

5 Easy Ways to

Make Grocery Shopping with Kids Fun and Green

Savvy parents know that any errand can become an educational and entertaining experience. Grocery stores are great places to explore and learn about food and nutrition. Visit www.bornlearning.org/ for more about teachable moments for kids.

1. Pick a smart time to shop.

The worst time to shop is when the store is crowded or you and your child are hungry. If you have a choice, shop when everyone is well-rested and well-fed. Use a shopping list as your guide and stick to the departments with the nutrient-rich foods you want to purchase. Steer clear of the all-too-tempting cereal and snack aisles.

2. Explore colors, shapes, numbers, and letters.

Every store is filled with opportunities to teach age-appropriate skills. As you walk in, pick something your child has been learning and focus on those items throughout the store, such as red items or circle shapes. To take the game a step further: Find a food picture in a book at home, take the book with you, and try to find the item in the store.

3. Put nutrition into their hands.

Food shopping can always be a nutrition lesson. Kids can put food into groups: meats, grains, fruits, vegetables, and dairy foods. It can also be a chance for children to choose new foods that they want to try, like picking out a new vegetable on each trip. As kids get older, they can help plan menus at home and choose the foods at the grocery store.

4. Talk about where food comes from.

Help kids learn where food grows by reading about it at home and discussing it at the store. Even better, make the connection by shopping at farmer's markets or visiting greenhouses, dairies, or ranches. Supporting local farmers and ranchers makes good sense for your family's nutrition and for the local economy.

5. Remember the reusable bags.

Reusing bags - big (canvas, mesh, or cloth) and small (plastic for produce) - is one of the simplest, most effective ways to go green while shopping. Many people forget to bring bags into the store. Here's a sure-fire way to remember: Get the kids involved! Keep a big bag of reusable grocery bags in the car - right next to your child's car seat!