



# Food For Thought

*Healthy Ideas for Preschoolers*

## Ten Ways to *Save* at the Grocery Store

Everyone would like to save money at the grocery store. Here are some tips to get you started.

- 1. Divide grocery money into equal weekly amounts.** Try not to “borrow from next week’s allowance. This way money should last all month.
- 2. Watch for store newspaper ads and coupons.** Take advantage of coupons and sale items, but be sure your family will use a “bargain.” If they won’t, it’s no saving.
- 3. Plan ahead.** Plan ahead for the main foods you will cook for the next several days. Are there items on sale this week that you can use? Check how much storage space you have for groceries.
- 4. Do most of your shopping only once a week.** You will save time and not spend as much money on “extras” you see as you shop.
- 5. Make a list and stick to it.** Don’t be tempted to buy things you haven’t planned on getting, unless you find less expensive substitutes for items on your list.
- 6. Shop by yourself.** Go without your friends, then you won’t be led astray by anything they buy. If possible, don’t take children with you.
- 7. Go when you aren’t hungry.** Shop on a full stomach or else everything will look inviting.
- 8. Compare brands.** Look at the cost and the quantity. Usually the store’s own brand is cheaper, but not always.
- 9. Compare different stores.** Look at prices in several stores if you have a choice. If you find one store is generally less expensive, stick with it.
- 10. Compare forms of food.** Buy a lower-cost form of the product if it will do as well.
  - Canned tomato pieces rather than whole tomatoes.
  - “Day-old” bread, if it is to be eaten soon.
  - Take time to compare frozen, fresh and canned products.



Try following these tips every time you shop for groceries. With their help, you **can** save money.

### *Meal Planning Made Easy*

Nutritious meals don’t just happen; they are planned. Family members need adequate amounts of protein, vitamins, minerals, and calories each day. Not getting the right foods every day can affect the health and well-being of every member of the family.

Plus, meal planning saves money. With planned meals and a list, you’ll save time and make fewer “quick” trips to the grocery store.



To get started planning nutritious meals, base your meal planning on the Food Guide Pyramid. Each day, try for at least:

6 servings of breads, cereals and other grain products;  
3 servings of vegetables;  
2 servings of fruits;  
2 servings of meats and  
2 to 3 servings of dairy products.

Here is a basic plan to get you started.

**Breakfast**

Fruit or Juice  
Bread of some kind  
and/or cereal  
(Some people occasionally  
add meat and/or eggs)  
Milk

**Lunch**

Main dish (sandwich, soup,  
casserole, etc.)  
Fruit      Vegetable  
Bread  
Milk

**Snack**

**Dinner**

Main dish (usually contains  
meat, but not always)  
2 vegetables  
(or vegetable and fruit)  
Bread

Make sure you're including nutritious foods for meals and snacks – then sit down with the grocery store ads and make that list.



**Creamy Ham and Pasta**

- 2 cups uncooked pasta
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 6 ounces extra lean cooked ham, cut up
- 6 ounces low fat cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup skim milk

Cook pasta according to the package directions, adding frozen peas the last 6 minutes of cooking time and ham the last minute of cooking time. Drain; return to pan. In a small bowl, combine softened cream cheese and milk; stir into hot cooked pasta mixture. Cook and stir over low heat 1 to 2 minutes or just until thoroughly heated.  
Serves 4.

Per serving: 370 calories, 10 g. fat, 36 mg cholesterol, 650 mg sodium, 2 g fiber.



**Glazed Carrots**

- 8 carrots, cut into 1-inch pieces
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 2 Tablespoons margarine, melted



Place carrots in a casserole dish with melted margarine. Cover and microwave on full power 6 minutes, stirring halfway through the cooking time. Stir in brown sugar to coat carrots. Cover and microwave on full power for 3 minutes, stirring halfway through cooking time. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.  
Serves 4.

Per serving: 215 calories, 6 g fat, 0 cholesterol, 125 mg sodium, 4 g fiber

Prepared by:  
Barbara Farnier  
Extension Educator  
Nutrition & Wellness  
Matteson Center