

# Kids' Corner

## Grocery Shopping 101

How to choose the right foods for a family meal

YOU'VE PROBABLY GONE GROCERY SHOPPING WITH YOUR MOM OR DAD—A PIECE OF CAKE, RIGHT? Not exactly. Grocery shopping is a bit more complicated than throwing your favorite ice cream or chips into the cart. It takes planning to make sure your menus are healthy and that you have all the ingredients to cook the recipes you've chosen. To help take you through these steps, we've provided a sample recipe for Make-It-Yourself Tacos or Taco Salad.

### STEP 1: Create Your Shopping List

Keep your trip to the store short by organizing your shopping list like a road map of the grocery store. Divide a piece of paper into five sections arranged in the order you go through the store:

- Paper/Cleaning
- Pantry/Bread
- Fruits and Vegetables
- Meat/Fish/Dairy
- Frozen

Next, write the ingredients for your recipes under the appropriate section. Check your pantry, refrigerator, and freezer to see if you already have some of the ingredients you need. We've already done the list for the tacos on page 68.

### STEP 2: Shop the Aisles

With your list as your map, start in the middle of the store for items you store in your pantry, like cereal, rice, canned soups, and paper goods. Then, travel around the edge of the store, starting with produce, then meat, fish, and dairy.



Arrange items in your basket carefully so fresh fruit isn't squashed under the canned vegetables, for example. The last stop is frozen foods, so they won't defrost before you check out. Here are some pointers for picking out the best foods:

**Produce Department** Fresh fruit and vegetables should smell fresh and have no dark bruises, wrinkled skin, or whitish or greenish mold.

**ONIONS.** White and yellow onions can be very sharp in flavor, while red onions can be sweet and mild. Look for firm onions with dry, smooth, crisp skin. Green sprouts or greenish or black mold is a sign that the onions are old.

**FRESH GARLIC** grows in "heads" made up of 12 to 16 cloves covered by a white paperlike skin. Choose plump heads that are free of green sprouts or dark spots. Individual cloves should hold firmly together, with the skin tight around the cloves.

**BAGS OF PREWASHED VEGETABLES** should always be checked for crispness, and the veggies should have no brown edges or spots. Don't buy them if the freshness date has passed.

**Meat Department** When choosing meat, poultry, or fish, make sure that the packages are tightly wrapped, don't contain much liquid, and have no tears or punctures. There shouldn't be whitish slime on the meat's surface or ice crystals in the package.

Feel packages to make sure they are cool to the touch in the refrigerator case.

Smell the packages. If there is a strong odor, the food inside the package is old.

Check the date on the packages. (This also applies to dairy foods and foods in cans and boxes.)

The "Sell-by" date tells the store how long to display fresh food like meat, fish, poultry, or milk products.

The “Best if used by” date is not a purchase or safety date. It tells you the date the food will have the best flavor.

The “Use-by” date gives you the last date recommended by the food manufacturer for the best quality and flavor.

Ground beef goes through normal color changes while refrigerated. Meat should be safe to eat if bought before or on the “sell by” date on the package label. Beef may appear bright red on the surface, where it’s exposed to oxygen that comes through the plastic wrapping, but the center may be purplish-red because no oxygen reached the inside. After long exposure to oxygen, beef turns brown outside but may remain red inside. Labels also indicate lean-to-fat ratios and the cut of beef that’s been ground. Chuck and round are tougher cuts of meat than sirloin.

**Dairy Department** When buying milk, sour cream, or cheese, check the expiration date on the packages. Cartons and packages should always be cold to the touch and unopened.

**CHEESE.** Hard and medium-firm cheeses such as parmesan or cheddar should look uniform in color and should not have bluish mold or look dried out. Softer, fermented cheeses, like blue cheese or Italian gorgonzola, are supposed to have blue or green veins running through them but should not look dried out.

**Pantry Department** Boxes, bags, or jars (containing, for example, the taco shells and the salsa in the recipe) should never look like they have been opened.

**CANNED FOODS** (tomato sauce, corn, beans, and sliced olives in this recipe) in dented or bulging cans may not be safe to eat. Generally, canned goods have a shelf life of at least two years from the purchase date. At moderate temperatures (75° F and below), they last almost indefinitely.



**DRIED HERBS, SPICES, AND SEASONING MIXES** (chili powder in recipe) are sold in small jars or bags. If you can see through the packaging, look for bright color. If the color seems faded, the seasoning is too old and will not have a strong flavor.

**Frozen Food Department** Check the expiration date first. Frozen foods shouldn’t feel soft when squeezed. Ice crystals or heavy frost on the outside of the package means the food may have been defrosted and refrozen. That could affect taste or freshness.

### MAKE-IT-YOURSELF TACOS OR TACO SALAD

PREP AND COOK TIME: 35 to 45 minutes  
MAKES: 5 cups, or enough for 15 to 20 tacos or 4 to 6 taco salads

#### Taco Meat Filling

- 1 medium onion
- 2 medium cloves garlic
- 1 teaspoon oil
- 1 pound extra-lean ground beef
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon salt

## Shopping List

#### PANTRY/BREAD

- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 (8 oz.) can tomato sauce
- 1 can (8¾ oz.) whole kernel corn
- 1 can (15 oz.) black beans
- 1 box Jumbo Taco Shells or a bag of your favorite tortilla chips

- 1 (24 oz.) jar Safeway SELECT Salsa, any flavor
- 1 can (4 oz.) sliced olives

#### FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- 1 medium onion
- 1 head garlic
- 1 bag (8 oz.) shredded carrots

#### MEAT/FISH/DAIRY

- 1 pound extra lean ground beef
- 1 carton (8 oz.) Lucerne Light Sour Cream
- 1 bag (8 oz.) shredded Mexican-style cheese

- 1 can (8 oz.) tomato sauce
- 1 can (8¾ oz.) whole kernel corn
- 1 can (15 oz.) black beans
- 1 box taco shells or bag of tortilla chips

#### Optional Fillings

- 1 jar (24 oz.) Safeway SELECT Salsa, any flavor
- 1 cup shredded carrots (8 oz. bag)
- 1 can (4 oz.) sliced olives, well drained
- 1 bag (8 oz.) prewashed shredded lettuce
- 1 container (8 oz.) Lucerne Light Sour Cream
- 1 bag (8 oz.) shredded Mexican-style cheese

1. Preheat oven to 275°. Dice onion into ¼-inch-square pieces. Finely chop the garlic, or press it in a garlic press.
2. Heat oil in a 10- to 12-inch, nonstick pan over medium heat. Add onions and garlic. Stir with a wooden cooking spoon to coat them with the oil. Cook, stirring occasionally, until onions are transparent (clear), about 10 minutes.
3. Add meat to the pan. Break it up with the spoon into small pieces as it browns, about 5 minutes. Stir in the chili powder and salt.
4. After the meat is cooked, stir in tomato sauce. Cook over medium heat until sauce thickens slightly, about 5 minutes.
5. While the sauce is cooking, empty the cans of corn and black beans into a strainer. Rinse well under cool, running water. Drain well. When the sauce has thickened, stir in the corn and beans, and cook over medium-low heat until everything is heated through, about 5 minutes.
6. While corn and beans are heating, place taco shells on a baking sheet. Bake in oven about 5 minutes to heat through.
7. To serve, use individual serving bowls for the cooked meat, salsa, shredded carrots, olives, lettuce, sour cream, and shredded cheese. Each bowl gets its own serving spoon. Put the hot taco shells on a large plate. Guests can either fill taco shells with their favorite fillings or make a bed of lettuce on their plate and top with the meat and fillings for a taco salad. For salads, serve tortilla chips on the side.

Per two tacos: 293 cal., 41% (125 cal.) from fat; 14 g protein; 14 g fat (4 g sat.); 31 g carbo (5.5 g fiber); 765 mg sodium; 31 mg chol.

Per taco salad: 288 cal., 45% (133 cal.) from fat; 20 g protein; 15 g fat (5.3 g sat.); 21 g carbo (5.8 g fiber); 959 mg sodium; 52 mg chol.

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