

Budget-Friendly Vitamin C Foods

12 Affordable Fruits & Vegetables to Add to Your Diet

Vitamin C doesn't have to come from imported fruit or expensive supplements. Some of the richest sources — amla, guava, green chillies — are also some of the cheapest things in an Indian kitchen. This guide lists 12 affordable options, colour-coded by fruit or vegetable, with vitamin C content, approximate cost, and how to include each one.

Colour Key

Fruits	Vegetables
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Budget-Friendly Fruits

Food	Vitamin C	Approx. Cost	How to Include It
1. Amla (Indian Gooseberry)	~600 mg/100g	~Rs. 3-5/100g	Eat one fresh amla daily, or have amla juice a few times a week.
2. Guava	~228 mg/100g	~Rs. 4-6/100g	Eat as a whole fruit snack, or add to your daily fruit chaat.
3. Sweet Lime (Mosambi)	~50 mg/100g	~Rs. 15-20/100g	Eat whole, or have fresh juice without added sugar.
4. Orange	~53 mg/100g	~Rs. 5-8/100g	Eat as a whole fruit rather than juice, to also get the fibre.
5. Lemon	~53 mg/100g	~Rs. 3-5/100g	Squeeze into water, dal, or salads throughout the day — a little goes a long way.
6. Papaya	~62 mg/100g	~Rs. 15-25/100g	Have a bowl as a snack, or add to your daily fruit chaat.

Budget-Friendly Vegetables

Food	Vitamin C	Approx. Cost	How to Include It
1. Green Chilli	~143 mg/100g	~Rs. 20-40/100g	Used in small quantities daily in cooking, so the actual cost per use is minimal.
2. Tomato	~14 mg/100g	~Rs. 10-20/100g	Used daily in most Indian cooking — the vitamin C adds up cumulatively across meals.
3. Cabbage	~37 mg/100g	~Rs. 15-20/100g	Use in poriyal, salads, or a light stir-fry a few times a week.
4. Drumstick (Moringa)	~51 mg/100g (leaves)	~Rs. 20-30/100g	Add drumstick pieces to sambar, or moringa leaves to dal.
5. Coriander Leaves (Cilantro)	~27 mg/100g	~Rs. 5-10/bunch	Use as a daily garnish — one of the cheapest ways to add vitamin C consistently.

Food	Vitamin C	Approx. Cost	How to Include It
6. Spinach (Palak)	~28 mg/100g	~Rs. 15-20/100g	Add to dal, poriyal, or smoothies a few times a week.

Simple daily habit: Add lemon to your water, a handful of coriander to your cooking, and one seasonal fruit like guava or amla as a snack — together, these alone can meaningfully cover your daily vitamin C needs for just a few rupees.

Note: Prices are general estimates and vary by city, season, and vendor. Vitamin C values are approximate averages and can vary by ripeness and variety. This guide is for general education, not medical or dietary prescription.