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Grocery Shopping With Young Children

By Dylan

Grocery shopping is one of those things that just has to be done. We can't put it off just because

the kids are awkward. We still need to eat. The key to stress-free shopping with kids is time - and plenty of it. How long would it normally take you to do the weekly shopping? OK. Double it. If you're short of time then try and make some elsewhere. If you try to rush the big weekly shop you'll get stressed, the kids will get stressed and you'll think the world and his wife is staring at you.

OK so how do you make time? Well, why not combine the shopping with a meal out? You'll save time on food preparation and washing up and it doesn't need to be expensive. Most large stores will serve food these days fairly cheaply. The added bonus of doing it this way is that the kids think it's fun. Children always think eating out is fun. You might not but they'll enjoy it.

Preparation is the next most important item on the list. Remember that children won't cry to deliberately annoy you until they reach 15-18 months old. Any younger than that and there's usually a reason. Make sure you have a small drink and snacks. Raisins are great because they take ages to get out the packet with little fingers. You can play games with older children and ask for their help with little items. Never try and shop if your child is likely to be hungry or thirsty and try to do it when they're least likely to be bored. This is another good reason to combine the shop with a meal as your kids will have eaten and had a drink and I find they can be interested for a while after lunch. The only problem is you will need to be prepared to leave your trolley and find a toilet for the older toddler round about aisle 5 (and 9 - and immediately once you've just unloaded the trolley!)

Finally - there's nothing wrong with a bit of bribery once in a while. If you're shopping in the morning or mid-afternoon then perhaps you could offer to go for a milkshake and biscuit if they're good. If you're shopping after lunch then maybe put a small ice-lolly in the trolley for afterwards.

So - to re-cap you need time (the less time you have the more stressed you will be), to be prepared (finding your child has a dirty nappy just as you get to the store and then remembering that you left the supplies in the house is really annoying - trust me), a little treat (not essential but always useful) and a lot of patience (always). Enjoy!

Dylan maintains the

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A Simple Technique to Remember Grocery Items

By Allen Beechick

Whoops! I Forgot the ... at the Grocery Store!

Have you ever left the grocery store and said, "Whoops, I forgot one recipe ingredient"? Or, "Whoops, I forgot to use my coupon"? Or even while in the store, "Whoops, I passed that aisle, and now I have to go back"?

Here's a simple technique to help. Use an aisle-by-aisle grocery list. Include coupon reminders on your list.

You could make an aisle-by-aisle template for your store, and then write the items in the proper aisle. Another way is to write down the items in groups, by category. This requires some thought and discipline ahead of time. Most people just jot down the items in the order that they think of them, and they end up with a randomly ordered list.

Alternatively, you could use computer software. Then you can simply select the items and let the computer figure out the aisles. Of course, you'd first have to enter the aisle information into the computer so that it knows what to work with.

One shopper's experience with aisle-by-aisle shopping follows:

Before using the program my shopping took forever. I would have a list created by the "what do I need" method. Things were jotted down as I thought of them so my lists were a mess. I would need to go back and forth through the store checking off items willy-nilly. This would take forever, making me stay in the store for 2-3 hours each time. I would often forget items and have to return to the store hours later.

Now I can shop aisle by aisle and rarely forget to pick items. I can keep track of coupons and make sure that I get the discounts that I am entitled to. I have tried different methods of shopping but the Aisle-by-Aisle program has made my shopping easier. I can use my time more efficiently and I am able to have more free time with my family due to quicker shopping.!!!!

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Allen Beechick is a computer programmer. Visit

<http://www.aislebyaisle.com>

for recommended

computer software.

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