



Menu Pricing Cheat Sheet

Good menu prices start with one number: what the plate costs to make. Use this sheet to check your prices against typical industry targets.

The formula

$$\text{Menu price} = \text{plate cost} \div \text{target food cost \%}$$

Example: a \$3.10 burger at a 30% target comes to \$10.33. Round it to \$10.49.

Typical food cost ranges by dish type

These are typical ranges that are widely cited in the restaurant industry. They aren't rules. Your concept, location and portions will move them.

DISH TYPE	TYPICAL RANGE
Whole menu, overall	28–35%
Pasta, rice and grain dishes	20–28%
Pizza	20–28%
Burgers and sandwiches	28–35%
Chicken entrées	28–35%
Beef and steak entrées	35–45%
Seafood entrées	35–45%
Salads	25–32%

DISH TYPE	TYPICAL RANGE
Appetizers and sides	20–30%
Desserts and baked goods	15–25%
Coffee and tea	10–20%
Soft drinks and fountain	10–20%
Beer	20–30%
Wine	25–40%
Liquor and cocktails	15–25%

Worked example

Tacos cost \$2.71 a serving. At \$9.49 on the menu, that's a 29% food cost, right in range.

Quick checks

- Re-cost a dish any time an ingredient price changes.
- Cost the whole plate, including sauces, garnish, oil and sides.
- Plan for waste and trim, not just the recipe amounts.
- Low-cost dishes can carry a high-cost one. Look at your whole menu, not just one plate.