

Grocery shopping and menu planning can be enjoyable. If you make these simple steps a part of your weekly routine, planning for meals and shopping for healthy foods will become an experience to look forward to. You will find that you save money at the store and come home with grocery bags full of healthy foods.

### Menu Planning Tips:

- Set aside one day each week to do your menu planning. Plan meals at least one week in advance. Write down each dish that you or your family would like to try.
- Check your cupboards at home to see what needs to be used up first and choose menu items that will help you use them.
- Look at grocery store ads to help you plan meals. For example if broccoli is on sale, use it in your week's menu by making broccoli soup one night, and steamed broccoli as a side dish on a different night.
- Gather your recipes and make your grocery list from the ingredients on those recipes. Cross off the ingredients that you already have on hand. Add regularly used items such as eggs, milk, and bread to your list.
- Write each day's menu on a calendar. By planning ahead and making a list, grocery shopping can be done only once a week.
- Refer to the portion plate on the next page to help you plan your meals. Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables, one quarter with whole grains, one quarter or less with lean meat or protein.

### Grocery Shopping Tips:

- Eat before you go grocery shopping. Try not to shop when you are hungry. You will be less tempted to buy junk food and unnecessary items.
- Stick to your shopping list to avoid impulse buying.
- Use the “stoop-and-rise” method. Bargains can often be found on the top and bottom shelves where less observant shoppers miss them.
- Compare prices and buy the least expensive.
- Buy healthy. Choose 1% or skim milk and other low or non-fat dairy products. Buy whole grain breads and cereals that have the first ingredient listed as “100 percent whole wheat”, “whole grain” or “whole oats”. A good rule of thumb is to choose products with at least 3 grams of fiber (or more) per serving.
- Try a new recipe once a week and continue to find new recipes. Keep a list of recipes and refer back to it when you plan your menus. Your list will gradually grow, as will your cooking skills!



[www.theportionplate.com](http://www.theportionplate.com)