



SIMPLE GUIDELINES FOR GROCERY SHOPPING



Simple Guidelines For Grocery Shopping For A Healthy Gut

Welcome to your journey towards a healthier gut! I am Emily and I am here to help guide you on your clean eating path. My journey to clean eating started two years ago after battling chronic indigestion, inflammation and a slew of other symptoms. Despite countless doctor visits and numerous medications, my health continued spiraling downward. It was during this low point that I had an epiphany: perhaps the very treatments I believed were healing me were actually contributing to my distress. This revelation jump-started my journey into the world of gut health, transforming not just my diet but my entire approach to life.

I spent over a year at the doctors office without any clear diagnosis or solution- I then went on a 30 day clean eating diet, followed by an elimination diet and I was able to heal my gut and alleviate my symptoms in less than 3 months. I am now a Certified Nutrition Coach through the National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM) and I have made it my mission to help educate others on the importance of gut health and clean eating.

This free, simple shopping guide is your first step to a clean gut and a healthier version of you!

Let's get started on this journey together!



Simple Guidelines For Grocery Shopping For A Healthy Gut

Your gut health plays a crucial role in your overall well-being, influencing everything from digestion to immune function and even mood. By making mindful choices at the grocery store, you can nourish your gut and support a thriving microbiome. This simple guideline for grocery shopping will equip you with the knowledge and tools to make informed decisions, filling your cart with foods that promote digestive health and leave you feeling your best. Let's embark on this journey together, one shopping trip at a time!

● MAKE A SHOPPING LIST

Making a shopping list before heading to the grocery store is essential for maintaining a clean, balanced diet that supports gut health. By planning your meals and snacks in advance, you can ensure that you're purchasing a variety of nutrient-rich foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats. This proactive approach helps you avoid impulse purchases of processed or unhealthy foods that may disrupt your microbiome and contribute to inflammation. With a well-thought-out shopping list, you're more likely to stick to your clean eating goals, prioritize whole foods, and create meals that nourish your body and promote digestive wellness.

● SHOP THE PERIMETER

Focus on the outer aisles of the grocery store where fresh produce, meats, dairy, and whole foods are typically located. This helps avoid the temptation of processed foods in the center aisles.

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● AVOID PRODUCTS WITH A LONG INGREDIENT LIST WITH INGREDIENTS THAT ARE DIFFICULT TO READ

Avoid products with long, complex ingredient lists to prioritize simplicity and transparency in your diet. Choosing foods with fewer, easily recognizable ingredients reduces the risk of consuming hidden additives, preservatives, and artificial flavors. Opting for simpler options promotes healthier eating habits and supports overall well-being.

● LOOK FOR WHOLE FOODS AS THE FIRST INGREDIENT

Ingredients are listed by quantity from highest to lowest. When looking at products, look for products that list whole ingredients. When whole foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins are the main ingredients, you're getting more nutrients and fewer additives.

● AVOID ANY INGREDIENT WITH A NUMBER IN IT

Steer clear of products containing ingredients with numbers in their names to prioritize natural and wholesome options. Ingredients with numerical codes often indicate artificial additives, preservatives, and synthetic flavors, which can be detrimental to your health.

● WATCH OUT FOR GUMS

Be cautious of products that contain "gum" as an ingredient, as it often signifies the presence of various artificial additives.

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DONT LET LABELS FOOL YOU

Beware of misleading food labels like "low sugar," "natural," "low fat" that may not accurately reflect a product's nutritional value. They can often be deceiving and may lead to overconsumption of unhealthy ingredients like added sugars, artificial additives, and unhealthy fats. Instead, focus on whole, minimally processed foods and prioritize reading ingredient lists and nutrition labels to make informed choices for your health.

- Natural - Unlike terms such as "organic" or "non-GMO," which have specific standards and certifications, the term "natural" is not officially defined or regulated by the FDA. This lack of regulation means that food manufacturers can use the term freely, even if their products contain artificial additives, preservatives, or other synthetic ingredients.
- Gluten free - A lot of gluten free products are highly processed and loaded with unhealthy fats and sugar. Make sure to read all the ingredients.
- No added sugar - A lot of products are naturally high in sugar, just because there is no added sugar- doesnt mean it's healthy.
- Non-fat/low-fat/light/low calorie - To compensate for the reduction in calories or fat and to enhance flavor, manufacturers often add sugar or other sweeteners to these products. This added sugar can contribute to excess calorie intake and may have negative effects on health and weight.

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● DONT LET LABELS FOOL YOU (CONTINUED)

- Multigrain or Whole grain - Look for bread where whole grains are listed as the first ingredient, indicating that they make up the majority of the product. Labels that state "made with whole grains" or multigrain can contain processed white flour. Avoid bread with artificial additives, preservatives, and high-fructose corn syrup.
- Fortified or enriched - When a label indicates that a product is "fortified" or "enriched," it means that nutrients have been added to the product. These nutrients are often synthetic versions rather than naturally occurring nutrients found in whole foods, and often times are added after other nutrients are removed during processing.
- Zero trans fat - Although a product may be labeled as "zero trans fat," it could still legally contain up to 0.5 grams per serving. Consequently, if the serving sizes are deceptively small, the product might still have a notable amount of trans fat.
- Made with real fruit - The "made with real fruit" label implies that the product contains real fruit, but in reality, many products contain minimal or no fruit at all. While food companies disclose the nutrient content of their products, they are not required to specify the percentage of actual fruit used.

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● BUY ORGANIC LOCALLY SOURCED PRODUCE

Start by choosing fruits and vegetables that are in season and are locally sourced. Look for produce that is firm, with vibrant colors and no signs of bruising or wilting. Give produce a gentle sniff to check for a fresh, aromatic scent. In order to minimize pesticide exposure, reference EWG's Dirty Dozen and Clean Fifteen list to prioritize purchasing the organic versions of the Dirty Dozen. The PLU sticker will help you identify what is conventional and what is organic. If it starts with a 4, it is conventional. If it starts with a 9, it is organic. Always thoroughly wash produce before consumption.

● Dirty Dozen:

- Strawberries
- Spinach
- Kale/Collard Greens
- Grapes
- Peaches
- Pears
- Nectarines
- Apples
- Bell Peppers
- Cherries
- Blueberries
- Green Beans

● Clean Fifteen:

- Avocados
- Sweetcorn
- Onions
- Pinapples
- Papaya
- Sweet Peas
- Asparagus
- Honeydew
- Kiwi
- Cabbage
- Mushrooms
- Mangos
- Sweet Potatoes
- Watermelon
- Carrots

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● BUY ORGANIC, GRASS-FED & FINISHED BEEF/WILD GAME

Shopping for organic, grass-fed, and grass-finished beef or wild game offers health and environmental benefits. These options are free from synthetic pesticides, hormones, and antibiotics, reducing exposure to harmful chemicals. Grass-fed and grass-finished animals are raised on pasture, resulting in leaner meat with higher levels of omega-3 fatty acids and antioxidants. Choosing these options supports sustainable agriculture, animal welfare, and biodiversity conservation. Opting for organic, grass-fed, and grass-finished beef or wild game is a healthier and more eco-friendly choice for both you and the planet.

● Labels to look for include:

- Organic
- 100% Grass-fed
- Grass-fed and grass finished
- Regeneratively farmed

● Favorite brands include:

- Wild Pastures
- Wild Land Marketplace
- Force of Nature

● Questions to ask to help you find the right meat:

- Are there any certifications or labels indicating standards for quality, sustainability, and animal welfare?
- Is it grass-fed and grass finished?
- What are the animal welfare standards?
- Is it locally sourced?
- What is the processing method?

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● BUY SUSTAINABLE, WILD CAUGHT SEAFOOD

Farmed fish pose environmental and health risks due to crowded conditions, antibiotic use, and pollution. Opting for sustainable, wild-caught seafood supports healthier oceans, biodiversity, and avoids harmful additives. Wild-caught fish and seafood are caught in their natural habitats, where they feed on their natural diets and live in their native environments. This results in seafood that tends to be leaner, lower in unhealthy fats, and higher in beneficial nutrients like omega-3 fatty acids, which are essential for heart and brain health.

● Labels to look for include:

- Wild caught
- Certified sustainable

● Favorite brands include:

- Vital Choice
- Safe Catch
- Seatopia

● Questions to ask to help you find the right fish:

- Is it wild caught or farmed?
- Where is it sourced?
- Is it labeled or certified? Both Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification and Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) certification indicate that the fish meets certain standards for sustainability and quality.

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● BUY ORGANIC, PASTURE RAISED POULTRY AND EGGS

Organic certification ensures that poultry are raised without antibiotics, hormones, or synthetic pesticides, reducing exposure to harmful chemicals. Pasture-raised poultry have access to outdoor spaces where they can forage and exhibit natural behaviors, resulting in meat and eggs that are higher in nutrients like omega-3 fatty acids and vitamins. By choosing organic, pasture-raised options, you support ethical farming practices, promote animal welfare, and enjoy products that are healthier and more flavorful.

● Labels to look for include:

- Organic
- Pasture-raised
- Free-range

● Favorite brands include:

- Wild Pastures
- Force of Nature
- Vital Farms
- These Came First

● Questions to ask to help you find the right meat:

- Are there any certifications or labels indicating standards for quality, sustainability, and animal welfare?
- Is it pasture-raised or free range?
- What are the animal welfare standards?
- Is it locally sourced?
- What is the processing method?

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● BUY ORGANIC, GRASS FED AND GRASS FINISHED BUTTER AND GHEE

Grass-fed and grass-finished butter comes from cows that have been exclusively fed grass and forage throughout their lives. This results in butter that is higher in beneficial nutrients such as omega-3 fatty acids, conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), antioxidants, fat-soluble vitamins and minerals. These nutrients are essential for overall health, immune function, and bone health.

Labels to look for include:

- Organic
- Grass-fed

Favorite brands include:

- Kirkland
- Kerrygold
- Organic Valley
- Pure Indian Foods

● BUY RAW NUTS & SEEDS

Buying organic sprouted nuts and seeds offers better digestibility, increased nutrient absorption, and reduced anti-nutrients. They are free from pesticides and GMOs, promoting better health and environmental sustainability. Nuts and seeds have a short shelf life so store them in an airtight container in the refrigerator or freezer.

Labels to look for include:

- Organic
- Sprouted
- Raw
- Unsalted

Favorite brands include:

- Go Raw
- Now Real Food
- Lark Ellen Farm
- Thrive

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BUY ORGANIC, NON-GMO PACKAGED FOODS

If a packaged food item that isn't organic contains any of the ingredients listed below, it is probably genetically engineered. To steer clear of GMOs in your diet, seek out products certified by the Non-GMO Project or those labeled as 100% organic.

GMO List A-Z:

- Aspartame
- Baking Powder
- Canola Oil
- Caramel Color
- Cellulose
- Citric Acid
- Cobalamin
- Colorose
- Condensed Milk
- Confectioners Sugar
- Corn Flour
- Corn Masa
- Corn Meal
- Corn Oil
- Corn Sugar
- Corn Syrup
- Cornstarch
- Cottonseed Oil
- Cyclodextrin
- Cystein
- Dextrin
- Dextrose
- Diacetyl
- Diglyceride
- Erythritol
- Equal
- Food Starch
- Fructose
- Glucose
- Glutamate
- Glutamic Acid
- Glycerides
- Glycerin
- Glycerol
- Glycerol Monooleate
- Glycine
- Hemicellulose
- High Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS)
- Hydrogenated Starch
- Hydrolyzed Vegetable Protein
- Inositol
- Inverse Syrup
- Inversol
- Invert Sugar
- Isoflavones
- Lactic Acid
- Lecithin
- Leucine
- Lysine
- Malitol
- Malt
- Malt Syrup
- Malt Extract
- Maltodextrin
- Maltose
- Mannitol
- Methylcellulose
- Milk Powder
- Milo Starch
- Modified Food Starch
- Modified Starch
- Mono And Diglycerides
- Monosodium Glutamate
- Nutrasweet
- Oleic Acid
- Nutrasweet
- Oleic Acid
- Phenylalanine
- Phytic Acid
- Protein Isolate
- Shoyu
- Sorbitol
- Soy Flour
- Soy Isolates
- Soy Lecithin
- Soy Milk
- Soy Oil
- Soy Protein
- Soy Protein Isolate
- Soy Sauce
- Starch
- Stearic Acid
- Sugar
- Tamari
- Tempeh
- Teriyaki Marinades
- Textured Vegetable Protein
- Threonine
- Tocopherols (Vitamin E)
- Tofu
- Trehalose
- Triglyceride
- Vegetable Fat
- Vegetable Oil
- Vitamin B12
- Vitamin E
- Whey
- Whey Powder
- Xanthan Gum

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I hope this shopping guide allows you to easily select foods that support a balanced and thriving gut. Remember to prioritize whole, unprocessed foods like vegetables, proteins, gluten free grains, and fermented products to support a diverse gut microbiome. These choices will improve your digestion, nutrient absorption, and immune function, reducing digestive issues and inflammation. By making these mindful choices at the grocery store, your refreshed diet will consistently support your gut health, ultimately contributing to your overall well-being.

If you liked this guide, please download my other free guide - *Guide To Eating Clean When Dining Out*. You may also purchase my *Food Elimination Diet* on my website at www.mygutinstincts.com. My 30 Day Clean Eating Meal Plan Guide will be released soon. Follow me on instagram @my.gutinstincts for more updates and tips!

