

How to navigate and buy essentials in a supermarket in a foreign country?

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You are on your first shopping trip in New South Wales, Australia, and you plan to visit the Safeway supermarket store. The shopping experience at your home country was fun, but the new setting and location is making you nervous. You are not very familiar with the English accent that is used by the local people and this is making you even more worried about how to communicate. You want your first shopping experience to be great without any hassles. Fret not, enjoy and make the outing a fun filled experience by sticking to a fluent use of basic English.



Supermarkets in foreign countries especially in western ones are very organized and user friendly. They have lots of goodies and essential items, which are organized in a proper manner, section-wise. Shopping through them should be a breeze and very easy. Follow the below tips to navigate and buy essentials in a supermarket in a foreign country.

1. Follow the signs

Supermarkets abroad are clearly demarcated and marked. Every section has signs that show which articles are stored where. The fresh produce section, housing fresh vegetables and fruits, is clearly labeled and highlighted. It's the similar case with other categories also. Drink sections and essential items are similarly marked and written in signs. Use your English vocabulary skills to identify the items clearly.

2. Ask for assistance

It is perfectly okay to ask for help from store assistants. They are there to guide you. Ask them specific questions and they will give you accurate answers. Your English speaking skills should be very strong and fluent. In case you don't understand them because of their accent, ask them to slow down politely. In case the store assistants are busy, you can turn to other customers. People who are regular to the supermarket will know where the sections are located. In case someone asks you for directions and you don't know, politely answer them.

Example:

1. 'Can you tell me where the washroom accessories are located?'
2. 'Can you guide me to the dairy products section?'
3. 'I am sorry but I cannot understand you. Can you go a little slow please?'
4. 'I am sorry, I don't know which section it is.'



3. Product details

Although almost all the products will have product information listed on them, there are cases where in house products will have less information on their packaging. In such instances, ask for clarification from the store assistants. You can ask questions in proper English like:

Example:

1. 'Is this milk freshly packaged?'
2. 'When was this spinach procured?'

4. Payment details

After doing all the shopping, it's time for payment. In foreign countries, most purchase and payment are done by credit cards. In case of doubt, you can ask the cashier what options are available. They will gladly assist you. You can ask them in the following manner:

Example:

1. 'Do you take credit card?'
2. 'Is paying by cash okay?'



Take note of the above four tips to take advantage of the great amenities available in a foreign supermarket. Let your experience be a breeze. Communicate with individuals inside the supermarket for assistance in fluent English in case of any clarifications. You can also take the help of an online English teacher for further English speaking improvement.

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- By Monika Agarwal

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