



Quick Tips

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Supermarket Secrets Helpful Tips to Save You Time and Money

Many of us think of supermarket shopping as a dreaded chore. For most, the reason is two-fold: time and money. Here are a few tips that'll help you save on both.

A little organization goes a long way. A supermarket's busiest times are weekdays between 5 and 7pm and weekend mornings. The slowest times are weekday mornings as well as popular TV nights. By planning ahead (and setting your TiVo®), you'll minimize the time you spend at the market. Also, try not to stray from your shopping list and never shop when you're hungry. Both faux pas are notorious for adding time to your excursion.

Be friendly. People who work in service industries are exposed to unfriendly customers on a daily basis. A smile and a simple "hello" go a long way. As you become a store regular, employees will soon recognize you as one of the "nice ones". Achieving this status may bring surprising results. Don't be shocked if checkout lanes open on your behalf or employees offer suggestions like, "The larger size is on sale for the same price."



Look for bargains. Most markets have bargain racks in both the produce and meat sections. This type of price slashing has less to do with product spoilage than it does with the store's inability to sell a steak that's not bright red or a banana that's not unblemished or a perfect yellow. The irony is that when it comes to steak, age is good. Bright red might look prettier, but brown tastes better.

Utilize expertise. Ask the liquor manager for suggestions of a great wine or approach a produce worker about picking out the perfect watermelon. Also, acquaint yourself with the butchers and fish mongers. If you ask nicely, many of them will allow you to bypass the selection in the case and bring you cuts of meat or fish from the back, where it's the freshest. In addition, many cuts of meat are sold in large quantities. Don't be afraid to have something cut in half and repackaged. It'll save you money. Don't worry – they'll sell the other half.

Minimize your stops. Do you find yourself making several stops to get what you need? In many cases all it takes is a conversation with a store manager to have a product specially ordered and on the shelf.

Look at expiration dates. When shopping for any item with an expiration (i.e. dairy products, bagged lettuce, etc.), always pull from the back of the case. This is where stores stock their freshest products. It is also how they ensure that older merchandise gets sold. By purchasing a fresher item, you extend its shelf life and postpone another trip to the market.

Grocery shopping doesn't have to be a pain in the asparagus, especially when it's really good asparagus sold at half price.

If you have any supermarket tips you'd like to share, feel free to call me!

