

Coupon myths and misconceptions: "Using coupons is too complicated!"

**Used with permission from Angela at thecouponproject.com*

My intention is to challenge some of the main objections I hear when I share with other people how I use coupons to save money on groceries. Today I want to talk about this objection: **"This sounds far too complicated. Maybe you save money using coupons, but I just don't have the time and energy right now. I won't stick with it."**

One thing I've learned is that since I've used coupons, I've done a better job overall of organizing my shopping trips, keeping a well-stocked pantry, eliminated the need for middle-of-the-week trips, and become a better steward of my money altogether. Sure, it did take an initial investment of time to find the system that was right for me and learn how to use coupons effectively (and I'm still learning!). But in the long run? I actually think using coupons has helped me create a more efficient, less-complicated household!

Here are some easy ideas for using coupons in a way that will help you and not complicate your life further.

- 1. Make couponing part of your normal routine.** Don't have a lot of extra time to spare? Who does! Find ways to work couponing and deal-hunting in with your other weekly tasks. I get my papers Sunday morning, on my way home from church. I may clip and sort my coupons during a favorite TV show. Plan your meals for the week based on the deals you find in that week's circulars. You get the idea.
- 2. File your inserts instead of clipping.** No time to clip and sort? I generally like to clip and file each of my coupons, but the last couple of weeks have found me extraordinarily busy. No problem, you can simply file the inserts by date and use an online database, such as [Southern Savers](#) or [Hot Coupon World](#), to retrieve the coupons when you need them.
- 3. Find a small coupon organizer.** I found a great little expanding file folder that I use when I go to the store. I have a tab for each store and a few other tabs that I've titled things such as "receipts," "Register Rewards," and "free coupons." I have found this is MUCH better to take into the store than my monstrous binders. I simply pull out the coupons I need for a shopping trip and add them to my expanding file folder.
- 4. Identify your best sources for deals, and bookmark them.** Find your favorite blogs, forums, and other deal-related websites and bookmark them or read them in an aggregate, such as [Google Reader](#). I spent some time finding the sites that I felt had the best deals for the stores I frequented and noted when they typically updated. Once you've saved those sites as your favorites, you'll find it doesn't take too much time to scan them for the deals that make sense for your family. As you get better at couponing, you'll find it's easy to identify many deals yourself just by scanning the ads.
- 5. Build your stockpile!** Your hard work will pay off as your stockpile will grow and your couponing skills increase. In a few weeks, your pantry will begin to round out and you'll notice less of a need to hit the grocery and drugstores in the middle of the week. Entertaining on the fly won't throw you. You'll learn how to become creative with what you have on hand.
- 6. Plan, plan, plan.** The thing you'll find quickly is that planning pays off in the long run. Plan your meals, plan your shopping trips, plan your budget, plan your pantry...and you'll save time, chaos, and frustration in the long run. Most of all, you'll save money. A LOT of money. And trust me, as you become more and more efficient you'll quickly see that the money you save will be well worth the time you put in.