

Saving Money at the Grocery Store

Most people do not enjoy going to the grocery store. The stores are crowded, it is inconvenient, and most of all, expensive. Here are a few tips on how to save money when buying groceries.

1. Plan out meals for the week.

Make a list of all of the foods you want to have for breakfast, lunch and dinner over the next week. Don't be afraid to plan meals around what you have on hand, coupons or what is on sale this week.

2. Make a list and stick to it.

Using your meal plan, make a shopping list of items you need that are not in your cabinets, refrigerator, and freezer.

3. Choose the right grocery store.

Not all prices at every store are the same. Figure out which store is cheapest for the things you need and go there.

4. Look beyond the grocery store.

Dollar stores may have cheaper canned goods and farmers markets may have cheaper fresh produce. Some Farmers Markets will match your SNAP benefits up to \$20 a day (if you receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits).

5. Don't be afraid of coupons.

There are thousands of coupons found in newspapers, magazines, and online. You can also download an app for coupons. Only use coupons on items you were already planning to buy.

6. Only shop once a week.

Going to the store less often can reduce impulse buys. Avoid going to the gas station or corner store for things that are forgotten on grocery day.

7. Don't go to the grocery store hungry.

If you feel hungry, eat a small snack before shopping for groceries. Being hungry, will make it harder to resist foods that are not on your list.

8. Don't waste left overs.

Pack leftovers for lunch or use them later in the week. This will cut down on the food and money being wasted.

9. When you can, buy in bulk.

Many stores have specials on bulk foods throughout the year. Stock up on these item while they are on sale. Be sure to use the food before it goes bad; it is not cheaper to buy in bulk if you do not use it.

10. Drink more water.

Tea, soda, juice, and other beverages are expensive. Water is a much healthier and cheaper option. Try using a reusable water bottle. Bottled water is not cheaper.

11. Buy store brand items.

Most store brand foods taste similar but are often cheaper than the name brand options. Compare the nutrition facts to make you are getting the same thing.

12. Price per unit.

Check the foods' shelf label carefully, look at price per unit. This is the cost of the product divided by how much of the product there is. Some options look like they are cheaper, but are actually in a smaller package.

Unit Price 45.8¢ per ounce	Retail Price \$3.44
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0	

13. Do not feel obligated to fill the entire cart.

Just because there is a large shopping cart, does not mean it needs to be filled to the top. Try using a handheld basket to limit the amount of space to fill.

14. Ask to have your meat sliced.

Purchasing large cuts of meat is usually less expensive. Ask the butcher to slice it for you. Freeze extra meat to use at a later time.

15. Avoid paying for convenience items.

Purchasing pre-prepared fruits and vegetables is almost always more expensive. Buy the items whole and prepare them at home.

