

# Navigating the Grocery Store

## General Tips

- Avoid overstocking or choosing unhealthy foods by planning ahead and writing a detailed shopping list.
- Choose whole, rather than processed, foods. Whole foods allow you to reap the benefits of the food's full nutritious potential. Whereas processed foods usually contain additives, such as oils and sugars. If buying processed food, make sure to read the ingredients label. Short ingredients lists that contain names you recognize are generally less processed!
- Buy the majority of your food from the perimeter of the store—this is where fresh, whole foods (i.e., produce, meats, and dairy) are generally kept.



## Bang for Your Buck

- Look for the unit price while shopping, which is listed separately from the retail price. The unit price shows the cost per ounce, pound, or item, and will help you choose the cheapest product. If no unit price is shown use this simple equation:

$$\text{Unit Price} = \frac{\text{retail price}}{\text{number of units}} = \frac{\$1.99}{15 \text{ oz.}} = \$0.13 \text{ per ounce}$$

- Avoid name brands! Many off-brand products contain the same ingredients as their name brand counterparts, but cost less. Read ingredient labels and compare unit prices before making purchases.



## Fruits & Vegetables

Come in different forms: fresh, frozen, and canned. There is no best form and each has their pros and cons.

- Purchase fresh fruits and vegetables when they are in season to keep the price down. Choose a variety of colors to obtain different nutrients and flavors!
- Frozen produce is often picked and frozen at its peak ripeness. It can also make out-of-season produce less expensive. Frozen produce requires very little preparation and is great steamed, blended into smoothies, or mixed into batters. Avoid frozen produce with sauces, as they add extra fat and sodium.
- Canned produce, like frozen, is canned at peak ripeness and costs less when buying out-of-season. It is great for quick preparation and is a pantry staple. During the canning process, preservatives like salt, sugar, or fat are often added, which can alter the texture of the fruit or vegetable. Check the ingredients label and choose low sodium vegetables or fruits canned in juice to keep additives low.

## Proteins

**Meat:** Buy lean meats such as poultry, fish, and beef. Meat can be purchased fresh or frozen. When buying frozen meat, avoid pre-breaded or fried options.

- **Poultry:** Chicken and turkey are both great options that can be transformed easily with a variety of flavors that are customizable to any preference. Boneless, skinless options are quick and easy!
- **Beef:** When buying beef, purchase cuts with little visible fat or trim the excess fat at home. For ground beef, aim for 90/10 or leaner. Beef is a good source of B vitamins, zinc, and iron!
- **Fish:** Fish is a low-fat option that is loaded with nutrients like omega-3 fatty acids, calcium, vitamin D, magnesium, and zinc. Aim for fatty fish (e.g., salmon, mackerel, sardines, and albacore tuna) to get the most omega-3s per serving.
- **Sliced Deli Meat:** Lunchmeat is a quick way to add a no-cook protein to any meal. Add it to salads, wraps, or sandwiches. Try to avoid sweetened meats, such as honey ham.

**Eggs:** Eggs are a quick and easy way to get protein. They can be purchased fresh or pre-cooked from the deli section. Don't worry about shell color, there is no difference between the eggs!

**Vegetarian:** Tofu, seitan, and legumes are ways to add protein to vegetarian dishes. Tofu and seitan take on flavor well and are great in stir-fry. Legumes such as beans, lentils, and peas are great in soups, rice bowls, or salads and are loaded with fiber!

## Grains

Any food made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley, or other cereal is considered a grain product. Grains are divided into two subgroups: whole grains and refined grains. Make at least half of your grains whole grains.

- **Oatmeal:** Old-fashioned oats and steel cut oats are the least processed of the oatmeal varieties and contain the most fiber.
- **Cereal:** When choosing cereal look for cereals that contain 10 grams or less of sugar and at least 5 grams of fiber per serving.
- **Brown Rice and Quinoa:** Both rice and quinoa can be purchased fresh or in convenient 90-second packets.
- **Other grain products** include bread, tortillas, crackers, pasta, amaranth, popcorn, millet, and buckwheat.

## Dairy

- **Milk:** When buying milk, try to buy 2% or less to avoid extra fat intake. If wanting flavored milk, try adding chocolate, vanilla, or strawberry flavorings at home to control sugar content.
- **Greek Yogurt:** Greek yogurt has twice as much protein and half the carbohydrates of regular yogurt. Greek yogurt can be used as a healthier substitute for sour cream or mayo in recipes. Try plain Greek yogurt with honey and fresh berries for a high protein snack.
- **Cheese:** Choose low-fat and reduced-fat varieties to limit saturated fat intake. Cottage cheese is also a great choice for snacks and meals; pair it with pineapple or tomatoes for a quick and nutritious snack.

## Frozen Meals

Look for natural, organic, or limited ingredients when buying frozen meals. Choose those with low fat, low sodium, and ingredients you recognize. Amy's meals are made from scratch and feature fresh ingredients from local farms. Other brands to try are Evol, Luvo, Stouffer's Fit Kitchen, Cedar Lane, and Artisan Bistro.

## Non-Perishables

In a time crunch? Keep your pantry stocked with nutritious, non-perishables to create a healthy meal or snack in minutes!

- **Canned/Jarred:** spaghetti sauce, soups, fruit, vegetables, fish, and chicken.
- **Dehydrated:** fruits, vegetables, and beef jerky.
- **Nuts/Nut Butters:** purchase all natural nut butters with no added oil or sugar.
- **Dressings:** aim for vinaigrettes or yogurt-based creamy dressings.

# Grocery Shopping List

## Proteins

- ☐ Eggs
- ☐ Sliced Deli Meat
- ☐ Poultry
- ☐ Beef
- ☐ Ground Meat
- ☐ Fish
- ☐ Shrimp
- ☐ Pork Tenderloin
- ☐ Tofu/Tempeh/Seitan
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

## Fruits & Vegetables

- |                                     |                                       |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bananas    | <input type="checkbox"/> Carrots      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apples     | <input type="checkbox"/> Potatoes     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pears      | <input type="checkbox"/> Squash       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Berries    | <input type="checkbox"/> Corn         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Melon      | <input type="checkbox"/> Onion        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honeydew   | <input type="checkbox"/> Lettuce      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pineapple  | <input type="checkbox"/> Spinach/Kale |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grapes     | <input type="checkbox"/> Cucumber     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oranges    | <input type="checkbox"/> Tomato       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peaches    | <input type="checkbox"/> Green Beans  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plums      | <input type="checkbox"/> Broccoli     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kiwi Fruit | <input type="checkbox"/> Cauliflower  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avocado    | <input type="checkbox"/> Asparagus    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____      | <input type="checkbox"/> _____        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____      | <input type="checkbox"/> _____        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____      | <input type="checkbox"/> _____        |

## Dairy

- ☐ Milk
- ☐ Greek Yogurt
- ☐ Kefir
- ☐ Cottage Cheese
- ☐ Cheese
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

## Grains

- ☐ Whole Wheat/Grain
  - ☐ Bread
  - ☐ Tortillas
  - ☐ Pitas
  - ☐ Bagels
  - ☐ English Muffins
- ☐ Cereal
- ☐ Oats
- ☐ Granola
- ☐ Popcorn
- ☐ Pasta
- ☐ Rice
- ☐ Quinoa
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

## Non-Perishables

- ☐ Canned Soup
- ☐ Canned Tuna
- ☐ Canned Chicken
- ☐ Beans
- ☐ Pasta Sauce
- ☐ Salad Dressing
- ☐ Dried Fruit
- ☐ Nuts
- ☐ Nut Butters
- ☐ Jelly
- ☐ Granola/Protein Bars
- ☐ Olive Oil
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

## Miscellaneous

- ☐ Hummus
- ☐ Salsa
- ☐ Guacamole
- ☐ Frozen Yogurt
- ☐ Frozen Meals
- ☐ Frozen Soy Products
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_