**You’ve Got to Eat!**Grocery shopping in the game of life

***1. Menu plan*** *- Use a piece of paper, calendar, or a menu planner to jot down your meal ideas.*

***2. Grocery list*** *- Write down the foods you need for the next week.*

***3. Go shopping*** *– “Buy” the foods you need on your grocery list.*

1- Menu Planning
Use the meal planner calendar provided and the checklist below to plan your meals for the week.

 Eat at least one dark green and one orange vegetable each day.

 Choose vegetables and fruit with little or no added fat, sugar or salt.

 Have vegetables and fruit more often than juice.

 Make at least half of your grain products whole grain each day.

 Choose grain products that are lower in fat, sugar or salt.

Drink skim, 1% or 2% milk each day. Drink fortified soy beverage if you do not drink milk.

Select lower fat milk alternatives.

Have meat alternatives such as beans, lentils and tofu often.

Choose at least two Food Guide Servings of fish each week.

Select lean meat and alternatives prepared with little or no added fat or salt.

****Include a small amount of unsaturated fat each day.

Satisfy your thirst with water.

Limit foods and beverages high in calories, fat, sugar or salt.

2- Grocery List
Make a grocery list with the templates provided based on the meal plans you made.

3- Go Shopping!
Bring your grocery list to the store and keep track of all the products you brought and how much they cost, use the sheet provided.

Read the shopping tips below so you can make the most of your time at the store!

**Shopping Tips**

* Buy vegetables and fruit fresh when they are in season and freeze extras for later.
* Choose canned or frozen vegetables and fruit - they are affordable and nutritious options.
* Use beans, lentils and other legumes in place of meat several times a week.
* Stock up on canned goods and staples when they are on sale. Store them safely and use them up by their "best-before" date.
* Skip the cookies and baked goods, chips and other salty snack foods, soft drinks and other high calorie beverages.
* Don't shop for food when you're hungry. That's just asking for trouble. Why? Because when you're hungry, even those chocolate-covered burritos look good.
* **Clip (or Print) those Coupons**
Taking the time to [clip](http://www.keepandshare.com/htm/lists/grocery_list/C01_7-Ways-to-Save-Time-%26-Money-at-the-Grocery-Store.php) coupons - and actually remembering to use them - can save you some money. Just don't get caught up in buying items you don't really want or need just because you have a [coupon](http://www.keepandshare.com/htm/lists/grocery_list/C01_7-Ways-to-Save-Time-%26-Money-at-the-Grocery-Store.php) for 50 cents off. There are also many [online coupon](http://www.keepandshare.com/htm/lists/grocery_list/C01_7-Ways-to-Save-Time-%26-Money-at-the-Grocery-Store.php) sites that offer [valuable coupons](http://www.keepandshare.com/htm/lists/grocery_list/C01_7-Ways-to-Save-Time-%26-Money-at-the-Grocery-Store.php) that you simply print out at home.
* **Make Your own 100 Calorie Packs**
You know those great little pre-packaged 100 calorie snacks? You can make them yourself and save. For example, it costs less to buy a big bag of pretzels and package them by serving in small bowls or bags than to buy them already divided up. With convenience foods, you're usually paying for the extra packaging.
* **Shop in Bulk**
No, that doesn't mean M&Ms. That means staples you frequently need like meat, frozen vegetables, laundry soap and toilet paper. Larger quantities usually cost less, and you'll also save yourself some trips to the store to buy these items.

**3. Don't recycle those pesky flyers yet**
"Keep your eyes open for No Frills’ amazing dollar sale. It's a great opportunity to stock up on everything, from dish soap to a bag of avocados."

**5. Have a plan**
"Walk to the store. Only buying as much as you can carry really makes you maximize on the things you need, and you put back the non-essentials. Plus it gives you free exercise and saves gas and mileage."
– Colleen Tully

"Make your shopping list at home and stick to it. Also, if you plan meals ahead of time you'll only buy what you need for the week."
– Christina Grivas

**6. Stick to the edges of the grocery store**
"Only shop the perimeter of the store. If you stick to the fruit, veggies, dairy, meat and bread that line the edges of the store – and skip all the packaged (way overpriced) aisles in the centre – you'll save tons of money. You'll [**eat healthier**](http://www.canadianliving.com/health/nutrition/10_tips_for_healthy_eating_on_a_budget.php) too!"
– Jessica Hotson

**Store Brands - Try it, You May Like It**
The days of generic type packaging and bland tasting food in store brand products is over. Companies have worked hard to improve their private-label brands and often the taste is equal to the national brands. Do not be afraid to experiment. If you find the product meets your standards, you can save an average of 40 percent off your annual grocery bill.

**Setting Limits on Impulse Buying**
Avoiding spontaneous shopping trips is one of the best deterrents to impulse buying. Sticking to a well thought-out shopping list will help will help cut down on grabbing for things that you do not need. In addition, giving yourself enough time to shop will help prevent dashing in and reaching for the first item that you come to. Setting a dollar limit for impulse buying will help soothe cravings without busting the budget.

**Learn to Be a Label Reader**
Reading the product label is the best way to find out more than what is advertised on the box. Ingredients are listed in order by the quantity actually used when making the product. The ingredients used in the highest quantity are listed first. For example, if you are looking for avocado dip you will want to see avocadoes listed in the first part of the ingredient list, not the last part.

If you are looking to cut fat from your diet, be careful of words such as "lite" or "fat-free" which can have broad definitions. By reading the label you can get a better idea of what the fat-to-calorie ratio is as well as other valuable nutritional information.

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