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5 Tips For Grocery Shopping With A Toddler

By Teresa Kolvek

Doing any kind of grocery shopping with a toddler can be a real challenge. But, with a little preparation and a lot of patience, it can be an enjoyable and entertaining experience. Here are some tips and tricks that work for our family.

1. Bring snacks! This is probably the number one most important thing to remember. A hungry toddler is a cranky toddler, and they get hungry often. I usually bring a plastic zipper bag full of her favorite dry cereal and a sippy cup of water. This will quite often keep her happy for most of the trip through the store.

2. If he gets restless sitting in the cart, let him down to move around for a little while. If you can bring along another adult or an older child to chase him around while you get the shopping done, by all means do so. Sometimes toddlers just need to burn off some energy.

3. Let her help! My girl loves to throw items into the basket. Of course, she will sometimes grab random things off the shelf and throw them in, but I just pull them back out when she's not looking. This leads in to tip number four:

4. Let him shop! Allow him to pick an item off the shelf and carry it around the store with you. (Just make sure it isn't breakable!) If it's something you don't want to buy, odds are he'll lose interest in it long before you reach the checkout, whereupon you can either put it back on the shelf or hand it to the cashier apologetically.

5. And finally, be careful what you offer as a means of distraction! One mom I know had a cherry slush hurled at her in the store by a grumpy toddler. The less potential for a mess there is, the better.

Shopping with little ones doesn't always have to be stressful. Believe it or not, it can even be fun!

Teresa Kolvek and her husband, Tony, are the proud parents of a beautiful and spirited toddler named Amelia. Visit Teresa's website at

5 Tips For Grocery Shopping With A Toddler

<http://www.toddlerdish.com>

for great information, tips, and recipes for toddlers.

Save Money On Your Grocery Bill

By Shannon Jarvies

We've all heard about certain ways to cut your grocery bill like avoiding the grocery store when you're hungry, using coupons on double coupons day, and buying only the items on your list. These are all good tips and we should keep using them. However, I've found a few pointers that might help you save even more on your grocery bill.

The first thing you need to do after you've made your grocery list is to try to figure the total cost of your grocery bill. Make sure you've got everything on the list that you'll need because after you've made an educated guess you're going to go to your purse (or wallet), take out the cash and leave the rest behind. Believe me, this will definitely cut back on the unnecessary extras because you won't have the credit cards to fall back on. And if you're like me, you'd rather be hung upside down by your toe nails than be found short at the check out.

Don't be afraid to look on the day-old bread rack or in the "about to expire" section of the meat department. You have to be careful, but you'll probably be able to tell whether the item is good. Just make sure to use it right away, don't let it sit in your refrigerator for a week. Who knows, it just might "meat" your expectations and save you money in the process!

Another thing to think about is the time of day, time of week and even time of month that you are shopping. I've found that early in the morning and in the middle of the week is when the grocery stores are less busy and you'll be able to get more efficient shopping done. Be careful not to go on the first day or two of the month. Some stores have been known to raise prices because that is the time that social security and welfare checks go out.

Buy in bulk when it makes sense. If you're shopping at Costco or Sam's Club you still need to comparison shop. I've found that some of the items are just as inexpensive at our local grocery store and there have been times when Costco's or Sam's Club prices were higher. So most of the time it makes sense for me to get most of our groceries at my local store because we live two hours away from Sam's Club

Look high and low for savings, literally. The grocery stores purposely place the higher-priced name brand items at eye level. The lower priced generic and store brands are usually higher and lower than the brand name items. Remember that the generic brand or store brand isn't always the less expensive. Some stores I've been to list the cost per ounce, or per item (trash bags) so be sure to compare these prices when shopping.

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Last but not least, if you've got kids at home try to find another mom to trade shopping times with. It's a lot easier to shop without kids, you won't be tempted to buy extras just to keep them quiet and you'll have more time to comparison shop. Your chances of having an enjoyable shopping experience will go up as well as their chances for survival!

Shannon Jarvies is a work at home mom with five beautiful children and a wonderful husband. Visit her Debt Management Website for debt consolidation, budgeting help and money saving tips and ideas. And join her Money Management Discussion Group

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