

Grocery List Basics: Plan To Save

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Making a grocery list before shopping can help you save time and money while keeping you focused on healthy eating. Before going to the store, plan and write down your list. When you're shopping, remember to stick to your list.

How to Make a Grocery List

Plan it.

1. Plan each meal for the next week or two for your family. For more details on meal planning, check out the UT Extension publication W1353 Meal Planning Made Easy.
2. Ensure your meals are balanced (carbohydrates, protein, and fat) according to MyPlate. You can learn more about MyPlate online.
3. Work with anyone who lives in your house to create your grocery list. This way, you can buy food that everyone enjoys.
4. Write down everything you need for meals and how much of each item you require.
5. Keep your grocery list in a common place and add to it when you notice something is running low. Ask other family members to add to it too.
6. Check your pantry, refrigerator, and freezer first to avoid buying items you already have at home.
7. Create a basic list of items you buy regularly, so you don't forget anything.
8. Choose recipes with affordable ingredients or look for foods on sale to save money.

9. Search for coupons, store ads, and online deals for the items on your list and for frequently used staple foods.
10. Sign up for store reward cards for extra savings.
11. Remember that coupons and ads are only good deals if you actually need the items, can afford them, and will use them before they expire.
12. Use your grocery store's app or website. Store rewards can track your purchases, and you might be able to quickly generate a list based on what you usually buy.

Write it.

1. After writing your list, check it to ensure it fits your food budget.
2. Highlight items on your list for which you have coupons or that are on sale, so you don't forget to use them while shopping.
3. Consider using a grocery list or meal planning app on your smartphone.
4. Include all ingredients needed for your meals and snacks in your shopping list. Be sure to specify the amounts you need for each ingredient.
5. Organize your grocery list by category to make shopping easier and quicker. Some grocery list apps can do this automatically.
6. If you're using online grocery shopping, create your cart and use that to shop in-store or to order groceries for delivery or pick-up.

Stick to It

1. While shopping, make sure to stick to your list. Get what you need and leave! This saves time and money.
2. Avoid impulse buys while shopping. If you feel tempted to buy extra items, consider how they fit into your weekly meal plan and whether you'll use them before they spoil.
3. Using online grocery shopping can seem like it saves money, but make sure to stick to your list when adding new items to your cart.

Creating a grocery list prior to shopping can save time and money while promoting healthier eating habits. Planning and writing down your list before heading to the store helps maintain focus. **It's essential to adhere to the list during your shopping trip.**

Sample

GROCERY LIST

<div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">PRODUCE</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 2 cucumbers </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 package of cherry tomatoes </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 bag of granny smith apples </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 bag of spinach </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 zucchini </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 bag of baby bella mushrooms </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 package of small red potatoes </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 2 avocados </div>	<div style="background-color: #5d3556; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">GRAINS</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 loaf of Sourdough bread </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div>
<div style="background-color: #ffeb3b; color: #5d3556; text-align: center; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">MEAT</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 pound of ground turkey </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 package of lean strip steak </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1/2 pound of low sodium turkey breast deli meat </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div>	<div style="background-color: #ff9800; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">PROTEINS</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div>
<div style="background-color: #00bcd4; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">PAINTRY</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 can of chickpeas </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 can of low sodium black beans </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 container of quick oats </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 container of natural peanut butter </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 bag of natural cashews </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 bag of brown rice </div>	<div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">DAIRY</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1-gallon low-fat milk </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 container of fat free Greek plain yogurt </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div>
<div style="background-color: #ff9800; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">FREEZER</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 bag of frozen peas </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 bag of frozen diced potatoes </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 bag of frozen corn </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 bag of frozen broccoli </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div>	<div style="background-color: #5d3556; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">OTHER</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 1/2 gallon of 100% juice </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> </div>

Template

GROCERY LIST

PRODUCE

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GRAINS

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MEAT

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FREEZER

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OTHER

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