

The Active Consumer

Tips for Saving More at the Store this Year

(NAPSA)—How well do you plan your excursions to the grocery store? By using common sense and your computer, you can save time and money. Try these savvy shopping strategies.

1. Use coupons as a trusted source for savings. Coupons are a great way to save on your favorite brands. Newspaper circulars offer traditional coupons, and now the Internet makes finding coupons fast, easy—and free. Try coolsavings.com, ivillage.com or your favorite manufacturer's Web site.

2. Home Economics 101. Think through menus and house-keeping “to do’s” in advance. Web sites like allrecipes.com and homemadesimple.com will inspire your creativity and keep you focused on your shopping trip.

3. Prepare a list prior to grocery shopping. Don't forget your shopping list—it will save you money. More than 40 percent of people purchase on impulse when shopping if they do not have a list with them, according to greedyfools.com.

4. Never grocery shop when you're hungry. The hungrier you are, the more you will crave food that may not be on your list or in your budget. Shop after a meal, or better yet, after you exercise.

5. Keep your eyes peeled. Food manufacturers compete for the best shelf space, so look high and low. For every one type of product, there are a variety of brands with varying prices including generic brands, which often offer the best value.

6. Save with the “Blinky Machines.” The dispensers perched on store shelves make it easy to spot great coupons and save on your favorite brands.



7. Give yourself a time limit. Get in and out of the store as quickly as possible. Experts say that for every extra minute you shop, you spend 50 cents more.

8. Shop at the right time. Mornings are less crowded—making it easier to satisfy your need for speed. And, shop when double and triple coupons are offered.

9. Cut down your trips to the grocery store. Make a monthly trip to a discount grocery store for staples and packaged goods. Then, shop weekly for milk, fruit and veggies. You'll buy less produce that often goes to waste.

10. Keep score. Track what you're paying for groceries each week. Using a computer program like Quicken you can create categories in your online checkbook and track your purchases with ease.

With the money you save using these helpful tactics, consider helping another in need. Visit secondharvest.org or cutout hunger.org for more information on how you can feed the hungry in your own community.

These helpful tips are brought to you by coolsavings.com.