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**The Penny-Pincher's Guide to
Stretching your Supportive
Eating Dollar**

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As a thank you for subscribing to my newsletter, I've compiled 30 of my favorite tips to help you stretch those hard-earned dollars as far as possible!

1. Check expiration dates when buying perishables. When purchasing items such as dairy, bread, meat and pre-packaged salads, check to make sure you are not buying expired or soon to expire items. Sometimes, the freshest items will be stored behind less fresh items. By buying items with the longest expiration dates, you extend its shelf life at home.
2. **CHECK FOR FRESHNESS.** Yeah, you know if your veggie selection looks brown or "off" not to get it. But sometimes, color doesn't matter if the brightest green head of broccoli you choose is rubbery, or the lettuce you buy has wilted leaves or has brown areas. Make sure you have firm, appealing produce without bruises or spots. If you don't like what you see, ask the produce manager if he has a fresher selection. Otherwise, don't buy it. It'll end up going to waste unless you use it as soon as you get home!
3. Always keep your fruits and vegetables in the crisper part of the refrigerator. The food loses its moisture a lot slower in there than any other part of the refrigerator. This helps preserve it.
4. Never store tomatoes in the refrigerator. They will not only lose their flavor, but they will also turn mushy a lot sooner if placed in there. Keep them away from sunlight at room temperature.
5. If you wash your fruit or vegetables before storing, always make sure that they are entirely dry before putting them away. Moisture can add to early spoilage.
6. Wrap onions individually in a newspaper and store in a cool and dark place to keep them fresh for long time.
7. Place overripe tomatoes in cold water and add some salt. Overnight they will become firm and fresh.
8. Celery: To keep celery fresh for long time, wrap it in aluminum foil and place in the refrigerator.
9. "Eat it while it's fresh." If it isn't being eaten, and it's still fresh, don't toss it. Instead, freeze it for later use.
10. Kale and herbs such as basil, parsley, and cilantro do *not* take well to home freezing. Dry them or use them up instead.
11. Buy pre-washed tomatoes, chopped cauliflower and broccoli from the salad bar. If time and expense are your stumbling blocks, figure out a way to get past them; veggies

are worth every second and every cent you spend on them! It's very tempting to buy those pre-made bags of ready-to-eat salads (trust me, I'm guilty too!), but with just 5 minutes of preparation a head of fresh lettuce (romaine, green leaf or even spinach) will make twice as much salad and cost less than half!

12. Do not, I repeat, DO NOT shop without a list for exactly what you need! Then do your best to stick to it and get out as quickly as you can!

13. Plan your weekly meals around whichever meats, poultry and seafood items are on sale. If you take just a half hour to look through the circulars you get in your mailbox ANYWAY, you could save hundreds (even thousands) of dollars per year on groceries.

14. You don't always have to follow recipes exactly as written in any book or magazine; work with what you have in your pantry, and buy what's on SALE! (This rule does not apply to BAKING, by the way- bake exactly as the recipe states. But if you're eating supportively, you're not going to be eating much for baked goods, anyway!)

15. Given that eating supportively entails eating lean proteins and fibrous carbohydrates, well, we're buying a lot of meat! When you do buy them, make sure to buy only what's on sale each week! If you have one or two favorite items, like chicken breasts or ground turkey, stock up when they go on sale.

16. Buy whole chickens and turkeys and portion the meat out yourself. Freeze it in portions after roasting it on a Sunday!

17. One of the most economical ways to buy pork is to buy the quarter, half or whole pork loins when they go on sale. Have the butcher cut them into chops and loins at the store. They'll do this for free.

18. Ham and turkey: The very best time to buy ham is before or after the holidays, they are always on sale! After preparing a large ham for one meal, make sure to divide the leftovers into family size portions and freeze.

19. Cut your own beef strips out of steaks that are on sale for stir fry's, or bite sized chunks for other recipes. This is much cheaper than buying the packages of precut beef strips or sirloin tips.

20. When buying produce by the pound, make sure it's dry! If it's just been sprayed with water it will weigh more, and cost more!

21. If you need to buy the larger bag (instead of individual produce items), and all of the bags contain one bruised or spoiled item, be sure to remove the damaged produce as soon as you get home. As they say, "One bad apple can spoil the bunch."

22. Growing our own garden in the summer saves my family a bundle of money. I freeze or can my veggies and eat them all year. Herbs can also be dried or frozen, depending on the herb.

23. Buy the store brands of veggies, and stock up when they're on sale!

24. Most store brands are very high quality and offer a money-back guarantee; don't be afraid to ask for your money back if you're not happy with the product.

25. Wrap salad greens and vegetables in a couple of paper towels and store them in a zip-loc bag or Tupperware in the refrigerator. The paper towels will absorb the moisture that causes greens and veggies to wilt and discolor. Change the paper towels every couple of days as they will get damp and lose effectiveness. This method also works well for opened bags of pre-packaged salad -toss a paper towel into the bag and clip close and the leftover salad will keep for an extra couple of days.

26. Many canned vegetables, like green beans, chickpeas, and other vegetables come in large family-size containers. And often, they are cheaper to buy this way (especially when they are on sale!). If you do not have a large family, and are unable to use up all the food within a couple of days, just pop the leftovers in the freezer. You don't have to have a large family to benefit from large "family size" sales.

27. If you have small amounts of leftover vegetables, freeze them in sandwich-sized baggies to make all kinds of quick, delicious (and frugal!) soups. You could also do the same with small leftover amounts of cooked beef, poultry or ham (for added protein), and add rice for heartier soups, if you're eating carbs.

28. And did you know cheese freezes well too? It sure does! Buy several packages of your favorite cheese when it goes on sale. By the time you use them up they will hopefully go on sale again! Sometimes (depending on the cheese), the block can change consistency once frozen, so shred or crumble it first!

29. Many people do not realize this (and the stores probably don't want everyone to know) but when a product is on sale, let's say for example "4 for \$10.00," you can almost always purchase just one of the items for the sale price (which in this case would be \$2.50). In other words, you do NOT have to purchase 4 items to get the sale price! (However, if it's an item you use regularly it's a good idea to go ahead and purchase more than one, as long as you have the money to spare AND the room to store the extra items.)

30. My local grocery store steams lobsters and broils fish for me. This is a better (and cheaper) option than eating out!

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