

Troop 26 Parent's Guide to Grocery Shopping

So, you've drawn the short straw and will be taking your son to buy groceries for his patrol's next campout. Keep these simple guidelines in mind as you stroll the aisles at your favorite grocery store:

- ✓ Let your Scout do the shopping. While it's OK to give him a ride to the store (and a little free advice), he needs to choose the food and make the decisions.
- ✓ Follow the patrol's plan. At least eight days before the campout, the patrol is supposed to develop a menu and shopping list for your son to use. Our menu planner worksheet will help facilitate the planning process.
- ✓ Make sure you know how many people to shop for. Again, eight days before the campout, the patrol should have a firm headcount.
- ✓ Shop early. Part of the logic behind the eight-days-out-policy is that it gives you a weekend and several weeknights on which to shop. You shouldn't have to shop the day of the campout.
- ✓ Plan to spend between \$9 and \$12 per Scout for a weekend campout. That includes a Friday Cracker Barrel, three meals on Saturday, and breakfast on Sunday. For longer or shorter trips, adjust accordingly.
- ✓ Don't over-buy items like milk, fruit, and vegetables. While we want our Scouts to eat right - and we strongly encourage them to plan balanced menus - the fact is that we end up throwing away a lot of healthy stuff on Sunday.
- ✓ Don't buy things we already have. Your son should check supplies with our Quartermaster before going shopping; we usually have items left over from previous campouts that can be reused.
- ✓ Control costs. You can do this by purchasing store brands, avoiding individually packaged items, and picking raw ingredients over prepared foods.
- ✓ Remember to buy ice for the patrol cooler.
- ✓ Bring perishable items to the drop-off location in the patrol cooler with plenty of ice (unless it's winter). Bring nonperishable items in grocery bags.
- ✓ Turn in your receipts to the Treasurer when you drop off the food. The sooner we get your receipts, the sooner we can reimburse you.
- ✓ Don't worry. Since the Boy Scouts of America was founded in 1910, there have been absolutely no recorded cases of Scouts starving to death on a weekend campout.

Adapted from the Scoutmaster's Other Handbook by Mark Ray, copyright 2003-07