Leafy Greens Basics

Leafy greens are low in calories and sodium, but high in other minerals, vitamins and fiber.

Shop and Save

- Choose greens that look crisp. Avoid wilted or yellowing leaves and browned stalks.
- Greens may be fresher and cost less when they are in season. Most are available spring through summer or fall. Kale, mustard greens and collard greens are available during the winter months.
- Try farm stands or farmers markets for local greens in season.
- Frozen spinach is a good value but other frozen greens often cost more than fresh.

Store Well

- Wrap greens in a damp paper towel and refrigerate in an open plastic bag or container. Use most greens within 5 to 7 days for best quality.
- Wash greens just before using to reduce spoilage.
  1. Swish leaves in a large bowl of cool water.
  2. Let rest briefly to allow dirt to settle.
  3. Lift leaves from the water.
  4. Repeat until there is no grit on the bottom of the bowl.
  5. Pat leaves dry if needed.
- Freeze for longer storage. Blanch (cook briefly) before freezing for best quality. Use within 10 to 12 months.

Waste Less
**Pasta with Greens and Beans**

**Ingredients:**
- 8 ounces pasta (try penne)
- 1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
- 3 cloves minced garlic or ¾ teaspoon garlic powder
- 10 ounces frozen spinach or 1 ½ pounds fresh spinach
- 1 ¾ cups (1 can/15 ounces) diced tomatoes with juice, canned, fresh or frozen
- 1 ¾ cups (1 can/15 ounces) white beans, drained and rinsed
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- ½ cup grated parmesan cheese

**Directions:**
1. Cook pasta according to package directions. Remove from heat when done.
2. Meanwhile, heat oil in large skillet. Add garlic and cook on low until soft.
3. Add spinach, tomatoes with juice, drained beans, salt, and pepper. Once the mixture bubbles, cook uncovered on low heat for 5 minutes.
4. Drain pasta. Add pasta and parmesan to spinach mixture. Toss well and serve.

**Makes** 8 cups

**Prep time:** 10 minutes  
**Cook time:** 30 minutes

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**Greens with Carrots**

**Ingredients:**
- 8 cups greens (try kale, bok choy, chard, collard, mustard or others)
- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- 2 large carrots, peeled and cut in thin strips or coarsely shredded
- 1 clove garlic, minced or ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander (optional)
- 1 pinch cayenne pepper (optional)
- 1 Tablespoon vinegar
- 1 ¼ teaspoons low sodium soy sauce

**Directions:**
1. Wash greens and separate leaves from stems if needed. Slice stems crosswise, if using. Chop or slice leaves into thin strips.
2. Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat.
3. Add carrots and stems if separated; cook for 2 minutes. Add garlic and cook for 1 minute.
4. Add greens, salt, pepper, coriander and cayenne, if desired. Stir often.
5. When greens have turned bright green and begun to wilt, remove from heat. Sprinkle vinegar and soy sauce over the top. Toss gently and serve.
6. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

**Makes** 4 cups

**Prep time:** 20 minutes  
**Cook time:** 15 minutes

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**Greens Math**

1 pound fresh greens = 1 to 3 cups cooked  
(thinner leaves and stems cook down more)

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**Kids Can!**

When kids help make healthy food, they are more likely to try it. Show kids how to:
- swish greens in a bowl of water to remove dirt.
- tear or cut leaves away from thick or tough stems

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**Visit FoodHero.org for easy, tasty recipes for greens.**