

**Let's make a deal.**

# How coupon club helps housewives save bucks

Loia Anchor has a tomato basket full of money in her Farmington Hills home.

At least that's how she views her collection of coupons and refund forms which are kept neatly filed in a cardboard fruit basket.

Although she doesn't claim to feed her family of three for mere pennies she views the 25 percent she estimates she saves on her weekly food bill through coupons as money in the bank.

"It's like paper money," said Mrs. Anchor of her collection. "I've been doing it faithfully for only two years. I don't know what took me so long," she said.

She and her friend, Mrs. Francine

Chatlin, are among the growing number of women combatting increased food costs with the careful and sometimes clever use of coupons and refund forms.

As with any other form of currency, there are methods to stretch its value.

Shopping on days when stores double the value of coupons, trading labels to take advantage of refund offers and tracking down refund forms are ways in which shoppers can stretch their budget, according to the duo who started a coupon club at the Farmington Hills library on 12 Mile.

THE CLUB started with 11 women

who were interested in trading coupons and now numbers 60. They meet at 11:30 a.m. alternating Tuesdays and Wednesdays once a month at the library.

The response surprised the co-founders and they are encouraging spin-off groups which meet at other times.

Typically, starting the club turned into a bargain.

"We didn't put any money into it. We called the paper and put an announcement in. That didn't cost us anything. Then we called the library for a room. That didn't cost us either," said Mrs. Anchor.

Effective use of coupons depends on

the shoppers ability to go to different stores and keep an eye out for special coupon days, according to the two women.

"If you stick to one store, you're not going to save as much as jumping around," said Mrs. Anchor.

Shopping at different stores in the area has enabled the friends to find store managers who are willing to help them find new refund forms.

Refund forms obtained at different stores are the key to cash refunds or to obtaining extra coupons from manufacturers by mail.

GETTING TO KNOW the different store managers without becoming a

pest is often a plus in hunting down new forms.

Some managers have instituted refund bulletin boards to inform shoppers of the latest offers.

There are some who aren't as interested in the forms, according to the duo.

"Some cashiers and managers act like they're (the forms) are coming out of their pockets," said Mrs. Chatlin.

Loyalty to specific brands of toothpaste and laundry detergent doesn't pay as well as taking the best buy, according to the women.

Some of the more spectacular coupon offers may not be used by the

pair. Those offers concern junk food or processed foods which they don't use.

Spectacular savings using coupons which make possible claims of feeding large families at an affordable price sometimes center on using coupons for these foods.

"I don't go to extremes. You have to buy products you don't ordinarily buy," Mrs. Chatlin explained.

THE TYPE of buy she and Mrs. Anchor strive for is called a triple play among coupon enthusiasts. That occurs when a shopper buys an item on sale, adds a coupon and then uses a refund form for a rebate.

"It's almost free," said Mrs. Chatlin.

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THURS: Veal Parmesan  
**FRIDAY: FISH & CHIPS \*1\***  
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