

# **Are You Living Inconvenienced Or In Convenience?**

**We live in a society of convenience.**

When you run out of something it is pretty convenient just to run to the corner convenience store or grocery store to pick up what you need. After all, it's only a few minutes away, right? Let me ask you this-- how many items did you intend to buy, and how many more than that did you walk out with?

Uh huh, I know.

**This is common in most families today.**

Be honest, most of the time meal planning means that you think about what sounds good at about 2:00 in the afternoon so that you can stop at the grocery store to pick up the ingredients on your way home from work. Am I right?

This is the exact opposite of efficiency. If you are serious about spending your money wisely, you need to know how to play the game.

**What's that? You don't think that it's a game?**

You couldn't be more wrong if you were driving south in a northbound lane of an L.A. highway at rush hour!



As nice, clean, friendly and service oriented, as your favorite grocery store seems, they have one purpose... to separate you from your hard-earned cash. The

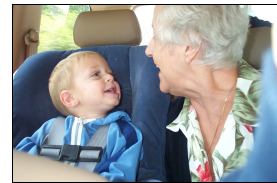
grocery industry is the most competitive industry, except maybe the fast food joints, to separate you from your cash.

### **For crying out loud, everyone buys groceries!**

Grocery stores make money by psychologically making you 'want' to buy. My dad used to tell me that if you want something from someone, make them want to give it to you. That's exactly what the grocery stores do.

### **It's Psychological Warfare... Arm Yourself!**

Yes indeed, it's psychological warfare as sincere as a stare-down between your toddler and your grandma over an Oreo.



Have you noticed that in your grocery store:

- They have the little ladies handing out the delectable baked bites of this and that with the fresh baked aroma wafting through the aisles?
- The temperature is always 5 degrees cooler than comfortable?
- They move items that you normally buy so that you have to look for them?
- How about the music that plays softly in the background with your old favorite songs that are upbeat while somewhat low-key?

### **Sounds familiar doesn't it?**

If you are cold you burn energy faster, tend to be hungry and the smell of delicious baking food helps to promote that. Now, add to that the fact that you can't find what you're looking for and you're singing a

favorite song while you shop and VOILA! You tend to stay longer and spend more money impulse buying.



There are other games that they play with your family too to get in your wallet like a pickpocket on New Year's Eve in downtown New York City. They manipulate the little people that don't take 'no' for answer without screaming and making you sound like you are torturing them... yep, the children.. the LITTLE children.

- Food items geared toward children are placed at eye level for the kids in brightly colored packages with pictures of super heroes or Dora or Barbie. You know what I mean.
- Pre-packed meals such as frozen breakfasts, pre-packed lunches that the 'cool kids' get, TV dinners with kid's portions and dessert.
- Snack containers shaped like the snacks they contain hanging everywhere in the aisles.
- Candy at the checkout counter so you can listen to the little angels persistently beg one more time before you leave.

**FACT:** Every additional person you take with you grocery shopping will add an average of \$17 to your checkout total.

To add insult to injury, there are the employees that smile at you and ask about your day, and how your spouse and the kiddies are, sounding very much like the Geiko Gecko, as they try to create a sense of you belonging there... as if you're family. They are trained to

develop a 'relationship' with you so that you'll be loyal to the store making it easier for them to separate you from your hard earned cash.

Think about it, I think that it's Albertson's that sweetly sings, "Albertson's... it's your store..." Hog wash! How about Publix where "Shopping is a pleasure" or Winn-Dixie who claims to be "Getting better all the time".

Don't let any one store chain eliminate the competition. The fact remains the cash in your pocket took hours to earn, don't give it up frivolously out of common consumer confusion.

**Become the grocer's biggest concern, a disloyal customer.  
Make them court you and win you over.**

Another favorite trick of one of our local groceries is the loss leader ploy. I love this one! If you buy \$25 worth of groceries from this supermarket they will give you three items for free... sounds great doesn't it. Ask yourself one question. Why?



**Because it benefits THEM!**

1. The three items are usually in three very different areas of the store creating a need for you to find them. Once you find the proper aisle and item you have to match the size of the item with the sales flier and decide which variety that you would like. Remember, the longer you're in the store the more you'll buy. They're winning already.

2. You are required to buy \$25 worth of something else to earn the three items after you find them.
3. 99 times out of 100 you will impulse buy all along the way, buying more than \$25 worth of groceries.
4. They want you to buy the items that are on sale as buy 1-get 1 free items... This is a tricky one. They mix true sales in with items that are overpriced to start with making your sales purchase still too expensive. To illustrate the point, the other day bread was on sale in this manner, but the price of one loaf was \$2.99 making two loaves at that price \$1.50 each, but the bread right next to this brand was \$.99 a loaf (everyday). I would have been spending an extra .50 per loaf to buy the 'sale' items.



**Game over, they win... again.**

The next ploy is the pricing. They set a base price for an item, then offer you a sales price to lure you into the store... usually the 'sales' item is in the back of the store so that you have the chance to, hmmm... impulse buy? If you don't keep track of the pricing of several stores that sell that item you won't realize that the regular price is too high, making the sales price close to where it should be to start with.

The best strategy for beating the store at their own game is to compare prices, coupons, sales, vouchers and shopping times from your computer ahead of time. You can go Online to any grocery store and pull up their web site to see what the sales are for the week. The

idea is to buy only items that are on sale that you have a coupon for and only go to that store when you are in the area. Always use your customer rewards card.

Do this for each grocery store and pharmacy in your area that you or your spouse normally pass. Stock up on those items when you get a really good deal so that you don't need it again before you get the same or better deal later. You will find that most items will be on sale in a 4 to 6 week rotation.

### **To Maximize Your Ability To Minimize Your Grocery Spending:**

- Know your store policies on sales and couponing.
- Learn how to coupon efficiently.
- Use vouchers.
- Use the store customer reward card for another 10% off of your purchases.
- Make friends with store employees to stay on the inside track when things change or go on sale. There are certain times of the day and days of the week that meat and produce go on sale to prevent spoilage. These items are still good and can be easily frozen at home.
- Remember that groceries are more than just food and go on sale in a number of places.

- Drug stores carry some food items, soft drinks, paper supplies, make up, toiletries, charcoal.
- Auto part stores carry paper toweling, snacks, window cleaner by the gallon (if it works on your windshield it will clean your household mirrors).
- Home Improvement stores carry light bulbs, outdoor grilling needs, plants to grow your own veggies and fruit.
- Feed stores carry dog and cat food, litter, feed dishes, collars, toys, pet bird and wild bird supplies etc.
- Shop alone with a full stomach, bottle of water in hand, wearing a sweater or jacket.
- When you get to the store, grab your coupons and list for that store and get in and out as quickly as possible. NO impulse buying, if it's not on the list you don't buy it.

This week I had 6 coupons for \$1 off of beef when you buy A-1 products, I also had 6 coupons for \$1 off of A-1 products. A-1 was on sale Buy-One-Get-One-Free.

Sooo, I asked the butcher to divide the beef into 1 lb packages averaging 2.10 per package and bought 6.

With my coupons and store sales and reward card I got:

6 bottles of A-1 @ .19 each = 1.14

6 1 lb pkgs of beef @ 2.10 each = 12.60

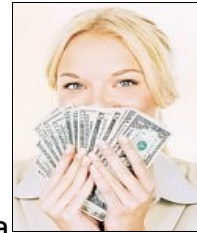
less the 10% store reward card discount = <1.37>

less my coupons = <12.00>

For the grand total of (drum roll please...) 37 cents!

**Steak NEVER tasted so good!**

Think before you spend and remember that it is easier to save money than it is to make it.



If any of the suggestions here are foreign to you, you can learn more about them at <http://Eat-Free.com>. There are a number of reports there on specific techniques to help you to quickly gain and apply the knowledge that you need to succeed.