



## Grocery Store Guide

Grocery shopping can be a daunting task especially if you are in search of natural foods you have not purchased before. When shopping for foods you are unfamiliar with, most grocery stores follow a similar layout. This is great because it will help you navigate just about any store using this guide.

### Big Box Grocery

Big Box stores almost all follow the same layout. Fresh, whole foods span the perimeter of the store with the processed and packaged foods in the middle aisles. You want to shop the perimeter first, filling up 80% of your list with these foods. The other 20% will come from the middle aisles in the forms of canned beans, pastas, nut/seed butters etc.

The perimeter is where you'll find all of your fresh fruit and veggies. While it's tempting to buy the pre-cut, pre-peeled and packaged versions of these (also available in the perimeter) it's always cheaper to buy the whole version and spend a little time doing the prep yourself. You will also find your meats along the perimeter. In addition, if you are consuming dairy or grain products, you will find these on the outside.

### *Should it be organic?*

This is a big question when it comes to grocery shopping. Organic is usually a little more expensive and if you're on a budget, you can't buy everything organic. So, the question remains, do you need to buy organic? Where you can, I would follow the Dirty Dozen guideline (published annually by the Environmental Working Group, EWG) and purchase items on this list as organic. The general rule of thumb is, if it has a peel or skin you remove and throw away (e.g. bananas and avocados) you do not need to purchase organic. Nutritionally speaking, there is research out there trying to prove organic is more nutritious but when you compare the studies, the nutrient profiles are very similar. It's the minimal exposure to harmful herbicides and pesticides (which cause neurological damage) that make organic a better choice.



## Environmental Working Group Dirty Dozen List

- Strawberries
- Spinach
- Nectarines
- Apples
- Grapes
- Peaches
- Cherries
- Pears
- Tomatoes
- Celery
- Potatoes
- Sweet Bell Peppers

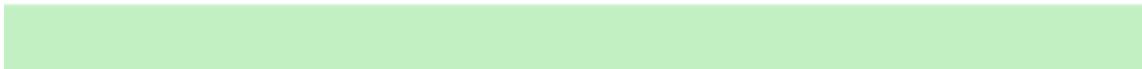
When purchasing eggs and meat, if you want to choose organic look for the USDA or Canadian Organic symbols on the packaging. If you see “Non-GMO Project Verified” it will, by definition, also be organic as it has not been genetically modified in anyway.

Happy chickens make happy eggs so free range, pasture-raised is the optimal choice. Same goes for meat. Grass is the natural diet for cows, not corn. Look for grass-fed or pasture-fed on the package. This would hold true for dairy as well.

### *Natural Foods Section*

Depending on the size of your grocery store, they may have a separate natural foods section. Here is where you will be able to find the alternative versions to meat and dairy as well as allergen friendly foods. If there is not a separate section with all of these foods, the store may still carry them, the products will just be on the shelves in their respective sections with the conventional foods. You will just need to have a close look.

In this section you will likely be able to find gut-healthy fermented foods like kimchi, sauerkraut and pickles.





## Health Food Stores

You will likely need to shop at a health food store if you need non-dairy, vegan, gluten free and or/allergen friendly foods. Big Box stores carry these to a certain extent but health food stores will always carry the specialty items. They also have knowledgeable staff to guide you with your selections.

Use the information in this guide to assist you with your shopping and in no time, you'll be able to navigate for new foods with ease.