

Jabs Grocery Hacks – DebtFreeAdventure.com

1. **Plan a menu** - 2-3 dinners for the week and eat leftovers the other nights. Base meals on what needs to be used up in the refrigerator.
2. **Make a list** - only purchase items you will need to add to the recipes you're making from *#1 Plan a Menu*.
3. **Stick to the list** - once at the store, DO NOT deviate from the list.
4. **Use coupons** - when available use coupons... but ONLY for the items on your list! Do not buy things just because you have a coupon.
5. **Stock up** - on your favorite/frequently used items when they are on sale. Clear out space in your cupboards, pantry, basement to store overflow.
6. **Grow a garden** - use your own produce in all of your recipes and if it is harvest season - plan your recipes around what you are harvesting.
7. **Pick your own** - when it comes to fruit and veggies, pick your own and preserve them by freezing, canning, etc. Use these frozen goodies to make your own jam, add to muffins, ice cream, [breakfasts](#), etc. We [picked strawberries](#) and we [picked blueberries](#), we saved a boat load on both.
8. **Make your own** - use fruits and veggies you grew/picked to make homemade jam, tomato sauce, salsa, etc. You can also make your own bread, crackers, [cleaners](#), etc. We decided to use up a lot of what we already have in our pantry, then when we run out of something we decide if it is something we can make ourselves instead of purchasing new.
9. **Preserve food** - Even if it is not something you grew, buy large amounts of in-season produce then go home and preserve it. I have already made mention of this in a few of the other tips, that's how important it is... this tip permeates so many of the other tips. You can freeze, can, dry, smoke, cure, etc. The predominate methods are freezing and [canning](#).
10. **Use more beans** - this has been a HUGE change and a HUGE benefit for us. You should definitely increase the amount you use. [Beans are cheap, healthy and delicious](#). They are much healthier and less expensive than meat.
11. **Frequent local farmer's markets** - my wife and I have switched to a predominately [fresh, healthy, and organic diet](#). We have found a farmer at our local market who sells organic produce, honey, maple syrup, butter, cheese, meats, etc. for cheaper than the grocery stores!
12. **Check "price per unit"** - despite popular belief, when at grocery stores sometimes it's actually cheaper per unit to buy 2 smaller items than it is to buy one larger portion.
13. **Pack breakfasts and lunches** - do this everyday so you are not tempted to buy these meals "on the run". Make this part of your nightly routine **every night** so it becomes habit. My wife & I pack our [healthy delicious breakfast](#) idea every week day.
14. **Pack healthy snacks** - place these in small containers early in the week. Keep some in your car, purse, office, man bag, etc. This will keep you from purchasing unhealthy and expensive snacks from vending machines, gas stations, or other places.
15. **Do more baking** - this kind of fits in with #8, but deserves it's own description. Set aside a little time each month to bake bread and [healthy cookies](#) then freeze them for the consumption throughout the month. The ingredient to bake cost much less and will go much further than purchasing pre-packaged cookies and breads.
16. **Make fruit salad** - using some of your pick-your-own fruits from number #7, combine delicious, fresh, snackable fruits into a Tupperware as a "salad". This is a great way to keep family members from purchasing and eating unhealthy/expensive snack foods.
17. **Eat more nuts** - another great snack food. We get an organic trail mix blend from our health food store for \$3.79/pound. This is another healthy and cheap alternative to expensive snack foods.
18. **Test generic brands** - [persistent and clever advertising](#) has tricked us into thinking we need certain brand name foods. Make sure you try generic brands at least once -- with an open mind -- before you decide how much you dislike them! My wife and I eat predominately generic/store brand foods. Also, generic health and beauty items, along with medicines, are often made up of the exact same ingredients as name-brand items.
19. **Organize your pantry** - this is VERY important. Most people waste a lot of food and money because it simply gets lost in the black hole that is their pantry! I'm lucky because my wife and I are both pretty organized when it comes to our food stuffs, so we excel in this area and it is a blessing.
20. **Work together** - like my wife always says... "Teamwork makes the dream work!" Just like any other good thing in marriage/family life -- saving money on groceries is much easier if both spouses are working together to reach the common goals of physical and financial health!