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Coupon madness

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What's in your wallet? If you're like most of us, not much these days.

With today's economic pinch, even basics such as groceries and fuel are setting back our budgets.

So how does one save?

"Coupons, coupons, and more coupons," said Jonathan Lieberman, CEO of DealLocker.com and other money-saving websites such as www.freeshippingon.com. "We're going to see a huge jump in coupon usage among people who normally shrugged at using them to save money."

Lieberman has spotted a 40 percent increase of visitors to DealLocker.com since January.

"I feel as though coupons will become the next trend for ALL households, across all income brackets," Lieberman said.

Tips for coupon shopping

Prepare your grocery list first • Then look for those coupons. Some people buy items they'll never use just because they found a coupon.

Internet coupons are available • Before you shop, search retail and manufacturers' websites for discounts.

We did some searching of our own and found a few sites that may help:

www.coupons.com • This was one of our favorite sites. On your first visit, you'll need to register and install the coupon printer. Download and save the installer to your machine. Next, the site will ask for your ZIP code. Within minutes, we were printing and clipping many \$1 off coupons on household items, frozen groceries and even some baby items, from Cottonell tissue to Lipton tea.

www.DealLocker.com • This site features online shopping for restaurants, clothing stores and much more. Recently, printable grocery coupons were added to this site. From the home page, click on "printable grocery coupons." You'll need to install the print driver software to allow coupon printing. This site offers 100 to 160 coupons every week, and you can print two copies a week. For the Amazon.com shopper, this site also offers a huge selection of coupons for shopping. From the home page, click on Amazon, and it will pop up a page of Amazon coupons.

www.freeshippingon.com • This site allows the consumer to search only for products with free shipping. With the price of fuel, this site could save you a lot of money.

www.clikquikcoupons.com • This local website offers printable coupons for

businesses including restaurants, food delivery, remodeling and construction companies, lawn services and a link to major department and grocery stores. "Most of the coupons are for goods and services in the St. Charles area," says president Terry Woodson, of O'Fallon, Mo.

www.amazon.com • An ideal site for baby diapers. This site offers free shipping on diapers and no tax. Keep a close watch for the "Special Offer" promotional certificates. We spotted one good for \$20 off a future Amazon.com purchase when you spend \$99 or more on select Pampers and Luvs products (restrictions apply).

Other coupon sources

Newspapers • Keep an eye out for your weekly Journals and the St. Louis Post-Dispatch's Sunday edition. Almost every Sunday, you'll find coupon inserts. Plus you'll find the "It's Coupon Thursday Shop-n-Save \$10 off \$50 or more purchase" coupon in the A&E section most weeks. This coupon can also be found in the Wednesday Let's Eat section. Dierberg's honors the coupon.

Magazines • Many fashion and beauty magazines offer coupons for cosmetics, hair products and beauty aids.

Back of grocery receipts • Here you'll find coupons for hair cuts, grocery items, dry cleaning services and restaurant offers from places such as Fantastic Sams and Meineke Car Care Center.

AT&T The Real Yellow Pages • Head to the back of the book and you'll find the SMART coupons offering discounts for pizza, tire companies, plumbing services, exterminating businesses, optical and even pet care.

Mail • Watch coupons that come to you in the mail, such as valpak.com. Restaurants such as Pasta House offer a coupon for \$5 off a \$15 purchase or \$10 off a \$30 purchase. If you accidentally throw them away, just visit the website www.valpak.com and search by ZIP code for your local coupon discounts.

Coupon savvy

This week, we saved \$20.20 with the use of printable website coupons.

Have you found the perfect printable coupon website? if so, email kdeer@post-dispatch.com

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