

How to Shop Yourself Healthy

The Daniel Plan



If you think shopping is a chore, hopefully Daniel Plan shopping will change your mind! Whether at a farmer's market; grocery, specialty, or health store; CSA (community-supported agriculture); food co-ops, or online, buying healthy ingredients that taste good can make you want to get into the kitchen and cook. And be sure to check out unique ethnic markets in your area for what they have to offer.

Buying fresh, locally grown, whole foods, fruits, vegetables, leafy greens, and sustainable meats and seafood is becoming easier for everyone across the country, thanks to the explosion of farmers markets and an increase of organic produce and healthy items available at mainstream grocers. Rest assured that your local grocery store will have most of what you need to start cooking and eating The Daniel Plan way. We'll help you navigate the aisles and become a pro shopping for your health.

Simple Shopping Tips

1. Shop the Perimeter. The perimeter of the market is where the produce, eggs, meat, and seafood departments are located.

2. Buy in Bulk. Many stores have a bulk area for non-perishable items such as rice and grains, dried beans, lentils and legumes, nuts and seeds. Buying in bulk saves money.

3. Brave the Inside Aisles. Though there are many aisles you now can totally skip, and that will save you time (and money!), the inside aisles are where you will find packaged whole grains, canned beans, frozen berries and vegetables, healthy oils, vinegars, dried herbs and spices, packaged nuts, broths, and condiments.

4. Keep it Cool. When you buy fresh seafood, ask for ice to keep it cold until you get home. Seafood is highly perishable. And use insulated shopping bags to help keep cold things cold. Have the store clerk pack all of your cold and frozen things together in one bag.

5. Stock Up, Wisely. When nonperishable items such as grains, beans, boxed broth, and canned or jarred tomatoes are on sale, stock up and save money. Be smart about how much you can store and how much you will seriously use. This includes frozen items such as berries for smoothies and fresh, ground meat and poultry that will keep when wrapped well (or vacuum-sealed) in the freezer. Nuts, which can be expensive, store in the freezer for up to six months when wrapped well or vacuum-sealed.

If something looks like a great deal, it might be, but not always. Be sure to check expiration dates if an item is on sale. Especially when buying oils, eggs, dairy, and other perishable items.

Chef's Trick

Cut the cooking instructions off the original packing for rice, legumes, and grains when you pour them into your storage containers. Then just set the instructions in the container for quick reference.