

Online and Curbside Grocery Shopping

If you are quarantined for a period of time due to sickness or exposure to sickness, you are at higher risk, and/or you prefer not to go to the grocery store, you could consider online ordering for groceries, especially from stores with home delivery options. Remember, you will need a debit or credit card to use most online grocery services.



Choosing a Store and/or Service:



Choosing a store and/or service:

Check to see if there are stores or services in your area offering online grocery shopping options

- Do an online search to look for stores near where you live that are offering online grocery shopping options – you can start by looking on the websites of your favorite stores or try searching “online grocery shopping” or “online grocery delivery”
- There may be some changes to online grocery service related to the Coronavirus, so make sure you look carefully at the websites.

Compare:

Compare the prices and service options for grocery stores to find a store that may work well for you. You may try a few different stores to see which one is the best fit for you.

- **Cost:** The online pick-up and delivery options vary in cost from store to store. Some offer a flat fee, others have varying fees based on the order, some require a subscription, and some are free with minimum order amounts.
- **Available products:** Some stores may have limitations on which products can be included in orders, especially during the Coronavirus pandemic. For example, some stores may not sell high demand items like toilet paper or disinfectant spray.



Compare (continued):

- *Item substitution:* Stores will often substitute items if something is not available. See what the rules are for item substitution, and if you are concerned, make sure the store has a place to enter information about substitution preferences for items.
- *Website or App:* You may be able to place orders on websites and/or apps. If you need an app to place an order, make sure the app will work with your phone.
- *Pick-up & Delivery:* Stores may offer in-store pick-up, curbside delivery and/or home delivery. Consider which options will work best for you and find a store that offers that option.
- *Service:* Some stores use an in-house service. Other stores use an outside service (like Instacart) for online grocery orders. Look for reviews on the online grocery service



Create an account:

Once you decide on a store to try, set up an account on the website or download the app.

- Pick a username (can often be your email) and a password that you will remember.
- If there are options to enter your phone number, that may be helpful as many stores have text messaging options for reminders.

Before You Get Started:



Make a shopping list:

- It is important to think ahead about what items you need for meals and snacks that you plan to eat. Also, do not forget to consider other household items that you may need like toilet paper, tissues, toothpaste, etc.
- During the Coronavirus pandemic, it is better to shop less frequently than usual, so consider items that will last longer and buy enough food for 2 or 3 weeks at a time. This may mean buying at least some frozen or canned fruits and vegetables, rather than only fresh produce.

Delivery or Curbside?:

Decide if delivery or curbside pick up will work best for you. If you are doing curbside pick-up, think about how you will get to the store.

- Remember, if you are quarantined because you are sick or may have been exposed to COVID-19, delivery may be the only option for you. If the stores do not offer delivery, you could do curbside pick-up if you have a friend, family member, or neighbor who is healthy and able to pick up the groceries for you.
- If you can do curbside pick-up, decide how you will get to the store. Some options are to drive yourself, ride a bike, or walk.
 - Remember, if you are riding a bike or walking, you need to think about ordering fewer groceries to make sure you can carry all the bags.
 - If you normally use a ride service or public transportation to get to the grocery store, it may currently be safer to try to find a delivery service or find someone else to pick up your groceries. However, if you need to use a ride service or public transportation, make sure to use with caution.



Steps for Online Shopping:



Select a store:
 Choose which store you will use (see above for tips) and sign-in online or on the app

- If the store/service offers multiple ways to order groceries, try using a computer and the app to see which one is the easiest for you to use.

Select a pick-up or delivery time:

- Pick-ups and deliveries often need to be scheduled 4 or more hours ahead of time, but during the Coronavirus pandemic may need to be scheduled several days or even a week ahead of time.
- If the available times do not work for you, you could try a different store to see if they have more options.



Pick items to put in the online shopping cart:

- Remember to plan ahead (see notes in **Before You Get Started** section above and other resources)
- Add notes on items if you have specific requests (like asking for bananas that are less ripe) or notes about substitutions (only wanting a certain brand of cereal).

Check the items in your cart:

- Make sure that you have the correct items and number of each item in your online cart.
- Review the total cost. If there is a minimum amount to spend for pick-up or delivery, make sure you meet the requirement.



Place the order:

- Make sure the order is submitted – sometimes there are several steps before the order is finalized.
- Have your credit card ready if it is not already programmed into the app.

Set a reminder:

Put a reminder for the pick-up or delivery time on your phone or calendar

- Many stores/services may offer automatic reminders as well, but it is helpful to have an additional reminder set by you.
- If you are picking up, make sure to set the reminder with enough time to get to the store.



For Pick-up Only:

Go to the location at the correct time.

- Make sure to bring your phone (for letting the store know you are there) and your credit card and ID (for any verification needed at pick-up).
- The store will usually have directions on the website or app about the specific pick-up location and what signs to look for. Some stores have a lane to pull up near the store, other stores have a specific parking space, and some stores may have in-store pick up only.

Let the store know you are there.

- There is usually some way to let the store know that you are there – either through the app, text messaging, or a phone.

Get the groceries.



For Delivery Only:

Listen for the doorbell or text-notification that your groceries have arrived and bring them inside.

- If you see the delivery person arriving, make sure to let them drop the bags outside. Maintain 6-feet of social distancing during drop-off. Some delivery services may ask that you wait until the delivery person is back in the car before you get your groceries.
- Get the groceries.



Tips:

Tipping policies vary by store and service. Many stores do not allow you to tip the person, but other stores either do not have a clear policy or may allow tips. Delivery services are often more likely to allow tips, but that also varies. Make sure you know the tipping policy.



Once the Groceries are in Your Home:



Wash your hands:

Remember to wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after you have brought your groceries inside.

Wipe off cans and boxes:

Before putting your grocery items away, wipe off any cans and boxed items with a disinfectant/sanitizing wipe.



Collect bags:

Put the grocery bags in a sealed container outside to return to store at your next trip.

Clean surfaces:

After wiping off your groceries, clean your counters and any areas where you placed the grocery bags and new groceries.



Wash your hands again:

Remember to wash your hands with soap and water again for at least 20 seconds.

Problem Solving:

Problem	Potential Solution
<p>The store does not have all the items on my list.</p>	<p>Sometimes a store may not have an item or a specific brand of an item that you would like to buy. Consider if there is a different item for you to buy. For example, you usually buy sliced cheese, but the store does not have any. If you really need cheese, you can try buying a block of cheese or a different type of cheese. If you do not want to buy a different item or brand, you can go try a different store/service for online shopping to see if they have the item you want or you will need to wait until your next order to see if the item becomes available.</p>
<p>I do not like the substitutions that the grocery store/service made.</p>	<p>This is a hard part about online shopping. If you do not like one of the substitutions, there are often ways to communicate that to the store or service. There may not be a way to change the substitution this time, but many stores/services learn from the feedback you provide and hopefully will not make a similar substitution in the future. Also, keep in mind that you can often put notes for specific items if you do not want a substitute.</p>
<p>I can't figure out how to use my coupons.</p>	<p>Some stores accept electronic coupons and others do not. Look for a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section for online ordering or the app to see if and how you can use coupons. If you often use paper coupons, you may want to start looking for electronic coupons, which are more commonly accepted for online shopping.</p>

Helpful Websites Related to Grocery Shopping:

MOMMY CONVOS



THAT INSPIRE A HEALTHY, HAPPY HOME

Pros, Cons, and Tips for Curbside Grocery Pick-Up

<https://mommyconvos.com/curbside-grocery-pickup-pros-cons-tips-4success/>



THE KRAZY COUPON LADY

Summary of Grocery Pick-Up Tips

<https://thekrazycouponlady.com/tips/family/grocery-pickup-curbside-chart>



Tips and Tricks for Grocery Shopping Online (USA Today)

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/reviewedcom/2020/04/10/tips-and-tricks-grocery-shopping-online-during-coronavirus-pandemic/5130942002/>



What to Know Before You Try Grocery Pickup

<https://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/my-money/articles/what-to-know-before-you-try-grocery-pickup>