

# ACCRA Cost of Living Index Survey Helpful Hints

Last Updated December 2008

## Item# ITEM & Instructions

### GROCERY ITEMS

#### 1. T-BONE STEAK

Price per Pound

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ Price a single steak in a shrink-wrapped package, weight of 12 to 20 oz
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes...**
  - Reporting the weight of the package as the price
  - Reporting the total price of a package (without regard to the weight)

#### 2. GROUND BEEF or HAMBURGER MEAT

Price per pound, lowest price, min 80% lean (or max 20% fat)

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes...**
  - Don't list the price or weight of a package
  - Don't price ground chuck or ground round
  - Don't price a product with soybean extenders

#### 3. PORK SAUSAGE

1 lb. (16-oz.) package, Jimmy Dean or Owens brand, any pure pork variety

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ Please price 16 oz packages wherever available; verify the size in your response
- ❖ If 16 oz. packages are not available, price 12 oz if at all possible and indicate the size
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes...**
  - Don't substitute any other brand
  - **Don't price patties, only the 16 oz. roll**
  - Don't price a product with soybean extenders

#### 4. FRYING CHICKEN

Whole uncut: Price per pound, lowest price

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ Price a single whole chicken in one package
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes...**
  - Don't list the price or weight of the package
  - Don't price baking hens or capons
  - Don't price "range" chickens

#### 5. CHUNK LIGHT TUNA

6.0 oz. can, Starkist or Chicken of the Sea

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ Price one can, in oil or water
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes...**
  - Take care to get the 6 oz can price, not the 9 oz or 12 oz
  - Don't price white albacore tuna, it's much higher
  - Don't price the Select Fillets, it's also much higher
  - Don't substitute any other brands

#### 6. WHOLE MILK

1/2-gallon lowest price

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes...**
  - Take care to get the 1/2 gallon and not the gallon size
  - Don't price 1%, 2%, buttermilk, chocolate or skim milk

#### 7. EGGS

1 dozen, grade A or AA, large

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes...**
  - Be sure the price is for a single dozen eggs, 18 egg cartons are now common
  - Don't price brown eggs, or "low" cholesterol eggs

#### 8. MARGARINE

1 lb., Blue Bonnet or Parkay, stick form

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ Take care to get only one pound size, two pound size is now common
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes...**
  - Be sure it is the stick form not the tubs, tubs are usually higher
  - Don't substitute any other brands

### 9. PARMESAN CHEESE, GRATED

8 oz. canister, Kraft brand

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ If 8 oz not available, get as close to 8 oz as possible, and use Comment box to report size
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Don't price the Kraft blends, parmesan cheese only
  - Don't substitute any other brands

### 10. POTATOES

10 lb. sack, lowest price

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ If 10 lb bag not available, get closest size and indicate weight in the comment section of the form
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Don't price baking potatoes or sweet potatoes

### 11. BANANAS

Price per Pound

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ Does not have to be a name brand but Dole, Chiquita or Del Monte are good
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Don't price over-ripe discounted bananas; the bananas priced should keep for several days

### 12. ICEBERG LETTUCE

Head (approximately 1.25 pounds)

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ Be sure to price only iceberg head lettuce, not bibb or head lettuce
- ❖ Normally lettuce is sold by the head; a head should be about 1 1/4 pounds.
- ❖ If the heads vary greatly from this, please prorate. If the lettuce is sold by the pound, price 1 1/4 pounds
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Don't price any lettuce except the very freshest, never old or discounted lettuce

### 13. WHITE BREAD

Price loaf with **lowest price per oz.** in each store

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ Store brands are generally the lowest price per oz.
- ❖ Check the shelf label, usually has the cost per oz
- ❖ Record both the price and size per loaf
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Never include any specialty breads like French or sourdough

### 14. FRESH ORANGE JUICE

64 oz (1.89 liters) Tropicana or Florida Natural brand

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ It should be "original", "not from Concentrate" and "no pulp".
- ❖ Please report the lowest price
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Don't substitute any other brands

### 15. COFFEE, VACUUM-PACKED

11.5 oz. can or brick, Maxwell House, Hills Brothers, or Folgers

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ Be sure it's 11.5 oz size and not 13 oz size
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Don't price decaffeinated coffee
  - Don't price instant coffee
  - Don't price generics or any other brands

### 16. SUGAR

4 - 5 lb., cane or beet, lowest price

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ Please price 4 lb. bags wherever possible.
- ❖ Please indicate the weight for each item.
- ❖ Price lowest price pure granulated sugar only
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Don't price powdered or brown sugars

### 17. CORN FLAKES

18 oz., Kellogg's or Post Toasties

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Take care to get the 18 oz box price, not the 12 oz or 24 oz box price
  - Don't substitute any other brands

### 18. SWEET PEAS

15 to 15.25 oz can, Del Monte or Green Giant

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Don't price cans with pearl onions or with carrots
  - Don't substitute any other brands

### 19. PEACHES

29 oz. can, Hunt's Del Monte, Libby's, or Lady Alberta, halves or slices

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ May be in light or heavy syrup
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Don't price the 15 oz size can

- Don't price spiced peaches
- Don't price the "diet" versions
- Don't substitute any other brands

## 20. FACIAL TISSUE

200-count box, Kleenex brand

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets or any other outlet, please
- ❖ Care must be taken to get only the 200-count box; if only a 184-count for colors is available, please indicate in comment box
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**...
  - Don't price the 160-count box
  - Don't price "Cold Care" or any lotions-type facial tissue
  - Don't substitute any other brands

## 21. DISHWASHING POWDER

75 oz. box, Cascade brand (powder, not liquid)

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets or any other outlet, please
- ❖ Please indicate the size you priced
- ❖ You may price either regular or lemon version; usually they are the same price
- ❖ Price 110 oz, 60 oz., or 45 oz. packages *only if 75 oz. is unavailable*; please remember to indicate the size you priced
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**...
  - Don't price the liquid type
  - Don't substitute any other brands

## 22. CANOLA OIL

48 oz bottle, store brand

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**...
  - Don't price corn oil, vegetable oil, or any specialty oils such as olive oil, peanut oil etc
  - Don't price Canola Oil mixed with other oils

## 23. FROZEN PREPARED FOOD

8 to 10 oz frozen chicken entrée, Healthy Choice or Lean Cuisine brand

- ❖ Please report the lowest price
- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only
- ❖ Please price Healthy Choice or Lean Cuisine brands
- ❖ Some of the chicken entrées you might encounter include Country Herb Chicken, Chicken Parmesan, Chicken Enchilada, Chicken Vegetables, Grilled Chicken Caesar, etc
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**...
  - Don't substitute any other brands
  - Please indicate the size of the entrée if the size is larger than 10 oz.

## 24. FROZEN CORN

16 oz. sack, whole kernel, lowest price

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ Usually the lowest price will be the generic or store brands
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**...
  - Don't price white or Shoepeg corn types, generally their prices are much higher
  - Don't price microwave, boiler bag, or cream sauce products
  - Don't price the 10 oz box of corn

## 25. POTATO CHIPS

13.75 **OR** 20 oz **plain** regular potato chips

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets only, please
- ❖ Price only LAY's brand
- ❖ Please also report the size
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**...
  - Don't substitute any other brands
  - Don't price other flavor potato chips

## 26. SOFT DRINK

2-liter Coca-Cola, excluding deposit if any

- ❖ Price at grocery supermarkets or any other outlet, please
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**...
  - Take care not to price the 3 liter bottle found in some areas
  - Don't price Pepsi Cola or any other brand except Coca-Cola

## HOUSING

### 27. APARTMENT

Monthly Rent 2 bedroom, 1-1/2 or 2 baths, unfurnished

- ❖ Price units of approximately 950 sq. ft.
- ❖ Exclude all utilities except water and sewer.
- ❖ Typically these are called garden apartments with a small balcony or an enclosed area for the first floor
- ❖ Price only the newer units, please. They do not have to be exclusive, but they should be nice.
- ❖ Generally these apartments are in the same growth areas as the new houses
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Do not include energy in the rent. If possible exclude the cost of electric and gas
  - Do not include the cost of garages or storage areas if they are available at additional cost

### 28. HOUSE PURCHASE: NEW HOME

2,400 sq. ft. living area new house (see Manual for specifications); full purchase price

- ❖ Price only newly constructed units that have never been previously occupied, please.
- ❖ The units don't have to be exclusive, but must be nice (with "Good" or "Very Good" construction quality). Typically these are spec houses found in developing subdivisions.
- ❖ Please, seek help from homebuilders in your area. If you are having trouble identifying builders or appropriate prices check out [www.homebuilder.com](http://www.homebuilder.com) (a site affiliated with the National Association of Homebuilders) for projects that are underway in your area.
- ❖ See the Cost of Living Index Manual for detailed specifications about custom features that should be present.
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Please do not price 3 bedrooms
  - Don't include the garage or porches or patios in the 2,400 sq. ft. of living area
  - Do not include the cost of garages or storage areas if they are available at additional cost
  - Basements are not required but, if present, include their sq ft only if the space is fully livable year around

### 29. HOUSE PURCHASE: MORTGAGE RATES

Current mortgage rate

- ❖ Please price mortgage rates on the Monday following the pricing dates for the rate in effect for the close of business on Friday
- ❖ It is important that you specifically ask for both Discount Points and the Origination Fee. Normally lenders do not volunteer that information.
- ❖ **IMPORTANT:** On the web site and other worksheets, *we assume* that origination fees you report at "2" or less are a percent of the mortgage value; and fees reported at more than "2" are being reported as a flat dollar fee.
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Don't rely on rates quoted in the local newspapers.
  - These are often not accurate since the lenders seldom actually offer the rate when you call. (They consider this as free advertisement so they take advantage of the newspaper listing).
  - Do not use an Adjustable Rate Mortgage (ARM) if a Fixed Rate, 30-year mortgage is available. Currently Fixed Rates are the norm.
  - *Don't use any interest rate in which the Discount Points total more than two (2).*

## UTILITIES

### 30. ENERGY -- ELECTRICITY, MONTHLY

Electricity Provider #1 Instructions

- ❖ Please report rate information for kilowatt hours (kwh).
- ❖ Check out the Residential Rates on your utilities' web site for a starting point. This site generally includes the basic rates, but may not include any recent adjustments (which you can get from your utility rep.)
- ❖ You may report your data in a utility spreadsheet (in Excel format) or via the Internet site.
- ❖ Both forms ask the same set of questions designed to gather information required to calculate the cost of providing energy for a standard-sized house.
- ❖ We will make the calculation so that it is as comparable as possible across places, but we need this information from your utility provider to make our calculations.
- ❖ You may wish to print either the Excel spreadsheet or Item 30 from the ACCRA Cost of Living Index Price Collector web site and provide this to a rate engineer or utility representative so that he or she can complete the form for you. Simply fax the form to your utility rep and ask for a response.
- ❖ It is best to input last quarter's data and let her/him correct the worksheet.

- ❖ Don't be surprised if the base rates don't change frequently (sometimes they can go for years without changing)
- ❖ A number of other charges and rebates change more frequently such as the customer charge or "special charges listed at the end of the Excel spreadsheet or the Price Collector Item 30 input screen.
  - Please remember to enter the **adjustment factor**; if there is none, please enter zero.
  - Also many utilities have multiple Charges or Rebates. You may include the 10 most important of these charges. Be sure they are for the current month.
- ❖ **IMPORTANT:** please enter rebates or credits as negative numbers.
- ❖ Please make sure that all decimals read as dollars and cents (or parts of cents). For example, when you receive data in cents (e.g., 65¢) should be formatted as dollars (e.g., \$0.65).
- ❖ If you enter data from past quarters, please review carefully for accuracy.
- ❖ Please direct questions by e-mail to Ed Sturgeon at [esturgeon@iglou.com](mailto:esturgeon@iglou.com).

### 31. ENERGY -- ELECTRICITY, MONTHLY

Electricity Provider #2

- ❖ See Instructions for Item 30

### 32. ENERGY – NATURAL GAS, MONTHLY

Natural Gas Provider #1 Instructions

- ❖ Please report rate information for therms or CCFs.
- ❖ Please divide data reported for MCFs by 10.
- ❖ **Check out your utility's web site. It usually has basic rates in a Residential Rates worksheet, but recent adjustments may not be captured. If your area was recently deregulated, use the most common or "well-known" gas company as a starting point.**
- ❖ You may report your data in a utility spreadsheet (in Excel format) or via the Internet site.
- ❖ Both forms ask the same set of questions designed to gather information required to calculate the cost of providing energy for a standard-sized house.
- ❖ We will make the calculation so that it is as comparable as possible across places, but we need this information from your utility provider to make our calculations.
- ❖ You may wish to print either the Excel spreadsheet or Item 32 from the ACCRA Cost of Living Index Price Collector web site and provide this to a rate engineer or utility representative so that he or she can complete the form for you. Simply fax the form to your utility rep and ask for a response.

- ❖ It is best to input last quarter's data and let her/him correct the worksheet.
- ❖ Don't be surprised if the base rates don't change frequently (sometimes they can go for years without changing)
- ❖ A number of other charges and rebates change more frequently such as the customer charge or "special charges listed at the end of the Excel spreadsheet or the Price Collector Item 32 input screen.
  - Please remember to enter the **adjustment factor**; if there is none, please enter zero.
  - Also many utilities have multiple Charges or Rebates. You may include the 10 most important of these charges. Be sure they are for the current month.
- ❖ **IMPORTANT:** please enter rebates or credits as negative numbers.
- ❖ Please make sure that all decimals read as dollars and cents (or parts of cents). For example, when you receive data in cents (e.g., 65¢) should be formatted as dollars (e.g., \$0.65).
- ❖ If you enter data from past quarters, please review carefully for accuracy.
- ❖ Please direct questions by e-mail to Ed Sturgeon at [esturgeon@iglou.com](mailto:esturgeon@iglou.com).

### 33. ENERGY -- NATURAL GAS, MONTHLY

Natural Gas Provider #2

- ❖ See Instructions for Item 32

### 34. ENERGY -- HEATING OIL (Use only if applicable)

Price per Gallon

- ❖ Please input as collars and cents

### 35. TELEPHONE (Monthly Costs)

Private residential line, total costs *except for long distance*

- ❖ Please price a single residential phone service in which the customer owns the phones.
- ❖ Please make sure that this price includes unlimited calling service AS WELL AS fees associated with having an active phone line. (Some companies are beginning to separate these costs.)
- ❖ Include all mandatory charges, including taxes and federal/state/local fees.
- ❖ Assuming you made no long distance calls. What would the total monthly bill be including taxes? This item includes all mandatory taxes.
- ❖ If unlimited calling is not available, assume 100 local calls per month.
- ❖ Please check for these common mistakes....

- Don't include any charges that are not mandatory, such as call forwarding or message services.
- Don't price any special telephone internet service. Must be a standard voice line.

## TRANSPORTATION

### 36. AUTO MAINTENANCE

Report the price to computer-balance one front wheel (use spin balance if computer N/A)

- ❖ Price typical tire dealers; places like Goodyear, Firestone, Michelin, Sears, K-Mart are good.
- ❖ You should be able to get computer balance at the above type places, but if you can't you may use spin balance.
- ❖ Be sure the price is for only one wheel. Normally when you get your tires balanced it's for at least two, if not all four wheels, but still only include the cost for one wheel.
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**...
  - Don't price at new car dealers -- they are almost always extremely high.
  - Don't price at service stations -- often they only have spin balance.

### 37. GASOLINE

1 gallon unleaded regular, incl. all taxes.

- ❖ Cash price at self-service pump (if there is a distinction between cash and credit).
- ❖ Use only national brands. Please price only at national gasoline company stations such as Exxon, Chevron, Shell and Texaco or the like.
- ❖ Price only the self-service pumps.
- ❖ The easiest way to price gasoline is to keep a 3x5 card with you while you are doing the grocery and other pricing and jot the prices down while you are at a stoplight. Most service stations are on corners and have their price signs posted.
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**...
  - Don't price the higher octane and higher priced gasoline mixtures.
  - Don't price local or regional gasoline stations.
  - Be careful not to price diesel fuel.

## HEALTH CARE

### 38. OFFICE VISIT, OPTOMETRIST

Full vision eye exam for established **adult** patient

- ❖ Please price only optometrist
- ❖ Eye exam should include eye examination, eyeglass prescription, glaucoma test and dilation exam
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**

- Please make sure that the price doesn't include the eyeglasses
- Dilation is not always part of the exam so you may need to verify that it has been included in the reported price
- Do not price ophthalmologists

### 39. OFFICE VISIT, DOCTOR

General practitioner average charge for established adult patient

- ❖ Please report the full price you would be paying if you had health insurance.
- ❖ Please price only general or family practitioners for an office visit.
- ❖ Price AMA Procedure 99213, is a mid-level service office visit.
- ❖ The easiest way to price is to call the doctors office directly each quarter. That way the receptionists get to know you and what you need. Every year or so, review your calling list to see if you should add a new doctor or two and drop another one or two.
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**...
  - Don't price AMA Procedures 99211, 99212, 99214 OR 99215. These procedures are insurance codes that reference level of service. These levels of service are not comparable to AMA Procedure 99213.
  - Don't price specialists or clinics

### 40. OFFICE VISIT, DENTIST

Teeth cleaning for established adult patient

- ❖ Please report the full price you would be paying if you had dental insurance.
- ❖ Please price only general or family practitioners for a semiannual treatment.
- ❖ Price ADA Procedures 01110 (insurance codes for teeth cleaning).
- ❖ The easiest way to price is to call the dentists office directly each quarter.
- ❖ That way the receptionists get to know you and what you need. Every year or so, review your calling list to see if you should add a new dentist or two and drop another one or two.
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**...
  - Please do not include the price of teeth exam

#### 41. NON-PRESCRIPTION DRUG

Advil Tablets, 200 mg. 100 Tablets

- ❖ May be priced at grocery supermarkets or any other outlet
- ❖ The tablets are round and have an orange/red coating
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Do not price any other brand

Please avoid pricing gel-caps or caplets

#### 42. PRESCRIPTION DRUG

Lipitor 20 mg., 30 tablets (one tablet per day)

- ❖ This is the most widely sold prescription drug to lower cholesterol
- ❖ Please price at local pharmacies in grocery stores or other retail outlets
- ❖ Please ask a pharmacist for the price of this item without insurance coverage
- ❖ Please be careful of these common mistakes
  - Don't price the 40 or 80 mg tablet, only the 20 mg tablet
  - Don't price any other brands

### MISCELLANEOUS

#### 43. HAMBURGER SANDWICH

McDonald's Quarter-Pounder with cheese

- ❖ Please price only McDonald's Quarter-Pounder with cheese.
- ❖ It shouldn't make any difference if you eat in or take out.
- ❖ Only price one Quarter-Pounder, no matter if you can get another for as little as a penny. What would it cost you to get only one
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Be sure it includes the cheese, even though some places make it a special order to get it without the cheese.
  - Don't price any other store than McDonald's
  - Do not include the tax -- be extra careful not to get the sales tax because most places include that automatically these days
  - Do not price any "Combo" or other special

#### 44. PIZZA

Medium plain cheese pizza

- ❖ 11"-12" diameter thin crust regular cheese pizza (no extra cheese)
- ❖ Please price only the medium plain cheese pizza, with no extras, at Pizza Hut or Pizza Inn. Get the round pizza price, not the pan or any square type.
- ❖ Only price one pizza, no matter if you can get another for even a penny. What would it cost you to get only *one* pizza?
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Please be sure to obtain the price for "eat-in"; you may be given a home delivery price and some places add a dollar or two for that.
  - Don't price any other franchises than Pizza Hut or Pizza Inn
  - Do not include the tax -- be extra careful to exclude the sales tax because most places may include the tax automatically in the price they quote (especially over the phone)
  - Do not price any specials such as a free liter of soft drink with the pizza, if you can avoid it. If not just take the price and ignore the "freebie". Do not take anything off for the "freebie."

#### 45. FRIED CHICKEN

Thigh and drumstick at Kentucky Fried Chicken or Church's Chicken

- ❖ Please price only at Kentucky Fried Chicken or at Church's Chicken
- ❖ Get the price for a thigh and a drumstick.
- ❖ A trick to get cooperation is indicate that you are pricing for a scout troop, a family reunion or some other function where you will need many pieces of chicken and want the individual cost for a thigh and a drumstick -- they then understand what you need.
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Please don't get a Bucket price.
  - Do not price the two piece dinner or two piece snack unless it is cheaper than the two pieces alone
  - Get only the fried chicken, not bar-b-que or roast chicken.
  - Do not include the tax -- be extra careful to exclude the sales tax because most places may include the tax automatically in the price they quote (especially over the phone)
  - Don't price any other franchises than Kentucky Fried Chicken or Church's Chicken

#### 46. HAIRCUT

Man's barbershop haircut, no styling

- ❖ Please price only standard barbershops. Typically these are found in small neighborhood shopping centers, may even have a barber pole outside. Usually they will have two to six barber chairs, a waiting area with lots of sports magazines lying around. There are no appointments, just first come first served.
- ❖ All barbers must be licensed professional barbers. The shop is clean but not luxurious.
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Please don't price styling, razor cuts or any fancy salon
  - Best to stick with the locals and not price any franchises
  - Do not include any barber colleges

#### 47. BEAUTY CARE

Woman's cut with shampoo and blow-dry.

- ❖ Please price only at salons that expect you to make an appointment and allow you to select stylist.
- ❖ Typically these are shops found in various shopping centers, even malls.
- ❖ This is a little nicer place than the man's haircut, but is not exclusive.
- ❖ Some large department stores have beauty salons in the store.
- ❖ All stylists must be licensed professional beauticians.
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Please don't price any franchises
  - Don't price shops in the home.
  - Don't include any beauty colleges

#### 48. TOOTHPASTE

6 oz. -6.4 oz. tube, Crest or Colgate

- ❖ May be priced at grocery supermarkets or any other outlet.
- ❖ If you find an extremely low price at a discounter, this may mean the product is very old and shouldn't be included.
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Take care to get the correct size, wrong size is the most common mistake
  - Don't price any other brands.

#### 49. SHAMPOO

15 oz. bottle, Alberto VO5 brand, any variety

- ❖ May be priced at grocery supermarkets or any other outlet.
- ❖ The product only comes in the 15 oz size and all varieties usually are the same price at the same store.
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....

- Don't price any other brands.

#### 50. DRY CLEANING

Man's two-piece suit

- ❖ Please obtain the "cash-and-carry" price for a man's two-piece suit.
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Don't any special services such as tailoring, expensive special treatment for silk or silk lined suits.
  - Some places even take the buttons off, clean the suit and sew the buttons back on. Don't price any of this.

#### 51. MAN'S DRESS SHIRT

Cotton/polyester; pinpoint; white, long sleeves; size range 15/32-16/34

- ❖ Please price a pinpoint cotton/polyester blend dress shirts.
- ❖ Price long sleeve white dress shirts only.
- ❖ Generally these will be about 65% cotton and 35% polyester.
- ❖ Best to price these at larger department stores or even men's shops.
- ❖ If the item is unavailable, you may use catalogues to price the item. Many nicer catalogues have them. But remember to include shipping and handling costs.
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Don't try to find this item at discounters.
  - Be careful not to price seconds, irregulars or damaged merchandise.

#### 52. BOY'S JEANS

Blue denim jeans - regular, relaxed or loose fit - sizes 8-20

- ❖ Please price name brands such as Levi's, Lee, or Wrangler
- ❖ This item can be found at large department stores such as Sears or JC Penney
- ❖ Please price button fly or zip
- ❖ Please report the lowest price
- ❖ Please check for these common mistakes
  - Don't price irregulars or damaged merchandise
  - Don't price men's or juniors, only boys

#### 53. WOMEN'S SLACKS

Women's Flat Front Khakis

- ❖ Please price name brands such as Dockers, Lee and other similar
- ❖ Please price at large department stores like JC Penney's.
- ❖ Pants must be at least 95% cotton, but may contain up to 5% Lycra or other material
- ❖ Price regular sizes, misses 4-14

- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**...
  - Please don't price seconds, irregulars or damaged merchandise
  - Don't price men's slacks.
  - Do not price shorts, long leg only

#### 54. MAJOR APPLIANCE REPAIR

- ❖ Home service call for clothes washing machine, including minimum labor charge but excluding parts
- ❖ Normally this is priced by calling the washing machine repair shops listed in the phonebook. Chose a sample of both new dealers and repair only shops.
- ❖ Only get the price for the minimum house call, no parts or labor. As an example, what would they charge you if they came to the house and the only thing wrong was the machine were unplugged?
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**...
  - Do not include any washing machine still under warranty.

#### 55. NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTION

Home delivery, daily and Sunday, for large city newspaper.

- ❖ 7 day a week home delivery for a large city newspaper.
- ❖ Paper must have full coverage of local, state, national and international news.
- ❖ Enter ONLY ONE of the 2 options -- 52 weeks or one year (might not be exactly the same as 52 weeks).
- ❖ If you have 5 days a week plus Sunday newspaper figure what the additional cost would be for a Saturday paper.
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**...
  - Use ONLY the largest newspaper in the area.
  - Don't price for both morning and afternoon paper.

#### 56. MOVIE

First-run (new release), indoor, 6-10 p.m. Saturday (no discounts)

- ❖ Usually this is very easy. Please price only the movies advertised on TV, or the movies that were released the Friday of the pricing period. Check a well-known movie critic's column in the newspaper to get the current movies.
- ❖ Must be indoor only, and must be Saturday evening prices from 6 - 10pm.

- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**...
  - Please don't price so-called "dollar" movie theatres. They may not be old movies (just bad and didn't last long) but they are not currently first run.
  - Don't allow any discounts, obtain full price only.

#### 57. BOWLING

Average price per line (game), non-league rates, 6-10 p.m. Saturday

- ❖ Please price the cost for one game (line) of non-league bowling on a Saturday night from 6pm to 10pm.
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**...
  - Don't allow any discounts, obtain full price only.
  - Don't include the cost of shoe or ball rental.

#### 58. TENNIS BALLS

Wilson or Penn brand, can of 3 extra-duty balls

- ❖ Please price at sporting goods stores or at any discount store.
- ❖ Price only Wilson or Penn brand, can of three extra-duty balls.
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**...
  - Don't price at country club or tennis pro sport shops. Prices will be very high.
  - Don't price if there is an additional charge for bright colored balls.

#### 59. VETERINARY SERVICES

Annual exam, 4-year-old dog

- ❖ Price exam only
- ❖ No vaccines, no lab work
- ❖ Visit should be for a yearly check-up of a healthy dog
- ❖ Animal hospitals are a good source for prices

#### 60. BEER

Heineken's 6-pack, 12 oz. containers, excluding any deposit

- ❖ May be priced at grocery supermarkets or any other outlet, but do not price at bars or taverns if it can be avoided, since it will generally be much higher
- ❖ Price whatever style container is the lowest cost
- ❖ Take care to get only the 12 oz size 6-pack
- ❖ Does not have to be chilled
- ❖ If you can not find disposal containers be sure to subtract the deposit
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**...

- Do not price a case and divide by four or a 12-pack and divide by two
- Do not price any other brand

## 61. WINE

Livingston Cellars or Gallo brand Chablis or Chenin Blanc, 1.5-liter bottle

- ❖ May be priced at grocery supermarkets or any other outlet.
- ❖ Some areas may not allow wine sales in groceries.
- ❖ Take care to get the 1.5-liter bottle size; most common mistake is to price the 26 oz "wine" bottle size.
- ❖ Does not have to be chilled.
- ❖ If you cannot find disposal containers be sure to subtract the deposit.
- ❖ Please check for these **common mistakes**....
  - Don't price at bars or taverns, since it will generally be much higher.
  - Don't price a case and divide by six (comes six to a case).
  - Don't price any other brand.

## 62. STATE AND LOCAL SALES TAX

Sales Tax Rates

- ❖ What is the combined state and local sales tax rate for your area?

If your area has differing sales tax rates, please report the most common rate.