

Leyla Weighs In: Grocery shopping tips



It's National Nutrition Month, and it's all about eating better!

Now that you've arranged your kitchen, pantry and refrigerator for ease of use for food preparation and cooking, let's tackle grocery shopping.

The lament I hear from most people is lack of time for any food prep including shopping for groceries. Here are some tips:

Decide to go food shopping only one day a week. Typically this is done on the day you're running errands—likely on the weekend. Think about what ingredients you'll need for the meals you'll be preparing for the week ahead and make a list. *I cannot emphasize the importance of a list.* That, and *never* go food shopping hungry.

But wait, is there anything you already have on hand on that list? Check your pantry and freezer. You don't want to bring home a chuck roast when you already have one in the freezer you should use first. Let that one thaw safely on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator so you don't contaminate any other foods. This is a rule for safely thawing any raw meat, poultry or seafood—always the bottom shelf.

At the store, or your local farmer's market, pick the freshest produce you can find. For example, broccoli should have a dark blue hue, not just medium green. Any yellow around the edges indicates it's old. The heaviness of fruits like oranges,

grapefruits and melon signal their juiciness.

When you get home, clean your hearty greens—lettuces, chard, collards, escarole, dandelion ahead of time to remove the sand and soil before putting them away. This is one less thing to do when you're ready to prep and cook your meals for the week.

To your health!

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