

Squeezed by rising food prices?



SMALL CHANGES in your shopping habits can mean **SAVING MONEY** at the grocery store.

What can YOU do to save?

Check off the tips on this flyer that can work for you and your family.

Remember...changing habits is hard! Try one or two each week. Soon you'll see some relief in your grocery bills!

BEFORE YOU GO TO THE STORE...

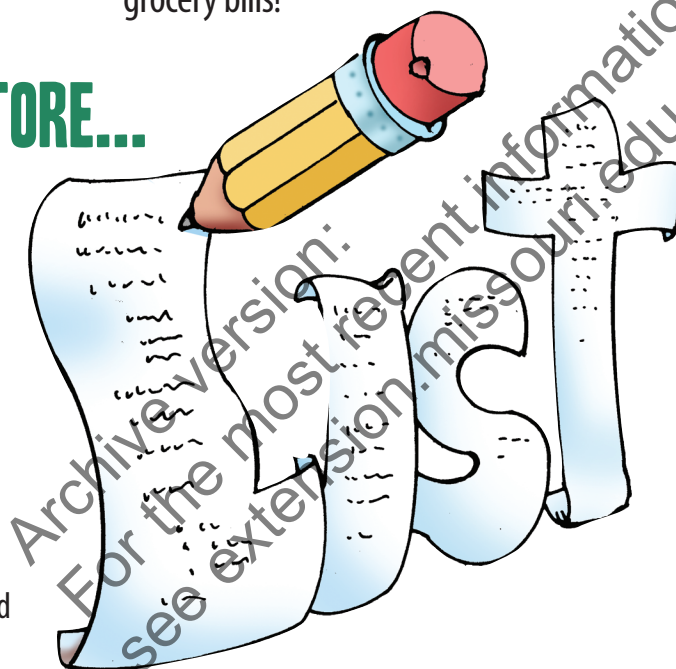
Make a list. Why? You'll spend less time in the store. For every minute in a supermarket, you spend \$2.17, according to the Food Marketing Institute. Also, if you have a list you will make less trips to the store and save gas.

Plan your meals. Look for specials and seasonal foods.

Where you shop may cost you money. Bulk food stores may not always be a good choice. You may be tempted to buy foods you don't need and can't store properly. Large food packages make it too easy to eat larger portions.

Use coupons for foods you need. Sometimes coupons tempt you to buy things you don't need.

Convenience foods can drain your food dollar. You pay for convenience such as a ready-to-cook chicken breast. If you prepare it yourself, YOU have control over what goes in the food - less fat and salt.



Looking for the **best value?** Foods high in fat and sugar, like cookies, chips, doughnuts and soft drinks, have fewer nutrients than nutritious fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat milk and lean meats. **Remember, the fiber in fruits and vegetables fills you up and keeps hunger away.**

Buy non-food items like pet food, cleaning supplies and personal care items **from discount stores.** You pay more for these at the grocery store.

AT THE STORE...

Shop alone. Shopping without kids can help you avoid the *nag* effect.

Shop on a full stomach so you are less tempted to buy more.

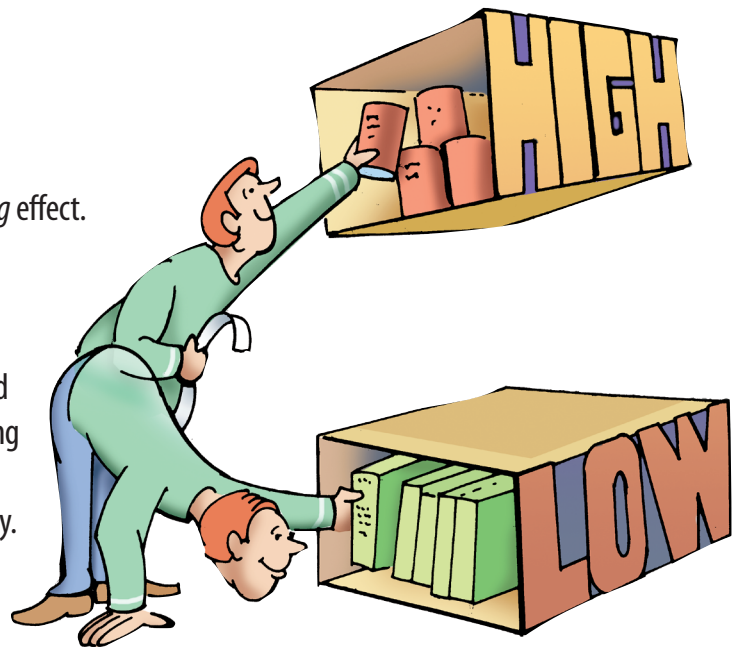
Consider store brands. Many taste the same as name brands and are from the same companies as name brands. If you are making a dish where appearance doesn't matter, like using frozen vegetables in a mixed dish, buy a store brand and save money.

Bigger is not always cheaper especially if you buy a large size food package and throw food away. Bring a calculator to compare unit prices. Sales tags often do not re-compute unit prices.

Shop the outer aisles where you find nutritious fruits, vegetables, dairy products and meats. The inside aisles are where you find higher priced processed foods and snacks.

Look high, look low. Bargains are usually on the top or bottom shelves - NOT at eye level.

Track your store's loss-leader items. What are loss-leader items? They are low-priced items to get you to the store so you buy other higher priced items. Different sections of the store are featured each week. Stock up on each week's loss-leader items, especially things like cereals and juice.



EATING OUT...

Eating out costs money and uses extra gas. Preparing food at home allows YOU to control what goes in your food. Food prepared at home can be healthier. If you have children, involve them in the meal planning and preparation to build their kitchen skills.

If you must eat out, share an entrée. Or choose appetizers which are smaller portions of food.

WHEN YOU GET HOME...

Store food properly. Food that gets thrown out is money lost. According to a University of Arizona study, households throw away about \$600 a year - that's 10 \$60 fill-ups with gas!

EATING AT HOME...

Portion sizes. Most of us eat larger portions than we need. Serving food on smaller plates and drinks in taller, thinner glasses can help us eat or drink less.

Eat slowly. Put your fork down between bites. You'll eat less. Try to be the last person who finishes eating!

Repackage large containers of food into smaller bags and containers. If you must have snacks on hand like cookies, smaller portions help you avoid overindulging.

Keep healthy foods in sight - like fruits on a bowl in the kitchen or cut-up vegetables in the refrigerator. You and your family are more likely to choose them over unhealthier snack foods.

PREPARING FOOD AT HOME...

What you don't use, you lose. If, for example, you are preparing broccoli, cut up the stalk and cook it so it is tender. If you use just the broccoli flowerets you are throwing money away.

Plan leftovers. Got veggies left over from last night's meal? Throw them in tomorrow's omelette or salad or pizza.

Add meatless meals to your family's menus. Or make a stir-fry with lots of vegetables and whole grain pasta to fill you up. Don't want to go meatless? **Add a smaller amount of meat** in your stir-fry.

Cook once, eat twice. Buy enough ingredients to cook more than one meal and freeze meal-sized portions. Now there's no need to buy frozen dinners.

BEFORE YOU GO TO WORK, AND AT WORK...

Eat breakfast at home or prepare something to take with you. Food on the road costs more. And sitting in the drive-through lane wastes gas.

Foods from vending machines are expensive. **Bring food from home.**

RESOURCES YOU MAY NOT HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT...

Grow your own food. Participants of SNAP can buy seeds and plants with the EBT card. For online information about SNAP, go to dss.mo.gov/fsd/fstamp.



Shop at the local farmers market. In season costs less. You may find bargains at the end of the day. To find a Missouri farmers market near you go to agebb.missouri.edu/fmkt/dir/index.htm. To find sources of local food in Missouri go online to foodcircles.missouri.edu/sources.htm.

Check with your local school or school district to see if your child may be eligible for free or reduced price benefits for School Meal Programs.

Are you an older adult interested in receiving meals? Contact your local Area Agency on Aging online at health.mo.gov/seniors/aaa.

If you fall into any of the categories below and meet income guidelines, you may be eligible to receive services and nutritious foods from the WIC (Women, Infants and Children) program:

- * you are pregnant
- * you are breast-feeding (up to 1 year after delivery as long as you are breast-feeding)
- * it has been 6 months or less since you delivered your baby or terminated the pregnancy
- * you have a baby up to 1 year of age or children up to age 5

To find a WIC agency, call TEL-LINK at 1-800-TEL-LINK or 1-800-835-5465, or check with your local health department.

WANT MORE TIPS?

Go to the **MissouriFamilies** website, missourifamilies.org, and search “food budget” or “living on less.” Or go directly to articles on the food budget at missourifamilies.org/features/nutritionarticles/budget.htm.

Contact **your local MU Extension center** (go to extension.missouri.edu/regions to find your local office) for more information or to see if they have classes on nutrition and saving money at the grocery store.

For more information call **MU Extension's Show Me Nutrition Line** at 1-888-515-0016

Running out of money for food?

Contact your local food stamp office or go online to: dss.mo.gov/fsd/fstamp.

Archive version:
For the most recent information,
see extension.missouri.edu

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Cindy Fauser, regional nutrition and health specialist, MU Extension's East Central Region, contributed to this publication.