

In today's economy, a person will be hard pressed to find someone who doesn't think they spend too much money on groceries.

For many people it is one of their top budget categories for their household. And for many it is the one they feel they have the least amount of control over.

Whether a person is just too busy to cook every night, so most of their budget goes to eating out, or they don't take the time to shop for deals so end up paying full price, everyone has room to make changes to how they shop and eat to help cut out a portion of the food budget.

There are many tricks and tips to use to help minimize the grocery bill. Some may work and some may not.

### **Tips to Slashing Your Bill**

1. Menu planning: Planning in advance allows you to take your shopping list and locate the best deals on the items you need, instead of paying full price the day you need it.

It can also save you money on gas as you normally can make less trips to the grocery store if you plan out meals at least a week in advance.

2. Buying in bulk: This is a great way to save money at the grocery store.

Learn how to properly store the excess and how long it will last in your pantry, fridge or freezer and plan accordingly.

3. Make a budget: Make a budget and stick to it. It seems simple but so many people have a problem sticking to their projected dollar amount they have to spend at the grocery store.

If you are running low towards the end of the month your last week of meals may have to be some of the less expensive ones on your list.

4. Don't buy convenience foods: Don't buy pre-made what you can easily make yourself.

This is a tough one for people with not a lot of time on your hands, but you'll find once you start doing it, it doesn't feel like you are spending any extra time at all.

5. Buy generic: Even though you have been brand loyal for years you may find there isn't a lot of difference once you try another.

If there is, go back to your favorite next time. But you will find many items that you can substitute for.

6. Shop the Clearance Section: Don't be afraid of the clearance or manager special items at the grocery store. Things like meat that have a short shelf life will go on clearance daily.

But you can snag it up and use it that night or freeze it with no issues.

7. Shop around to get the best deals: Don't shop at just one store.

Know which stores have your basic products priced the lowest and plan trips to each throughout the month as needed.

Also keep an eye on the weekly sale ads from each store to stock up on items you use a lot when on sale.

8. Use coupons: This is a great way to save a few extra dollars almost every time you go to the store.

Find out where to find coupons for the items that you use the most and pair them up with the next sale that comes up for even bigger savings.

9. Keep easy meals on hand: For nights when life just doesn't allow time to make the meal you had planned. That will stop you from spending money going out to eat or ordering in.

Making meals ahead of time and freezing them so you just have to pop them in the oven are great for this.

10. Don't always buy fresh: Buy frozen or canned vegetables instead of fresh produce.

Most people think that fresh is the best way to go, but frozen and canned veggies are picked at their peak.

In many cases it will save tons of time also to buy, for example, frozen diced onions instead of cutting one up yourself.

So now that people know the best tips to lower their monthly grocery bill, figure out which will work for them and get started!

Try to tackle one or two items to get started. Shoppers can add on more as they go. Before they know it they will have cut the grocery budget in half!