

January 4, 2011

Prison Woes: Inmate Grocery List

One of the things I'm continually asked--and that surprised me when I first got locked up, that inmates get to actually shop for regular food--is what exactly can be bought in prison. Well, the following pages are copies of the list itself (this list, however, was replaced by a new December update with a 5 percent price increase for 2012).

A small peanut butter is now \$2.98

Every prison yard has a store that uses this list, and once a week inmates with money on their Cooper Trust Fund account can go there, put a list in the little window, and have the order filled--each week's spending limit is \$125.00

The prison does not supply me with any hygiene items whatsoever, as you would think they would. The reason for this is that SC, to the best of my knowledge, is the only State in the nation that requires an inmate to have less than \$6.47 on their account for 30 days, in order to qualify for a bag that contains:

- 2 bars of state-made soap
- 2 disposable shaving razors
- 1 very small bottle of shampoo/conditioner/shaving cream all-in-one
- 1 #2 pencil
- 2 pieces of unlined paper
- 2 envelopes with postage provided

If you have just one penny over the allotted minimum--you do not get this pack.

But, no big loss. That state-made soap will eat you up all over--it's mostly a bar of lime--and I don't know about you, but the idea of rubbing down with a white caustic alkaline substance consisting of calcium oxide that they get by heating limestone, is not very appealing. It may kill germs, but it kills your skin too.

Give me my Irish Spring any day.

And if you're wondering how inmates cook? Each dorm has an industrial-grade microwave, and as you can see on the list under "Miscellaneous" is a Microwave Bowl for \$5.72 (now of course this is the same square Rubbermaid found at any WalMart or Dollar General for about a dollar or so).

Some of the food prices aren't so bad though.

I used to think inmates ate only what was given to them; but finding out I was wrong was a nice surprise.

<u>MISCELLANEOUS</u>		<u>PROPERTY ITEMS</u>	
Hand Ball	1.81	TV 7.5 LCD Digital Hiteker	187.79
Playing Cards	1.72	Radio, Sony AM/FM Digital SRF-M35	49.35
Uno Cards	7.40	Alarm Clock, Battery	7.36
Dominoes	3.89	Alarm Clock, Wind-Up	7.94
Chess Board	4.74	Casio Wrist Watch	18.06
Checkers	2.95	Hot Pot, Westbend	28.02
Cereal Bowl W/Lid	.77	Razor, Braun Battery	25.56
Microwave Bowl	5.72	Razor, Remington, Electric Microscreen	47.81
Batteries (AA) •	•1.82	Norelco Replacement Heads	17.33
Batteries (AAA)	1.82	Remington Replactment Heads & Cutter Foil	23.19
Reading Glasses (Must Submit I/M Request)	10.48	Remington Replacement Cutter Foil	22.03
Page Magnifier	3.60	Brother Typewriter SX4000	166.12
Clear Plastic Tumbler	.86	Smith Corona Typewriter Ribbon 200/250	12.26
Coffee Mug	.66	Smith Corona Typewriter Ribbon H21000	13.01
Watch Battery (Only CR2016) Must Submit Request	4.32	Brother Typewriter Ribbon 1031	18.79
Hearing Aid Battery (13 HPX)	8.66	Nukote Typewriter Ribbon B234	5.19
Hearing Aid Battery (ZA 13)	5.26	Nukote Typewriter Ribbon 234 TL	2.90
Hearing Aid Battery (312 HP)	8.20	Nukote Typewriter Ribbon B199	5.76
Light Bulb (40-Watt)	.74	Nukote Typewriter Ribbon B268	4.90
Bed Lamp	11.55	Nukote Typewriter Ribbon B167	5.35
Sun Glasses	6.63	Nukote Typewriter Ribbon 867L	1.20
Notebook Paper	2.28	Nukote Typewriter Ribbon B214	6.57
Notebook	1.42	Correction Tape, Canon QS2	5.76
Legal Pad	1.06	Correction Tape, Smith Corona 200	7.50
Legal Box 15x12x10	1.27	Correction Tape, Smith Corona H21060	7.59
Typing Paper	4.72	Print Wheel, Smith Corona	28.16
Envelopes, Stamped •	•.54	Daisy Wheel, Canon QS2	25.98
Envelopes, Brown Clasp	.15	Canvas Sport Low-Top	29.73
Scotch Tape	1.25	Canvas Sport Hi-Top	34.98
Ball Point Pen	.22	Leather Sport Low-Top	49.11
Photo Album	2.97	Leather Sport Hi-Top	49.11
TV Antenna	16.36	Leather Sport Shoes 8-15 EE Wide	49.11
Coax Cable (6-FT)	1.73	Leather Sport Shoes (7 ½ -16) EEEE Wide	49.11
Splitter 2-Way	.86	Tan Oxfords	48.98
Splitter 3-Way	1.30	Work Boots, Leather (6-15)	34.66
Barrel Cable Connector (Fem/Fem)	.18		
Male/Female Push On Adapter	.52		
Ear Buds (Koss)	4.90		
Coiled Head Phone Ext. Cord	2.68		
Mini Dual Adapter	1.23		
Electrical Ext Cord	8.66		
Surge Protector	3.26		
Padlock	9.08		
Fly Swatter	.66		
Dictionary (Pocket Size)	4.09		
Key Ring	.54		
Can Opener	.90		
Clothes Hanger	.35		
Hanging Air Freshener	.76		
Tote Bag (Blue Mesh)	3.76		