

At the Market

Connect: Going to the market is obviously a chore, especially at the end of a busy day. But markets also offer many opportunities for learning that can make the time there less trying.

Watch and listen: Make sure that your child is not too hungry when you go to the market. Either take a snack or let your child pick an acceptable snack to eat. Then you and your child can focus on other things. Notice what your child is interested in to help make marketing a fun learning time together.

Extend:

For your baby

- The market is like a collage in motion—there is so much going on. Talk about the things you see as you shop.

For your toddler

- Talk to your child in advance about a special thing that she or he can buy at the market. Then look for it, like a treasure hunt. This helps your child learn to be a good observer.
- Ask your toddler about the shapes and colors he or she sees. Or, ask your toddler to name things that are up high or down low.
- Give your toddler a cracker or piece of apple. Then point out the crackers and/or apples in the store.

For your preschooler

- Take the adventure of looking for items you are going to purchase a step further. Cut out a picture of an item you are going to purchase and have your child match the picture with the real item on the store's shelf.
- If there is conflict over what you are buying, set rules. For example: we will buy an item, but sugar can't be one of the first four ingredients. Or it can't have too many preservatives in the food. Have your child look at labels with you to see if this is something you can buy. All of these games can build pre-reading and thinking skills.

These tips were developed for Born Learning by [Mind in the Making](#), a project of the Families and Work Institute and New Screen Concepts.