PRACTICAL AND FINANCIAL LITERACY

Unit Prices

Difficulty level: Easy

Practical and Financial Literacy

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Overview of the concept

This is how you tell which pack is really cheaper at the grocery store, like comparing a big bag of rice with a small one, by working out what one item, litre, or kilogram actually costs. A bigger pack is not always a better deal, because the price and the size both change. Working out the cost of one unit puts both packs on the same footing, so the cheaper one is obvious. That is how you shop smart, and avoid paying more for a pack that only looks like a bargain.



Rule

Unit prices: unit price $= \dfrac{\text{total price}}{\text{number of units}}$.

Divide the price by how many you get, and the smallest unit price is the best deal.

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Worked examples

EXAMPLE 1

Q A 6-pack of water costs $3.54. What is the cost per bottle?

SOLUTION

This is a unit price question, so the one rule to remember is: unit price is the total price divided by how many you get. One division gives you the price of exactly one.

Divide the price by the number of bottles: $3.54 ÷ 6 = $0.59.

So each bottle costs $0.59.

EXAMPLE 2

Q A 3 lb bag of oranges costs $4.50 and a 5 lb bag costs $7.00. Which is the better deal?

SOLUTION

This is the same question type as a best buy comparison: never compare the bag prices, compare the unit prices, because the bags hold different amounts.

The 3 lb bag costs $4.50 ÷ 3 = $1.50 per pound, and the 5 lb bag costs $7.00 ÷ 5 = $1.40 per pound.

$1.40 is less than $1.50, so the 5 lb bag is the better deal.

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Practice questions

1 A 4-pack of juice costs $3.20. What is the price per juice box?

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2 A 10-ounce box of cereal costs $2.59 and a 13-ounce box of the same cereal costs $3.99. Which box is the better buy?

A. The 13-ounce box

B. The 10-ounce box

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3 Orange juice costs $6.40 for 2 litres and $8.70 for 3 litres. Which is the better buy?

A. The 3-litre bottle

B. The 2-litre bottle

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4 Breakfast cereal costs $4.50 for 500 g and $6.00 for 750 g. Which is the better buy?

- A The 500 g box
- B The 750 g box

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5 A 12-pack of soda costs $3.99 and a 20-pack costs $5.48. Which pack is cheaper per can?

- A The 20-pack
- B The 12-pack

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6 Rice costs $3.60 for 1 kg and $16.50 for 5 kg. Which is the better buy?

- A The 5 kg bag
- B The 1 kg bag

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7 What is the unit price of 8 apples for $4.00?

- **A** $0.40 per apple
- **B** $0.50 per apple
- **C** $0.80 per apple
- **D** $2.00 per apple

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8 A store sells 1.5 litres of soda for $2.25 and 2.5 litres for $3.50. Which has the lower unit price?

- **A** The 2.5-litre bottle
- **B** The 1.5-litre bottle

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9 If 3 kg of apples costs $7.50, how much would 8 kg cost at the same unit price?

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10 A bigger pack always costs less per unit. Is that true?

A. No, compare the unit prices

B. Yes, a bigger pack is always cheaper per unit

C. Yes, a bigger pack always costs less in total

D. No, a smaller pack is always cheaper per unit

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ANSWER KEY

1. 0.80

2. The 10-ounce box

3. The 3-litre bottle

4. The 750 g box

5. The 20-pack

6. The 5 kg bag

7. $0.50 per apple

8. The 2.5-litre bottle

9. 20

10. No, compare the unit prices

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