

To build a stash of food you regularly eat:

- When you go to the store, buy a little extra of the same shelf-stable stuff you already use,
- shop the inner aisles of grocery stores,
- get in the habit of looking at the expiration dates before putting something in your cart,
- avoid stocking up on anything that doesn't last at least a year,
- consider foods that have high nutrition, but don't take up lots of space (beans, rather than potato chips),
- comfort foods are valuable, but aim primarily for complete nutrition
- aim for foods that are easy to prepare (Dry beans last longer, but canned beans don't need cooking),
- use "first in, first out" rotation, so newest food goes to the back or bottom
- use what you store; store what you will use
- in storing, reduce exposure to heat, light, moisture, pests, and oxygen (seal airtight),
- NEVER eat from damaged cans even if within the 'use by' dates. If dented, rusty or swollen throw it out.

Consider these types of foods:

- Grains,
- beans or legumes,
- fats,
- meats (shelf stable) or other proteins,
- spices, including salt
- vinegar
- dried fruits and vegetables (high-acid canned foods like tomatoes have a much shorter shelf life)
- drinks