

Wellness

Wednesday



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7 Grocery Shopping Mistakes That Cause You to Overspend

In the face of soaring inflation, the cost of groceries has become a significant financial burden for many households. With skyrocketing prices at the checkout counter, it's no wonder that shoppers are feeling the strain on their wallets. However, the solution to curbing your grocery spending may lie in identifying and avoiding common shopping mistakes that lead to overspending.



Mistake #1: Not Tracking Your Current Grocery Expenses

The first step in reducing your grocery budget is to understand how much you're currently spending. Many people simply guess at a target number without knowing their actual expenditure. This approach can be problematic, as your budget may be unrealistic if it doesn't align with your current spending habits. By carefully tracking your grocery receipts over the past month, you can gain valuable insights into your typical spending patterns. This information will then allow you to make informed decisions about where you can cut back and set a more achievable budget.

Mistake #2: Failing to Meal Plan

One of the most significant contributors to grocery overspending is the lack of a comprehensive meal plan. Without a clear plan for how you'll use the items you purchase, it's all too easy to end up with spoiled produce, forgotten ingredients, and impulse buys that never make it to your plate. By taking the time to map out your meals for the week, you can ensure that every item on your shopping list serves a specific purpose. This not only helps you avoid waste but also enables you to make more strategic purchasing decisions.

Mistake #3: Not Checking Your Pantry and Fridge Before Shopping

It's a common scenario: you head to the grocery store with a list in hand, only to return home and realize you already have half the items you just bought. This duplicate purchasing not only wastes money but also contributes to food waste. Before setting out on your shopping trip, take a few moments to thoroughly check your refrigerator, freezer, and pantry. This simple step can help you identify ingredients you already have on hand, allowing you to cross them off your list and focus your spending on the items you truly need.

Mistake #4: Overreliance on Meat as the Centerpiece of Meals

While protein is an essential part of a balanced diet, it can also be one of the most expensive components of a meal. By shifting your focus away from meat as the primary ingredient and instead incorporating more plant-based proteins, such as lentils, beans, and chickpeas, you can significantly reduce your grocery bill. These alternatives not only tend to be more budget-friendly but also offer a range of health benefits.

Mistake #5: Neglecting Frozen and Canned Produce

Fresh fruits and vegetables are undoubtedly delicious, but they can also be highly perishable. This can lead to costly waste if you're unable to consume them before they spoil. To combat this, consider incorporating more frozen and canned produce into your meal planning. These options often retain their nutritional value while boasting a longer shelf life, making them a more cost-effective choice. Just be mindful of any added sauces or seasonings that may increase the price.

Mistake #6: Buying Spices and Herbs in Small, Expensive Containers

Spices and herbs can quickly add up on your grocery bill, especially when purchased in those tiny, pre-packaged jars. Instead, opt for buying them in bulk, either from the store's bulk bins or in larger containers. This not only saves you money per ounce but also allows you to refill your own reusable spice jars, reducing waste and maintaining freshness.

Mistake #7: Gravitating Towards Eye-Level Shelf Placement

Grocery stores are carefully designed to encourage impulse purchases, and one of the tactics they employ is strategic shelf placement. Items at eye level are often the most expensive options, as stores know that shoppers are more likely to reach for these products. To avoid falling into this trap, make a conscious effort to scan the shelves above and below eye level for more budget-friendly alternatives.

Navigating the challenges of grocery shopping in an era of rising prices can be daunting, but by being mindful of these common mistakes, you can take control of your spending and keep your kitchen stocked without breaking the bank. From tracking your current expenses to embracing frozen and canned produce, these strategies can help you become a more savvy and strategic grocery shopper. With a little planning and a willingness to think outside the box, you can continue to enjoy your favorite meals while keeping your grocery budget in check.



INGREDIENTS

3 tbsp red wine vinegar
2 tbsp fresh lemon juice
1/3 cup olive oil
1/2 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp dried oregano
1/2 tsp kosher salt
16 oz orzo pasta, wheat or gluten-free
1/2 cup halved pitted kalamata olives, plus 2 tablespoons brine
1/3 cup red onion, diced small
3 cups from 1 large English cucumber, diced small
1 pint grape tomatoes, halved
1 orange bell pepper, diced
1/2 cup feta cheese, cubed
fresh oregano, optional garnish

Warm summer days call for light, flavorful dishes that tantalize the taste buds and leave you feeling refreshed. One such culinary gem is the Greek Orzo Salad - a vibrant, Mediterranean-inspired pasta salad that seamlessly blends the nutty goodness of orzo with a medley of crunchy veggies, tangy feta, and a zesty vinaigrette. Whether you're hosting a backyard barbecue, prepping for a picnic, or simply craving a delightful side dish, this versatile salad is sure to delight.

THE ALLURE OF ORZO PASTA

Orzo, a rice-shaped pasta made from durum wheat, has long been a staple in Mediterranean cuisine. Its diminutive size and unique shape make it the perfect canvas for showcasing a variety of flavors and textures in salads. Unlike traditional pasta, orzo's compact nature allows it to effortlessly mingle with diced vegetables, olives, and tangy dressings, creating a harmonious blend in every bite.

THE ART OF PREPARATION

Crafting the perfect Greek Orzo Salad is a delicate dance of technique and timing. The key lies in cooking the orzo pasta to a tender, yet firm texture, ensuring it retains its shape and doesn't become mushy. Once cooked, the pasta is rinsed under cold water to halt the cooking process and allow it to chill before being tossed with the vibrant dressing and array of vegetables.

Nutrition Information

Serving: 3 /4 cup, Calories: 173 kcal, Carbohydrates: 24 g, Protein: 5 g, Fat: 6 g, Saturated Fat: 1 g, Cholesterol: 4 mg, Sodium: 112 mg, Fiber: 1.5 g, Sugar: 2 g



INSTRUCTIONS



How to Make It

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a rolling boil. Add the orzo and cook according to package directions for al dente, adding an extra minute.
2. Drain and rinse under cold water, drain.
3. Meanwhile, In a large bowl, combine the dressing ingredients. Add the olives, red onion and brine from the olives and mix to combine.
4. Stir in the pasta with the cucumber, tomatoes and bell pepper and toss well. Taste for salt and adjust as needed.
5. Add the cheese just before ready to serve.

CUSTOMIZING THE SALAD

One of the joys of Greek Orzo Salad is its versatility. While the recipe provides a classic foundation, there's ample room for personal touches and culinary creativity. For those seeking additional protein, the salad can be enhanced with the addition of grilled shrimp, chicken, or even a can of chickpeas. Olive enthusiasts can experiment with substituting Castelvetrano olives for the traditional kalamatas. And for those with dietary restrictions, the feta cheese can be easily omitted to create a delectable vegan version.

<https://www.self.com/gallery/lower-body-moves-that-work-your-abs>

Featured Exercise ► Dumbbell Deadlift



HOW TO DO IT:

- Stand tall with your feet about hip-width apart. Hold a dumbbell in each hand in front of your body with palms facing your thighs.
- Keep a slight bend in the knees and push your hips back to lower weights down the front of your legs. Keep the weights close to your shins as they lower.
- Then slowly reverse the movement to stand. Make sure your spine is neutral during this exercise, says Villani (so your back isn't arched or rounded).

THE BENEFITS:

Strength training enthusiasts have long revered the deadlift as a cornerstone exercise, and for good reason. This compound movement engages multiple muscle groups simultaneously, delivering unparalleled functional benefits. While the barbell deadlift is a classic, the dumbbell variation offers a unique set of advantages that make it an equally compelling choice for fitness enthusiasts. In this comprehensive guide, we'll delve into the myriad benefits of incorporating the dumbbell deadlift into your workout routine, from building a powerful posterior chain to enhancing overall core stability and muscular development.



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Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it's been awhile since you've exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.



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