

Shopping for One or Two: Planning



Shopping for one or two people can be a challenge, but careful planning makes it easier. The following suggestions will simplify your trips to the store and help you save money at the same time.

At home

- Make a shopping list and keep it handy so you can add to it as supplies run low.
- Plan what you will be eating for the week, using Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide.
- Look for food bargains in newspapers and flyers.
- Keep a list of prices for foods you usually buy and check it against advertised specials. The price in the flyer may not really be a sale price.
- Organize your shopping list in the same way that the store is laid out, to save time and energy while shopping.
- Find any coupons that match your shopping list. Use coupons to buy only the foods that you want and need.
- If you can't get to the store yourself, check whether your grocer offers a delivery service. Or contact a local senior centre, which may know volunteer drivers. Grocery shopping online is another option if you have Internet access.
- Arrange to shop with a friend. You can share the taxi fare and some of the larger grocery items.
- Take your list, your coupons and glasses or magnifying glasses to read labels and prices. You

- might also want a calculator for figuring out which items are better buys.

Buy canned or frozen vegetables and fruits. You don't need to clean or chop them, you save money, and they won't rot in your crisper! You get the same health benefits whether your vegetables and fruits are fresh, frozen or canned. Frozen and canned produce is packaged when it is fresh and it has no time to lose precious nutrients. Ensure that your canned goods are packed in water or juice, not in syrup, and have no added sugar or salt.

At the store

- Shop when the store is not as busy, so employees will have time to help with items that are hard to reach or lift.
- Take advantage of discount days for seniors offered by some grocery stores.
- Compare prices between brands. Store brands are often cheaper.
- Check the "unit price" such as the price per ounce (gram) or per pound (kilogram). Most grocery stores display unit prices on shelf labels above or below the item. Bigger sizes are not always the best buy.

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- Buy the size that is the most economical and convenient for you. Smaller portions are available for a variety of foods (soup, fruits, vegetables, baked beans, stews, pudding, yogurt, cheese) and may be worth the extra cost if you can avoid throwing any away.
- If the larger size is less expensive but more than you can use, share the extra with a friend.
- Bulk bins allow you to buy exactly as much as you want of many staples. Bulk items are usually cheaper, but not always. Check unit prices to be sure.
- The grade or quality of a product is determined by looks, not by nutritional value. If appearance doesn't matter to you, save money by buying lower grade, such as Utility Grade or Grade B chickens and Canada Choice fruits and vegetables.
- Read labels to be sure you are getting what you want. Check the ingredients, listed in descending order by quantity, with the main ingredient listed first. Look at the
- Nutrition Facts table and choose foods that are lower in salt, sugar and saturated/trans fat. To learn more about reading food labels, visit www.healthyeatingisinstore.ca..
- Check the “best before” date to make sure the food won't spoil before you can eat it.
- When the store is not busy, ask cashiers to ring your groceries through more slowly so that you can check for correct pricing.

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