



# Wisconsin Council of the Blind & Visually Impaired

## Online Grocery Shopping

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WCBlind.org

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### General Overview

#### Advantages of Online Shopping

- Users can independently compare products and read product ingredients, nutrition information and preparation directions prior to making a purchase
- Eliminates need to get transportation to and from a store and find assistance from store employees
- Online shoppers can add items to the cart and they will be stored until checkout
- Many stores and delivery services offer convenient delivery times

## **Disadvantages**

- As delivery services charge fees and stores charge extra for delivery, your purchase may be more expensive
- Shoppers are unable to touch products prior to purchase. This may be helpful in identifying canned goods or products in similar containers.
- Not all brands and sizes of a particular product offered in-store may be available for online purchase.

## **Other Things to Consider**

- Once you find a store or service which delivers to your location and you are comfortable using it, stick with that site. Once you are familiar with the layout, online grocery shopping will be much less of an adventure each time you need to purchase items.
- As online grocery sites are often large and quite complex, you need to be familiar with the assistive technology products (screen reader or screen magnifier) you use to access the web. Effective use of the web navigation tools within your assistive technology application will make navigating this complex site a much more enjoyable experience.
- Flexibility is important. Online grocery services and store websites do occasionally change. Products may come and go. Expect the unexpected when navigating this fluid environment.

## **General Process**

While all online grocery shopping services and sites are different, this is the general process you will follow to purchase items on most sites. Some services may do things a bit differently, such as requiring you to specify a delivery time at the beginning of

the process, but these steps should provide a general overview of the process.

- Specify delivery address: This will determine what stores will deliver to you and which store location your groceries will come from. Its best to type in your entire address, including city, state and zip.
- Locate the items you want to purchase: Most sites offer a search function which allows you to search for a particular product or brand. This can save a lot of time if you know what you want. Be as specific as possible with these searches. Alternatively, you can browse aisles, such as produce or meat, to see what is available. When you find a specific item, activate its link to see product details and preparation directions.
- Add items to cart: Activate the add item to cart link to add this product to your virtual cart. This is not a commitment to purchase, you can always remove items later.
- Choose delivery time: When you initiate the process to purchase the items in your cart, you are often asked to confirm a delivery date and time. This is usually done with a series of radio buttons or links.
- Add delivery instructions: At some point in the checkout process, sites will allow you to add delivery instructions. If you live in an apartment building, this may include leaving your groceries in a certain spot in the lobby. If you reside in a house and you want your items left by a specific door, you can include this information.
- Check out and pay for items: This will finalize your grocery order, so be sure to review the items in your cart before the order is final. You will also need to provide a credit card to pay for your purchases.
- Tip your driver: Most sites will provide the opportunity to tip your delivery driver. While you can specify the exact amount you want to tip, the default is usually five dollars or five

percent of your order, which ever amount is higher. If your shopper has gone out of there way to help substitute products or found a hard to locate item, you may want to consider adding something to this tip.

- Take delivery of your groceries: Most sites will offer the option of contactless delivery, meaning your shopper will simply leave your items at a specific location and call you to inform you they have arrived. Even though delivery is contactless, you should be home during your delivery window so you can collect your items as soon as possible.

### **Advantages of Third-Party Grocery Shopping Services**

- When using a service, you will often have the same interface for multiple stores
- Dedicated customer service email or phone number in case you encounter issues with your order
- Ability to communicate with your shopper via phone or text message. This can be helpful if a store does not have the exact item you specified when placing your order. The shopper will often contact you to ask what item you would like instead.

### **Drawbacks of Delivery Services**

- Most delivery services charge a monthly or annual fee. If your order does not meet a certain minimum, you may also be charged a delivery fee
- Delivery services may not always be aware of certain sales and discounts. As a result, you may pay more for certain items.
- Delivery services tend to operate in large metro areas where there are a lot of customers. If you live outside one of these

areas, you may not be able to use one of these services.

### Shipt

- Website: <http://shipt.com>
- Allows users to shop from the app (iOS or Android) or via the website
- Provides same-day delivery, as soon as 1 hour.
- Free delivery on orders over \$35 with monthly or yearly subscription
- Orders under \$35, fee is around \$7
- monthly subscription is \$14.99 and yearly is \$99
- Some examples of available stores include CVS, Target, Hy-Vee, Office Max and Sur La Table
- Website seems to be quite accessible
- Once signed up and logged in, you will find the name of the store you are currently viewing near the top of the page. Activating this link will allow you to choose another store.
- Contains categories for on sale today and weekly sales
- Items are displayed using two buttons. The first button shows product information and the second button adds the item to your cart. These buttons can be easily navigated with a screen reader.

### Instacart

- Website: <http://instacart.com>
- Works with a wide variety of stores including, Hy-Vee, Pick 'N Save, Costco Groceries, Festival, CVS
- Instacart express, costs \$99 per year or 9.99 per month and provides free delivery for orders over \$35
- Non express members pay varying delivery fees, starting at \$5.99 for orders more than \$35
- Title of current store and current search term are always shown in window title, which is extremely helpful

- Items shown in a list view, with a button to add item to virtual cart
- Once a link for a specific product is activated, the preparation directions and nutrition information can be difficult to locate as they are at the bottom of the page, under recommended items.
- Instacart makes good use of headings

### Woodman's

- Website: <http://ShopWoodmans.com>
- When first visiting this site, you are prompted to select either delivery or pick up
- Enter your address to locate the Woodman's nearest to your location
- Delivery fees are shown at time of schedule
- Woodman's offers an accessible site with good product descriptions
- After performing a search, results are shown as headings
- Activate the link immediately above the heading to view product details and add it to cart

### Amazon Fresh

- Website: <http://fresh.amazon.com>
- Must be an Amazon prime member
- No additional monthly fee
- Limited delivery area, not available in Madison
- Search function was easiest way to locate products
- Amazon Fresh allows you to add items to your virtual cart with Amazon Echo

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