



Lesson Overview: Have you ever seen those parking spaces at the grocery store that say “Grocery pickup” or wonder how you get groceries delivered to your door? We will discuss in the ins and outs of grocery shopping online, including how much to tip the person shopping for you, and what to do when your favorite item isn’t in stock.

Five Key Points to Discuss with your HCE Group:

1. Comparison shop between which delivery service you would like to use. Look around at your local grocery stores and see if they offer a free first-time delivery. If there is an annual cost, make sure to compare between the different delivery or pick-up options available to you.
2. There will be times when an item that you chose for your groceries will be out of stock. (Example: Toilet paper, bananas, carrots) You’ll need to let your shopper know if you would like to replace the item with something else, or have them skip picking it up this trip. For most items, like pasta, there are comparable items to switch it to, but for others, like toilet paper, you may have to wait until the next trip to get it.
3. If you know someone who may be struggling with food costs, using a delivery service or pick up grocery service can help curb costs. By knowing in advance what your groceries will cost you, can help keep your budget or spending plan in check, especially if you’re living on a limited income.
4. Do not forget to tip your grocery shopper/delivery driver. Someone else picking up your groceries and delivering them to your door is considered a service, just like getting your hair colored or cut, you need to be able to tip them. Keep your total cost, the delivery, plus tip for your shopper, in mind.
5. If you use the grocery service and you start to notice you don’t like it, you can always switch or change to a different grocery delivery service. It’s better to be more specific with your order than general. Example: You really enjoy ripe green bananas, then ask for green when you’re shopping



Leader Discussion Questions

- Have you ever used an online grocery shopping service? What did you like about it? What didn't you like about it?
- Do you think using a grocery shopping service is cost effective? Why or why not?
- Why would you consider using an online grocery service over shopping for items in the store yourself?

**Written by: Sasha Grabenstetter, Consumer Economics Educators, University of Illinois Extension,
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Recently grocery stores have started offering a variety of services to help you shop. You can choose to shop online, pay online, have the grocery items delivered to your house and/or pick up your groceries at the store. Who knew you didn't have to trek up and down the aisles to buy groceries! Here are some options to consider when deciding between services.

Cost –

Many online grocery options have costs associated with the service. To help you figure out if the fees are right for you, consider how often you will use the service. If you are a casual shopper, who only may only use a delivery service a few times year, a service that charges a fee per delivery may be more cost effective than an annual membership. While this may cost you more for each delivery you receive, it would still be less in the short term. Be sure to read the fine print. Delivery fees vary widely depending on the service and location. The fees can range from free with orders over a certain dollar amount (usually \$35, but check with your store) to up to \$9.99 per delivery. Be sure to check stores for low cost specials or free trial offers.

For those who use the delivery service to get all their groceries or who like frequent delivery of grocery items, a service that charges an annual membership may be more cost effective. Just like the delivery fees, memberships have different price points. The average grocery delivery membership cost has a range from around \$99/year to as much as \$130/year. However, if you use the service a lot, this membership cost offsets the per use delivery fee.

	Low End Cost	High End Cost
Membership to grocery delivery service	\$99/year	\$130+/year
Delivery fee per delivery	Free (depending on how much you order)	\$9.99/per delivery

Replace, Adjustments, Out of Stock –

Even on a normal grocery store day, not every item is in stock. If this happens while you are picking items online, the service may ask you to pick a different item or comparable item to replace it. However, sometimes it happens after you have already placed your order. In these cases, the person filling your order, the "shopper", can select a replacement. For example, if you have your favorite flavor of yogurt, but it's not currently in stock, then the shopper can get your second favorite flavor as a replacement. Many online sites ask if you are willing to have the shopper select a similar item as a replacement. This option can help you make sure you get all the item to what you wanted. However, a drawback can be turning back the replacement they selected for you and not getting the items on your grocery list.



Other adjustments that often happen are related to size and quantity. Usually this is for pounds of meat or produce, especially when you're purchasing specific amount of pounds. For example if you order 2lbs of hamburger meat, but the package is less or more, there will be an adjustment made for the price and pounds of the meat.

Keeping it in your budget –

Are you tempted by the cookies, cakes and other goodies on the shelves? Shopping online and getting your groceries delivered, *can help you skip all of the temptations!* It can help you stay focused on buying only what you need from the store, instead of things tempting your sweet tooth. Another way to keep your budget in check is to set a limit for the overall total price for your grocery delivery. If you need to tweak the total cost in your cart, you can play around with the items in your cart or remove items, if necessary.

Other considerations –

Let's say you forget to put bananas on your list, you can communicate to your shopper while they're shopping and ask them to grab them before they leave. It's also good to be aware of when your shopper is picking out your groceries and then keep an eye on your smartphone or smart device if your shopper sends any messages relevant to your grocery cart.

Another consideration is to determine if you want your groceries delivered when you're home or not. Let your shopper know if they can leave them on the doorstep or if you'll be home so they can hand off the groceries to you at the front door.

Lastly, some services allow you to **tip your shopper**. You can decide to tip your shopper online via the website or the app, or you can decide if you'd like to tip your shopper in cash when they drop off your groceries.

Grocery shopping online can relieve some of the stress of shopping for food and may save you money too! Take time to consider whether it's a good fit for you and then consider trying it for yourself. Happy grocery shopping!

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Grocery Shopping Online Comparison Chart Table

Online Grocery Shopping Platform	Key Features	Approximate Monthly Amount	Notes	
InstaCart	Partnerships with local stores like Costco, Aldi, Kroger, Safeway and more.	\$99/year or \$9.99/month Or Deliveries start at \$3.99 for same day orders over \$35	Senior Service Support: 1.844.981.3433	Shop on the app or your website browser
Walmart	Groceries available near 3,000 Walmart stores	Picking up groceries at Walmart is free Delivery cost without Walmart + is \$7.99-\$9.99 Membership of Walmart + is \$12.95/month or \$98/year	Can order other items besides groceries.	Shop on the app or your website browser
Shipt	Partnerships with local stores like Target, Meijer, Jewel-Osco, and more.	Delivery fee is \$7 for orders below \$35 Membership: \$99/year or \$14/month	Customer Service Number: 1 (205) 502-2500	Shop on the app or your website browser

Prices and information correct as of December 15th, 2020

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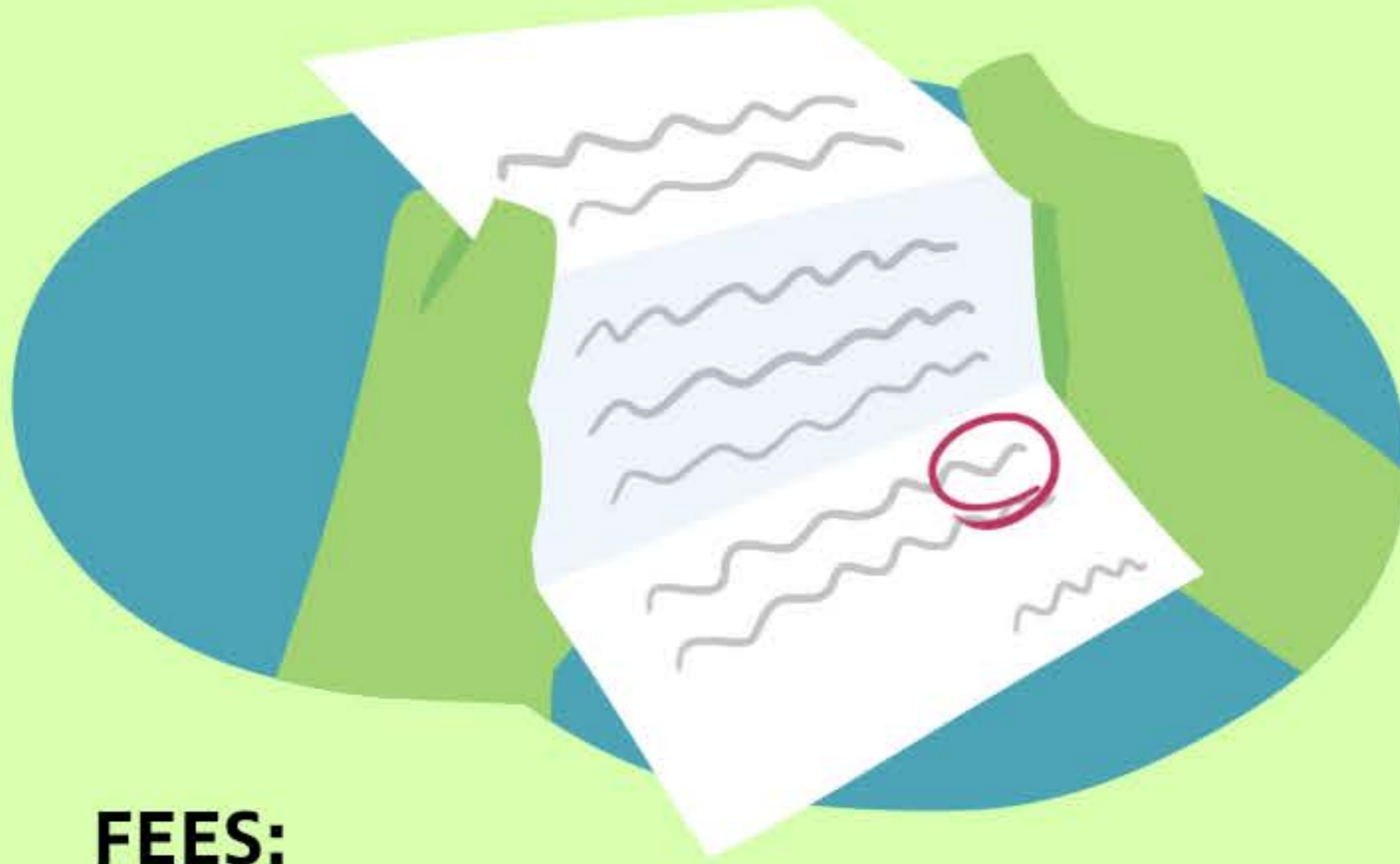
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Grocery Shopping Online

New to buying groceries online?

Consider:



FEES:

Stores may charge an annual fee or per-delivery fee. Make your choice based on how often you will use the service.



SUBSTITUTIONS:

There will be times the item you order is out of stock. Most times, a similar item is chosen in its place. If you like to choose your own items, online buying may not be for you.



BUDGET:

Buying online helps you avoid those spontaneous, unplanned walk-by pickups. Resist the urge to splurge by sticking to a budget.



BONUS FEATURES:

Some stores allow you to communicate to the shopper in case you forget something.