

7 Tips to Help You Cut Down on Impulsive Grocery Store Purchases

Have you noticed lately that your grocery bill is going up? Although the cost of food may be rising, some of your growing grocery store costs might be due to making impulsive purchases. If you shop when you're lacking energy, hungry, or in a hurry, chances are good you sometimes make hasty decisions about food.

★ After getting home from the store, if you've ever said, "**Now why did I get *that*?**" these tips are for you:

- 1. Keep a pad of paper and pen in the kitchen.** When you notice you're getting low on something you use regularly, write it on the list.
 - If you're tech-oriented, enter those items into your smart phone so you'll have them with you the next time you go to the store.
 - Think about food products you don't use much or that your family doesn't want to eat anymore. Consider excluding them from your store list.
 - Before you leave home to go grocery shopping, double-check for any items you may need but haven't yet listed. Add those to your list.
- 2. Allow a reasonable amount of time to grocery-shop.** Having ample time to shop means you're more likely to cut down on hurrying through the store and grabbing whatever food product strikes your fancy at the moment.
- 3. Make a real effort to avoid processed food.** Food items in boxes, bags, or cans usually have additives and other unhealthy ingredients.
 - If you "think healthy" at the store, you'll most likely save yourself from picking up all those processed, packaged foods.
- 4. Stick to the store list.** Now that you've made a list of everything you need, purchase only items you've listed.
 - If sticking 100% to the list is difficult, consider allowing yourself just one or two foods not included on your store list.
 - Think about those items carefully to ensure they're worth the price and that you can use them in preparing healthy meals or snacks for your family.



5. **Eat a meal before you go grocery shopping.** An old grocery-shopping rule is, "*Never go grocery shopping when you're hungry.*"

→ It's no secret that people tend to spend more when they're feeling starved while shopping. A bag of chips here, a candy bar there, and you just bumped your grocery bill a few dollars.

6. **Establish a budgeted amount of money you plan to spend at the grocery store.**

→ Let's say you don't want to exceed \$75 per week on food. While you're at the checkout counter, the store staff tells you your bill is \$79. What can you do?

→ Quickly look over your food items. Ask yourself what you can do without. See if there are snack items you don't really need. Make a concerted effort to reduce the total to \$75.00, as you planned.

→ Then, when you get home, consider whether you need to raise your budgeted amount to spend on your next trip to the store. You might conclude you didn't really need the items you put back. Or you may realize that \$75 just isn't enough to meet your needs and you should raise your budget a little.

7. **Pat yourself on the back for the planning you did to avoid impulsive purchases at the grocery store.** You made a real effort and it shows.

→ Recognize that with just a few changes you can nearly end impulsive purchases at the grocery store.

Cutting down on your impulsive purchases at the grocery store is entirely possible. With some advance planning and use of these tips, you'll reduce your overall grocery store spending and decrease your impulsive purchases. **You'll be successful in reaching your shopping goals, and have more money to show for it!**

