

Going to the Grocery Store

A free printable social story for ages 3-8

Grocery stores pack bright lights, crowds, beeping checkouts, and tempting shelves into one demanding errand. This story previews the trip and gives children a helper role, which reduces both sensory overwhelm and the buy-me-this battles. Start with short trips after reading it a few times.

Sometimes I go to the grocery store with my grown-up.

The grocery store is where we buy food for our family.

The store can be big, bright, and busy.

There might be lots of people, carts, and beeping sounds.

I can walk next to my grown-up or ride in the cart.

My grown-up follows a list. The list tells us what to buy.

I can be a helper. I can find the bananas or put things in the cart.

We buy the things on our list. Sometimes the answer to extra treats is no, and that is okay.

If the store feels too loud or busy, I can hold my grown-up's hand and take a slow breath.

At the checkout, we wait in line for our turn.

The scanner beeps for each thing we buy. Beep, beep, beep.

We pay, bag our food, and take it home.

At home, we have food for meals and snacks.

Shopping helps my family, and I am a great helper.

Tips for Reading This Story Together

- Give your child a real job before entering: a picture list of three items they are in charge of finding.
- Start with 10-minute trips for a handful of items and grow from there; success on short trips earns longer ones.
- Shop at off-peak hours (weekday mornings) while the skill is new, and check if your store offers sensory-friendly hours.
- State the treat policy in the car, before the store, and hold it kindly and consistently every single time.

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