



16 tips to save with monster coupon deals

Consumer Reports

June 3, 2009

Shoppers across the country are going coupon crazy. Ninety-four percent of people now use coupons on food, household products and health and beauty items, up from 86 percent in 2006. More people are also whipping out coupons beyond the supermarket.

ShopSmart, the shopping magazine from the publisher of Consumer Reports, shared 16 ways to uncover discounts at supermarkets, restaurants, department stores, clothing stores, oil-change shops and other kinds of specialty retailers.

"Between online downloads, mobile alerts and good old-fashioned circulars, there are more ways than ever to get coupons," said Lisa Lee Freeman, editor in chief of ShopSmart. "If you know where to look, it's easy to cut the cost of practically anything, and we're excited to point you in the right direction."

9 supermarket tactics

- Download discounts. Check sites such as SmartSource.com, Coupons.com and CoolSavings.com on the first day of each month, when new coupons are usually loaded.
- Sign up for e-mail alerts. Go to manufacturers' Web sites, and sign up for e-mail lists to receive coupons and other special offers. Tip: Use an alternative e-mail address to avoid the clutter.
- Take along your printout. To redeem an Internet coupon, ShopSmart suggests printing the whole page (URL included) and taking it with you to the store in case there is a question about its authenticity.
- Search online circulars. Before you plan menus and decide where to shop that week, scan store circulars at Mygrocerydeals.com and Sundaysaver.com, or on the sites of local supermarkets.
- Check out new coupon programs. Some supermarkets now allow you to select desired coupons online so you do not have to clip and bring them in store. Other supermarkets have hand-held scanners that let you tally discounts and keep a running total as you shop.
- Be alert in supermarket aisles. Look for coupons that are attached to the item itself and coupon dispensers that are perched on store shelves.
- Uncover hidden coupons. Look on the back of can labels and supermarket receipts for money-off coupons.
- Buy multiple copies of local newspapers. There's a guaranteed return on your investment if the paper has a few dollars worth of coupons you are sure to use.
- Buy or create a carryall. Organize your coupons in a pouch or envelope that is divided by category and expiration date and kept in your purse or glove compartment to ensure they do not go unused.



7 coupon strategies

- Sign up for frequent-shopper programs at your favorite stores. All kinds of retailers — bookstores, pet stores, drugstores, movie theaters and office-supply stores — have discount programs.
- Search online circulars. Many specialty and discount stores post weekly fliers on their Web sites or on ShopLocal.com.
- Sign up for store e-mail lists. You will receive alerts for coupons regularly, and many stores offer incentives just for signing up.
- Scan the big sites. Couponcraze.com, CouponMom.com and GoGoShopper.com are gold mines for in-store and online purchases. Also try CouponCabin.com, RetailMeNot.com, Dealio.com and MommySavesBig.com, a portal for dozens of coupon sites.
- Ask at the store. If you see someone using a coupon at a department store, ask the cashier whether he or she has an extra or can scan the coupon for your purchase, too. ShopSmart also recommends checking the customer-service desk.
- Click on store and mall sites. If you're headed to a specific store, mall or outlet center, check its site for coupons or deals before you go. Google can also do the trick.
- Use your cell phone to dial up savings. If you have an Internet-enabled cell phone, punch in Cellfire.com, a service that lets you download coupons right onto your phone.

Originally published at: <http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2009/jun/03/16-tips-save-monster-coupon-deals/>