



# Extension News Column

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What kind of a shopper are you? Do you brag to others about how much things cost, or how cheaply you got them? No matter what your attitude is about shopping, we want to get the most for the dollars we spend. There are some easy ways to make sure that we get the best deal, but the whole process depends on you doing your homework.

Make sure a sale is a sale, particularly if it is a big ticket item. You have to be sure the price is a discount and is not a creative marketing strategy to encourage you to spend your money without thinking. Know what things cost and you'll develop a nose for a bargain. Keep a price book that will help you remember what items are priced at in any store.

It is particularly important to know what things cost if you are buying used. If you buy a couch or a piece of sporting equipment from the classified ads, you must know the regular price or you won't know if what you are paying is a good deal.

When you are shopping, keep your eyes open for rebate programs. It may be a job to fill out the paperwork and clip the UPC codes from a box, but the money is worth it. Before you go shopping for a big ticket item, check these two websites—A smartShop and [rebateplace.com](http://rebateplace.com) are great places to check for rebates.

Sign up for reward cards or frequent shopper accounts. These may net you a discount, or if your rewards are based on the amount of money you spend, may add to the reward points you are getting.