

S.K.I.P.

Strategies with Kids | Information for Parents

# Supermarket Survival



**The supermarket is a really exciting place for children, but sometimes it can all get too frustrating and they go into overload. There are ways to make the weekly shop less stressful.**

**“Our supermarket has a sweeper that goes through at 9am so I take the kids then and we follow it around the aisles”**

# Plan

Try not to go when you're in a hurry and your child is hungry or tired. It might be tempting to fit the shopping in after a morning out and about – but chances are your child will be tired and ready for a quiet time at home.

Involve your children in writing the list beforehand. Give them some options – for example what sort of cereal they want. Give two or three choices that you are prepared to buy, and then make sure you both look for those choices when you get there.

If you live in the country and do your shopping on a day trip to town, do it in the morning when everyone's fresh.



**Pack a drink and a snack in your bag. This helps to distract them.**

# When you're there

- Take along a small toy that they can play with.
- Bring something for your child to snack on as you shop.
- Give them some choices – “strawberry or apricot yoghurt?”.
- Try to keep your trolley away from things you don't want to buy, but your child will ask for – for example the sweets aisle.
- Give them a job, for example holding the list or coupon book. Ask them to look for things on the list.

**“The checkout operators usually talk to him when he helps. He really enjoys that”**

- Keep them in the trolley. That way you can talk to them and involve them, and they won't disappear. If you've got more than one child, the others can hold onto the trolley as you go round.
- Managing with a small baby and a toddler can get really tricky. Try to shop when someone can come along to help or can look after the children at home.

# The checkout

- Play games such as I Spy as you wait. With young children use colours – “I spy something red”.
- Give them some groceries to put on the checkout counter.
- Thank them for being helpful.



# If things start going wrong

- Don't give in to demands. Try distracting them by asking them to find something they like on the list, give them a bit of food or a drink.
  - Stop the trolley. Explain quietly that you need their help and when you get home you can both do something they like
    - like watch a tv programme.
  - Keep calm – try not to show your anger. Count to ten. If you're next to something your child wants, move the trolley to a quiet corner.
  - Don't worry about the other shoppers, most of them will have had children and will know what you are going through.



# When you've finished

**“I go  
without the  
kids or just do  
a bare necessities  
when they're  
with me”**

- Tell them they were really good at choosing/sitting still/ playing I spy. If they were difficult, try to remember something positive you can tell them.
- If things went wrong think about what triggered the trouble – you might be able to avoid it next time.

## Think about

It's a good idea to set up an arrangement with a friend where you mind each others children so you each can shop on your own.

**Remember: Try not to go when you're in a hurry and your child is hungry or tired.**



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Skip supports parents and caregivers  
to raise their children in a positive way.

For more information go to:

**[www.skip.org.nz](http://www.skip.org.nz)**

Email: **[info@skip.org.nz](mailto:info@skip.org.nz)**

or phone: **04 916 3385**

For more information on support for parents go to

**[www.familyservices.govt.nz](http://www.familyservices.govt.nz)**

and click on Family Services Directory.



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