



Whole-Foods Pantry Staples

Your printable guide to a real-food kitchen

A well-stocked pantry makes whole-food cooking the path of least resistance.

Oils & Fats

- Extra-virgin olive oil (everyday cooking & finishing)
- Avocado oil (high-heat cooking)
- Coconut oil (virgin & refined)
- Real butter (grass-fed when possible)
- Ghee
- Toasted sesame oil (for flavor)

Vinegars

- Balsamic vinegar
- Apple cider vinegar
- Red wine vinegar
- White wine vinegar
- Rice vinegar

Canned & Jarred

- Diced tomatoes
- Crushed tomatoes
- Tomato paste
- Black beans
- Chickpeas
- White & kidney beans
- Coconut milk (full-fat)
- Chicken, beef & vegetable broth
- Olives
- Capers
- Artichoke hearts
- Roasted red peppers

Condiments & Sauces

- Dijon & yellow mustard
- Real mayonnaise (or homemade)
- Soy sauce or tamari
- Worcestershire sauce
- Hot sauce
- Salsa (clean ingredients)
- Pure maple or honey for glazes

Grains & Dried Goods

- Brown rice
- White rice
- Quinoa
- Steel-cut & rolled oats
- Farro
- Barley
- Buckwheat
- Pasta (simple ingredients)
- Lentils (green, red, brown)
- Dried beans
- Cornmeal / polenta

Nuts, Seeds & Butters

- Almonds
- Walnuts
- Cashews
- Pecans
- Pistachios
- Chia seeds
- Flaxseeds
- Pumpkin & sunflower seeds
- Hemp hearts
- Nut butter (just nuts & salt)
- Tahini

Flours & Baking

- Unbleached all-purpose flour
- Whole wheat flour
- Almond flour
- Baking soda
- Baking powder
- Pure vanilla extract
- Cocoa powder (unsweetened)
- Active dry / instant yeast
- Tapioca starch (or arrowroot)

Natural Sweeteners

- Raw honey (local when possible)
- Pure maple syrup (Grade A)
- Whole dates / date sugar
- Unrefined cane sugar
- Blackstrap molasses

Spices & Seasonings

- Sea salt & kosher salt
- Black peppercorns
- Garlic powder & onion powder
- Cumin
- Paprika (real, not smoke-flavored)
- Chili powder
- Cinnamon
- Turmeric (pair with black pepper)
- Ginger (fresh & dried)
- Italian herb blend
- Oregano, thyme, rosemary
- Bay leaves
- Cayenne
- Nutmeg

Fresh & Refrigerated

- Eggs
- Quality cheese (block, not pre-shredded)
- Whole milk
- Plain yogurt & kefir
- Heavy cream
- Garlic, onions, shallots
- Lemons & limes
- Fresh herbs
- Seasonal produce

Frozen Staples

- Frozen vegetables (no added sauces)
- Frozen berries & fruit
- Frozen quality proteins
- Frozen spinach & peas



Smart Shopping Tips

Keep these in mind every time you shop

A few habits make shopping for whole foods a lot easier.

The five-second test: Flip the package over and read the ingredient list. If you can't pronounce most of it, if it has more than ten ingredients, or if sugar appears in the first three — put it back. Real food usually has a short, recognizable ingredient list.

Read the ingredient list first

Ignore the front of the package — it's marketing. Flip it over and read what's actually in there. The shorter the list, the better. If you wouldn't cook with it at home, it's probably not real food.

Watch for hidden sugars

Sugar hides under many names: high-fructose corn syrup, cane juice, dextrose, maltose, syrup, agave nectar, malt extract. If a sweetener appears near the top of the list — or several show up — put it back.

Skip these red-flag ingredients

Maltodextrin, modified food starch, gums (xanthan, guar), "natural flavors," artificial colors, and industrial seed oils (canola, soybean, corn, cottonseed) are markers of ultra-processing.

Shop the perimeter

The outer ring of the store — produce, meat, dairy, eggs — is where whole foods live. The center aisles hold most of the ultra-processed products. Spend most of your time around the edges.

"Whole wheat" isn't always whole

Check that "whole" grain is the first word in the first ingredient. Bread labeled "wheat" or "multigrain" is often refined flour with caramel color. Real whole grain says so up front.

Fewer ingredients, better food

A jar of marinara should be tomatoes, herbs, oil, and salt — not a paragraph. Use the "could I make this at home?" test as your quick filter while you shop.

Buy produce in season

Seasonal produce is cheaper, fresher, and more flavorful. Frozen fruits and vegetables (with no added sauces) are picked at peak ripeness and make a great year-round backup.

Don't shop hungry

It's an old tip because it works. A quick snack before you go makes it far easier to walk past the impulse buys and stick to your real-food list.