

# Grocery Shopping Simplified

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Healthy shopping can seem so confusing! Part of reducing overwhelm is to develop a grocery shopping system that enables you to shop efficiently and stay on track with your goals. You don't want to spend the entire day walking up and down the grocery store aisles, and you don't have to!

The first step to a simplified grocery shopping system is to **make sure you have a plan**. Avoid wandering into the store without a list and without knowing exactly what you are there to get. Going in without a plan almost guarantees that you will impulsively buy food that isn't in alignment with your health goals or your budget. This all goes back to setting aside the time to plan your meals for the week and make a grocery list.

## WHERE TO BEGIN

Here are some tips for once you enter the store, armed with your list:

- Shop the perimeter of the store first. This will allow you to stick with fresh, healthier choices and you will not be tempted by processed goodies and food labeled with tricky marketing claims.
- Know what food labels mean and do not be persuaded into buying processed foods because of the health claims. Stick to mostly unprocessed foods, and packaged foods in their most simple form (i.e. spaghetti sauce, salsa, plantain chips, almond butter)
- Don't make saving money your highest priority when buying food. Yes, be conscious of sales and eating what's in season to avoid high prices, but work to save your money on other things. If you put food and your health high on your financial priority list, you can budget in other areas.

## BUDGETING

While I don't advocate sacrificing food quality to save money I'm a big fan of saving money where you can. Here are some tips:

- Shop in season. If you are trying to buy organic blueberries in December, you are going to notice that they are 3x more expensive than during the summer months. Eating what's in season is far less expensive. Stock up when produce is in season and freeze it!
- Frozen veggies sometimes get a bad rep, but they've improved immeasurably since that soggy spinach you recall eating as a kid and you can stock up on weeks' worth. Check out Kitchen Daily's [best and worst frozen vegetables](#).
- Familiarize yourself with [the Dirty Dozen and Clean Fifteen](#). Prioritize buying organic the foods sprayed with the most pesticides.
- Buy in bulk when you can. Costco and other big-box stores are carrying more organic and healthy options. You can even cook large portions of food and freeze for leftovers.
- Shop once a week. Every time you walk into the store you are at risk for buying things that are not on your list. Even an extra \$10 per trip will add up over time. Meal plan and shop once time to cut down on impulse buying.
- Weed out the junk food. We often see healthier food as an added expensive when the goal is to be replacing unhealthy food with healthier choices. Reduce your impulse purchases like mid-afternoon coffees when you need a pick-me-up and gas station snacks. Consider eating out less overall and eat more meals at home.
- Buy whole foods, as opposed to pre-cut, chopped, minced, etc. Grocery stores charge a premium to do the chopping, and while it's super convenient to have someone else do the prep work, it's also more expensive.

## OTHER HELPFUL TIPS

To help save time and/or money, considering these services:

- Prioritize quality with your meat & eggs. Grass-fed beef is more expensive but superior in quality and health benefits. A 2010 study in the *Nutrition Journal* reviewed three decades of research comparing the nutritional profiles of grass-fed and grain-fed cattle. It turns out that grass-fed beef has lower levels of unhealthy fats and higher levels of omega-3 fatty acids, which are better for cardiovascular health. It also has lower levels of dietary cholesterol and provides more vitamin A and E, as well as cancer-fighting antioxidants.
- If free-range poultry and wild caught fish are out of your budget, try eating fewer animal foods and more plant foods. You're better off eating less animal protein and having it be higher quality.
- Check the freezer section for marked-down grass-fed meat and free-range poultry. At Trader Joe's you will save \$1 per pound on grass-fed beef just by purchasing in the frozen section instead of the refrigerated section.
- Farmer's Market: all the produce is guaranteed to be local and in-season, packed with nutrients! You have the opportunity to get to know the people who are growing your food and often buy organic produce at a discount price.
- Produce Delivery Service: don't have time to hit up the Farmer's Market? A produce delivery service is the next best thing. Local, fresh produce delivered to your door. I personally love [Farm Fresh to You](#) because you can customize your delivery choices. (Use the code **LIND8455** to get 15% off your first delivery.)
- Another fantastic option is [Imperfect Produce](#), a company combating food waste in America by collecting delicious, healthy produce that is "imperfect" by grocery store standards (the carrots aren't perfectly shaped) and boxing it up for local delivery. Use this link to save \$10 off your first delivery: <http://imprfct.us/mpyBy>.
- Grocery Delivery: many stores are now offering grocery delivery to your door! While there's usually an added fee, you may wind up saving money if you struggle with impulse shopping when you head into the store. Also, the time you save on making a trip to the store may be worth it to you!

- Shop during “off” hours. Grocery stores are busiest during peak hours, such as on the weekends. You can cut time off your shopping trip by picking another time during the week, like an evening after dinner.

## ONLINE GROCERY SHOPPING

**Thrive Market:** imagine that Whole Foods, Costco and Amazon had a baby. That’s Thrive Market! Unbeatable prices and fast shipping on healthy food, personal care, supplements are more. Use [this link](#) to save an extra 25% OFF your first order + a 30-day free trial membership when you sign up!

**Amazon:** what isn’t on Amazon?? I always check here for money-saving options on my favorite things. Last week I ordered 6 boxes of [organic, gluten-free cheerios](#) for a fraction of the cost at the local health food store. You can also stock up on specialty items, such as [Primal Kitchen Foods dressings](#), my favorite salad dressings!

**U.S. Wellness Meats:** grass-fed meats, organ meats, bone broth, seafood, cooking fats, snacks, and pet food. All super-high quality!

**Vital Choice Seafood:** wild seafood, grass-fed beef, bone broth and organic food.

**Butcher Box:** delivers 100% grass-fed beef, free range organic chicken and heritage breed pork directly to your door. They’re like the neighborhood butcher for modern America. Use [this link](#) to get 2 lbs. free of grass-fed ground beef in every box for life!