and what time fresh food is dumped, so keep checking. Don't ruin a good dumpster for everyone by throwing trash everywhere while rooting around. If you clean up the manager will have no reason to lock the dumpster, and the cops can't charge you for littering.

Be aware that a "No Trespassing" sign or demands by an employee usually mean that you do not have permission to dive there, which may cause trouble with the cops. However, if you are never asked to leave and there is no obvious signage you *should* be fine. Most state trespassing laws will not charge or even arrest you for trespassing if you have not refused to leave after being asked, which can be substituted by a "No Trespassing".

Rubber boots, work gloves, long trousers, and long sleeved shirts will help protect you from cuts in the dumpster if needed. Box cutters are useful for packaging, boxes, bags, and twine. Dumpsters are mostly safe, just really dirty. But don't gamble with sharp metal or broken glass, wear tall rubber diving or leather boots.

LED headlamps will give you light to see what you are grabbing. Use a red filter when possible at night to prevent your flashlight from being visible at distance. Removable car seat covers, trash sacks, or sheets of newspaper will protect your car seat if you have gotten really gooped up. Clean plastic trash sacks are a good way to protect your finds while wading in the dumpster, transporting your haul home, and when containing messy boots or clothes. When biking, line your panniers or backpack with plastic shopping bags.

Don't worry about getting sick until you start deciding what to eat. Always wash unpackaged produce; vinegar or diluted bleach soak for 30 minutes kills most bacteria to safe levels. If you come across any cans that are bulging at the top and/or bottom, leave them in the dumpster. They're known in the trade as being "blown" and are unfit to eat and ripe with bacteria.

**Compactors and garbage smashers are really good at crushing bones.** Don't disable compactors as that can get you in trouble with the police, and may not even disable the system. Most stores with compactors have fitted a metal collar to keep divers and raccoons out. We find that these are usually bent from careless truck drivers and desperate kids grabbing beer left by friends inside. You can usually grab for something you can see and reach, but you **MUST** use a **grabber** or you risk trapping your arm. We don't like compactor amputations.

You can purchase a "universal skip key," which will open many (if not most) dumpsters. Bumping a lock or picking it can also work.

## Day Old Bread Stores

Ask for bread a bakery is going to throw away. Tell them it's for your pig. Most times they will squash it down in a buggy but squashed bread is still tasty. Remember to check for mold and pinch it off, but a spot of mold will not hurt you.

Many deli chains and sub stores have a "bread bin" with perfectly edible, scrap bread to be thrown away. It's sanitary, and if the employee is cool, they may give you some for free. Just remember that for many employees it is still cool to disrespect the homeless.

## Free Drinks

Get your hands on a plastic cup from a gas station or fast-food restaurant. Swipe 'em from tables, ask for a cup of water, or surreptitiously peruse the trash bin. This guarantees you free drinks there for as long as you have the cup. If you're worried about germs, when you fill up your stolen cup, "accidentally" drop the cup, and ask for another one. Don't forget to clean up the mess.

Some restaurants will issue "courtesy" cups for non-customers asking for water. If a restaurant has drink fountains out in the open, as most fast food joints do, these can easily be filled with the beverage of your choice. Even if the minimum wage employees see you, it's unlikely that they'd go out of their way to stop you.

Fortunately the mono culture consumerism ensures that restaurant that lack branded cups will have have selected theirs from a small collection. Save your cups nested inside each other; often you can "select" a matching cup from your bag without suspiciously digging through the trash. You might think you are being sly, but reaching into the trash is one of those faux pas that store clerks catch from across the restaurant every time.

## Hotel Grazing

Do not forget the wondrous resource that is your local hotel. Many hotels offer complimentary breakfasts, a fact which you can use to your advantage.

First, look at what hotels offer what. A small Super 8 or Motel 6 may not have much more than pastries and coffee. Mid-scale hotels like Hampton Inns offer a very generous free spread and a couple of free hot items. Higher end hotels and some independent establishments may not offer any free breakfast at all. The best ones to hit are business-styled suite hotels, which offer free hot breakfasts and often free dinner, snacks, and sometimes beer during the evenings. Since they are designed for the long-term traveling business man, looking respectable can guarantee you weeks of free grub!

You should (of course) make sure that they don't check that you have a reservation or a room key. Don't worry, most don't. Most hotels work on a shift schedule (7-3, 3-11, 11-7) so going in during shift changes almost guarantee complete distraction by employees at the front desk.

Once that's established you may want to dress nicely to make sure that you can enjoy a hearty breakfast. You should at least have a backpack/messenger bag with an extra shirt in it. Walk into the hotel early in the morning, looking like you're coming in from a long night on the town. Head towards your "room" and find the laundry, exercise, or any room that has both water and privacy.

Change into the fresh shirt, wet your hair and wash your face - make it look like you had a quick shower and changed your clothes. Stash the bag where you can retrieve it later or risk it and take the bag to breakfast with you. Now wander on down, eat your fill. You shouldn't hang around more than a couple minutes once you've finished, but don't look overly rushed.

One thing you may notice (especially if you're a "repeat customer") is that a manager will make their rounds chatting with the breakfast diners. Don't be alarmed...they won't notice a thing with a halfway decent alibi.

## Fast Food Chains

On a busy Friday or Saturday night, find the closest chain to the bar district in your town. After last call stand in the food line for about 15 minutes then approach a clerk. Often in the busy after hours crowd they won't notice you approach from outside, and the cleaning staff almost never get a chance to tell the kitchen staff of your scam. Tell them you've been waiting in line for any item off the menu for half an hour, and they will serve you right away!

## Convenience Stores

Clerks get really bored at the dead hours or when they have to stock the shelves and they are often happy to let you lift in exchange for some company. If you make friends with the staff they'll often let you chew on their hyperinflated shelves and encased junk food. Don't insult them by being too open with your sticky fingers, let them turn their back, stock some shelves, or go in back, before you start filling your pack, give them some plausible deniability in case you somehow get caught.

Sometimes loss prevention and the manager actually view the cameras, but this is normally only after a robbery, sometimes you'll meet an employee who is forever afraid of losing their job. Avoid the paranoid high strung type employee they probably won't even converse with you as it is against the company policy. Our best results are with the angry, burned out, or apathetic clerk.

Convenience stores have surprisingly useful services like western union money-grams, rolling papers, prepaid credit cards, prepaid cell phones, etc. The convenience store recognizes the needs of the underground economy of drug dealers and undocumented illegal aliens, and cater to their privacy needs in a way that rakes in huge profits.

## Movie Theaters

Wait outside a movie theater on a Friday night and ask people leaving for a ticket stub to get in. Walk into a theater that is just letting out, or peek into the garbage cans and grab the largest bucket of popcorn and the largest cup. Most theaters provide free refills on popcorn and soft drinks, so dump out the contents and proceed to the food vendor. This works particularly well at the new megaplexes.

If you know anyone employed at the movie theater, ask them to get you a big bag of the gallons and gallons of popcorn that theaters throw away every night, especially on weekends. These can also be obtained from the dumpster after hours, but then it will most likely be mixed with popcorn that was swept off of the floor. Once again, this works particularly well at the megaplexes.

Many theaters have back side exits for safety reasons. Take a peek inside and if you see anyone other than an employee (they'll have name tag), knock and kindly gesture to be let in. Pat them on the back, say something along the lines of "thanks buddy", and then just pick a movie. Make sure there are a lot of other people seeing the film you choose. Occasionally (at some cinemas) audience members will be counted and compared to number tickets sold—if the numbers don't match up, customers will be asked to show their tickets. Nobody wants to interrupt the movie for a hundred people just to catch one or two freeloaders, assuming they did not miscount.

## Cafes

Most Coffee shops give away their remaining pastries at the end of the day due to their sales policies to refresh the stock each morning. In addition, most coffee chain baristas are cool, and will give as many free samples of different drinks and snacks as you want. Many chains have a very liberal customer service policy so make a fuss if they won't give you a sample. You may be able to walk out with a free drink or gift certificate.

## Hospital Cafes

In addition, cafes inside hospitals provide a diverse menu, particularly focused on grab-and-go, and can be excellent locations to get lost in the lunch rush, and forget to pay on your way out. A busy worker bee mentality will help you in your appearance.

## Free Milk

Many places that serve coffee also serve liquid cream packets. These are often provided freely, where the public can take as many as they want. They range between coffee cream and whole milk and if you a proportionate mixture in an 8 oz. glass of water you can easily make an approximate 2%, the same as sold at a supermarket. It won't really taste like supermarket milk however, because it has been added to water rather than having milk fat removed.

## Free Candy

Super glue or tape a coin down to a rotating coin feeder and spin it as many times as you like for whatever is in the dispenser, be inconspicuous because in the unlikely event that you're caught this can be considered both vandalism and theft. It may not be nutrition, but we like free sweets too.

Find a grocery or department store that has the bulk candy/coffee bean racks and grab a handful of them. Walk around like your shopping and you will almost never be stopped for this. Since the candy has no intrinsic value as it is not priced unless it is weighed you will not be charged with shoplifting. Otherwise, nearly every parent you see in the supermarket would have a charge on behalf of their kids' sticky fingers.

The above trick is not limited to candy though. Trail mixes, dehydrated fruits, cookies, etc. Anything measured in bulk is difficult to prove as a theft and security will almost never bother you for it. If you are stopped you may be asked to leave the store, so leave.

## Free Meat and Cheese

Many grocery stores will give away free samples of the meats and cheeses sold in the deli. Dress appropriately, fill a basket with products, and then ask the deli hand to taste a meat or cheese that interests you. They'll usually cut a slice or two for you to nibble.

Fool them into believing you're a customer and you can usually ask to try yet another meat or cheese. Repeat this as long as they'll allow and make up any excuse to not purchase anything. Take your samples and make a soup, sandwich or other quick dish with.

Don't hit the same deli day after day or they'll get smart to your scam. Have a grocery store for each day of the week and rotate them weekly. Obviously more grocery stores in your neighborhood makes this a lot easier. By changing the order from week to week and the time of day you should keep most staff from catching on to what you're doing, and keep yourself in a consistent supply of deli samples.

Don't worry, unless you throw the poor wiener sample lady into a freezer case and steal her tray, nobody cares if you raid a few times. These people get bored like everyone else, and chatting or flirting will help you fill your belly.

## Grocery Stores

Your local supermarket deli, produce section, and bakery may sometimes have a free sample any day of the week. They, most likely, will gladly give it to you, this is often corporate policy. Wearing crappy, tom, homemade clothes made from rags will sometimes buy you another piece or a bigger sample to start with out of sympathy but will more likely get you nothing more than thrown out on your ass.

If dressed and acting casual, asking the deli counter for a sandwich, salad, etc in most grocery stores will give you a free meal - as long as you eat it in the store. Just make sure not to take the packaging with you.

## Sikh Temples

The Sikh religion believes in charity that will benefit the neighborhood and culture they live in. As a result, most temples offer a free meal to the community at least once a week, if not every day. Their cooking is mostly starches and curry, and they often offer second or third portions with enthusiasm. A bean or lentil curry will give you needed protein, the starches will keep you feeling full for the day!

## Free Food For Your Own Church

Join the Universal life Church, a free and legally recognized Church. Once joined, you will be a legally ordained minister. Then ask for donations to your food bank.

This might require talking to some managers but if you find one that has a cross on, it just might work, because they're usually the holy types that will help. It doesn't hurt to have a few business cards printed up stating that you're the minister of the universal life church. A shirt and tie also helps this undertaking, but if you really want to do it up, bring a black long sleeve shirt, a minister's collar, a cheap cross necklace, and ULC membership card. This getup costs around \$50, but can scam thousands of dollars worth of retail.

Please have a conscience about this. You can easily hoard way more food and clothing than you'd ever need this way, so help out your less fortunate sisters and brothers. Keep a month's worth of groceries and give the rest out to the less fortunate. Not only does this help others, but it no longer makes this a scam, as you are genuinely starting a food program for the poor.

A bible verse which may help you, and should be memorized, is this; "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'" - Matthew 25:34-40. If you memorize this and talk about the "social gospel of Christ" and "the Sermon on the Mount" you can sway even hardcore Bible beaters into giving up loads of perfectly good stuff.

You might consider contacting the Mormons RELIEF SOCIETY groups. These people function as the welfare for Mormons and give their members free food. Contact them to see where and how in your area they are getting food for their food banks. Then tell them that you also are trying to start a food bank for your church. While they might try to convince you to join them a little bit, they are usually more than helpful because they will see you as someone who is trying to carry out charitable work.

## Bird Bread

Most jurisdictions don't allow stores to sell items for human consumption after their sell by date, but they can sell them for other purposes. Its not uncommon for bakery thrifths to sell "bird bread". This is simply smooshed up bread one day after its sell by date. Use it in meat loaf. We also show how to make cheese from just expired milk to put on a handmade pizza in Cheap Chow.



## Own a Pickup?

Make up a convincing-looking pamphlet **IN COLOR** at your local copy store or off your computer. It should say "Cans for Homeless Mothers" or some such, followed by various heart wrenching facts about how a can of food can feed someone for a day, etc. (Copy some text from a charity website if you are unsure.) Now, armed with your pamphlet and your pickup truck, go to your city's neighborhoods. For some reason, poorer neighborhoods are best, especially trailer parks. (Sorry, it's sad but true.) Now, go up to the door, show your pamphlet, and say "Can you spare a can or two of food for those in need?" Tell them you do not accept money, this is important! It builds trust, and they will give you more cans. Bring grocery bags. After a day of this, your pick-up will be filled with canned goods.

## External Links to Free Food Resources

These are proposed solutions that will work in today's world.

- About.com Frugal Living Directory - <http://frugalliving.about.com/od/?once=true&> (*This site contains tons of tricks for getting free food. Some are best suited to those -with access to stoves and kitchens.*)
- Dumpster Diving FAQ - <http://ranprieur.com/misc/dumpster.html>
- The Dumpster Lady (Website down, but archived) -  
<http://members.aol.com/TheDumpsterLady/thedumpsterlady.htm>
- Dumpster World Forum - <http://www.dumpsterworld.com>
- Feeding America Food Bank Locator - <http://feedingamerica.org/foodbank-results.aspx>
- Food Not Bombs - <http://www.foodnotbombs.net>
- Instructables Tutorial on Dumpster Diving - <http://www.instructables.com/id/Dumpster-Dipping-for-a-small-planet-or-just-for-f/>
- Soup Kitchens USA - [http://4homeless.hypermart.net/soup\\_kitchens.html](http://4homeless.hypermart.net/soup_kitchens.html)
- Trashwiki - A wiki about dumpster diving - <http://trashwiki.org/>



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[stealthiswiki.com](http://stealthiswiki.com)