

Staying Safe While Grocery Shopping

Despite being on lockdown, many of us continue to go grocery shopping. Here are some tips from food safety and infectious disease experts for safe grocery shopping during the pandemic.

Biggest Risk. People, Places or Things?

Being in the store itself is the biggest risk since we do not know who may be infected with the virus. Shop in stores that limit the number of shoppers at one time. Bring your own disinfectant wipes and wipe down your shopping cart and handles. Be as efficient as possible while going through the store. Shop with a list and know the layout of the store. Rather than bringing other family members, it is best to shop alone. Avoid crowds. Try not to touch your face until you can wash your hands. Don't forget to wear a face covering. Lastly avoid using your cell phone while in the store.

Checking Out

Maintain social distancing. Whether you decide to go self-checkout or to the cashier, choose the option that gives you the best social distancing. Some checkout counters now have plexiglass between the cashier and the customer. In that case, going to a cashier is fine, especially if one or both of you is wearing a mask or face covering.

Touchless payment is always best, like Apple Pay or Google Wallet. Otherwise, paying by credit card is a better choice than handling cash. You may decide to wear gloves if handling cash and make sure to use hand sanitizer or wash your hands as soon as possible. Always dispose of your gloves in the trash can before driving off.

When You Get Home

Wash your hands as soon as you arrive home. Be mindful of where you place your packages. Wipe down your surfaces after you finish unpacking.



Putting food in the refrigerator or freezer will not kill the virus; whereas cooking your food will. Rinse fresh produce in running water, before eating or storing. To avoid contaminating your food, it is not advisable to use antibacterial wipes or sprays directly on food. If you desire, you can wipe down cans or rise with soap and water before storing. If concerned with cardboard packaging for freezer items, you could discard the box and freeze in a ziplock bag for added protection. Although, this is not a necessary step.

Should I Order Online?

No contact delivery is another option to avoid face to face contact. You can pay ahead of time online and have groceries delivered outside your door. Don't forget to wash your hands and take the same precautions as noted above.

Source: [npr.org/lifekit](https://www.npr.org/lifekit)