

**Jill Cataldo saves hundreds on groceries by making the most of the common coupon. You can, too. Here's how.**



### Coupon Crime, Unintended and Otherwise



By Jill Cataldo  
CTW Features

**Q:** "I read your article about coupon fraud. I never knew you were prohibited from making photocopies of a coupon printed out from the Internet. I'd never done this before a week or so ago. Should I go back to the store and offer to pay for these coupons or should I try to get in touch with the company that makes these two items and explain what happened? I in no way want to be dishonest. And I will never do this again. I did not know this was illegal."

**A:** It's true, and it's worth repeating: never, never make photocopies of coupons you print out from the Internet. This is coupon fraud. Each printable contains identifiers (typically a serial number) that make that individual coupon unique. When you photocopy a printable coupon, you're making an identical copy - and when your store redeems two or more coupons with that same serial number on them, guess what happens? The store is only reimbursed for one of the coupons. It's essentially a small form of stealing from the store.

Photocopying printable coupons is also not without consequences. When multiples of the same printable coupon are submitted for redemption and several show up with the same serial number, that information can be sent back to the site that originally hosted the coupon. It's very easy for the site to track down both the IP and hardware addresses of the computer that originally printed it. With that information, the site typically permanently revokes the coupon-printing privileges for that computer. If flagrant abuse has occurred, legal prosecution can follow.

For this reason, it's also not a good idea to trade printable coupons with people you do not know well. If they decide to make photocopies of coupons you give them, guess who stands to pay the price? You.

If this was the first time you made a copy, it's not likely that you will be prosecuted. I applaud you for wanting to make it right. I'm not aware of any way to make this right with the manufacturer, but you could try explaining to your store what happened and ask if they'd like you to pay for those coupons. It's likely that they may let it go and appreciate your honesty and commitment not to do it again.

**Q:** "I have read that several stores do not accept Internet coupons that contain the word 'Free,' even if the coupon states 'Buy One, Get One Free.' Is this true?"

**A:** Yes. Printable coupons for free products are among the most frequently counterfeited types of coupons. Sadly, anyone armed with a scanner, graphics software and a decent amount of skill can create a valid-looking, fake coupon. And if someone goes to the trouble of creating a counterfeit coupon, what dollar amount are they going to put on it? Certainly not 50 cents or even \$1. They're going to go all the way, creating a coupon for a free product.

Some stores place limits on the dollar value of printable coupons that they will accept - typically \$5. It's highly unlikely that a manufacturer would issue, say, a \$10 coupon for baby diapers. In choosing not to accept high (and unlikely) dollar amounts on printable coupons, a store is protecting itself from fraud.

One of my local stores will not accept printable coupons for free products or printable coupons with dollar values greater than \$5, but they will accept BOGO printables. Check your store's policy to determine if your area supermarket has specific restrictions on printable coupons. Sadly, many have had to put them in place.

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Jill Cataldo, a coupon workshop instructor, writer and mother of three, never passes up a good deal. Learn more about couponing at her website, [www.supercouponing.com](http://www.supercouponing.com). Email your own couponing victories and questions to [jill@ctwfeatures.com](mailto:jill@ctwfeatures.com).

**Bring This Coupon In For \$20<sup>00</sup> OFF Your Purchase of \$100 or more**

Expires 6/5/10  
**Lu Lu's** Located in the back of Gifts use **GIGGLES**  
217 W. 3rd, Downtown Yankton, 665-6767

**Oil Change \$21<sup>99</sup>**  
Most cars up to 5 quarts of oil.  
Expires June 8, 2010  
**BROADWAY**  
CHRYSLER • DODGE • JEEP  
2720 Broadway Ave., Yankton  
(605) 665-8033  
[www.broadwaychrysler.com](http://www.broadwaychrysler.com)

**\$3.99 Bacon Cheese Grillburger Combo**  
PLU 35073  
**DQ Grill & Chill**  
Coupon expires 6/13/10. Limit 1 coupon per person per visit. Cannot be combined with any other offer.  
1917 Broadway, Yankton

**Buy One Jewelry Item Get One 1/2 Off**  
Coupon Expires 6/14/2010  
**Rita's**  
Purse-o-Nalities  
Hours: 10am-8pm Monday-Sunday  
2101 Broadway, Yankton Mall

**Bring In Coupon & Receive 10% Off Any Meal Ticket**  
Good thru 6/13/10  
**Sportsmen's Rendezvous**  
Main St., Tyndall, SD  
605-589-4386

Photography by **Classic Clicks, Inc.**  
2101 Broadway Yankton SD 57075  
605.668.1640  
**2011 Seniors Models Needed**  
Enter your Classic Clicks Senior Portrait for a chance to win prizes valued at **\$450**  
1st 25 seniors a free 11x14 clicks image poster  
Winning Valued at \$650  
Your portrait in all modeling advertising 2012  
Copyrights to all your portraits  
16x20 Portrait Print  
Waivers for 100 of your friends  
Sitting fee for our photographers **\$10**  
Enter once per sitting.

**You'll Scream For Ice Cream!**  
**Books and Beans**  
Your One Stop Treat Shop!  
WiFi  
Open 8-8 Monday-Saturday  
104 W. 3rd St., Downtown Yankton  
605-260-0024 • 605-760-2023

**Swimsuit COUPON Sale! \$8<sup>00</sup> Off**  
with coupon ~ expires 6/12/10  
Infants, Boys, Girls, Sizes 3mo-6X  
**Linda's Angel Crossing**  
1101 Broadway 665-0080  
Open Monday-Friday 10-6, Saturday 10-5

**Country Cupboard Floral & Gifts**  
2800 N. Broadway, Yankton • 260-2333  
**FREE Custom Planting Of Your Pots**  
Brought into the Greenhouse with this coupon  
Coupon expires 6/5/10. Limit 1 coupon per person per visit. Cannot be combined with any other offer.

**Buy Any Bag of Hill's® Science Diet® Small & Toy Breed Dog Food (Already Lowest Price) and Get a FREE® Li'l Pals® Collar & Leash Valued Up To \$12**  
\*After mail-in offer. See store associate for details. Limit 1 per customer. While supplies last. Expires 6/14/10.  
**Tropical Creations**  
Yankton Mall • 665-1464

**Buy 4 Regular Price Buffet Meals 5th Buffet is 1/2 Price!**  
With coupon. Cannot be combined with other offers. Expires 6/6/10.  
**KING BUFFET**  
AND MONGOLIAN GRILL  
3013 N. Broadway, Yankton  
260-8888 NO-MSG

**COUPON FREE HAIRCUT with color**  
Call 604-260-1387  
Brianna Mech & Claudia Alonso  
**Vixen Salon**  
Open Mon-Fri. 10-7 Sat. 9-5  
coupon expires 6/26/10 1101 Broadway, Morgen Square, Yankton

**Monday & Wednesday Night Special \$8.95 Sirloin or Strip - 1/2 Price Savings!**  
June 5th - Nissen Wine Tasting at 2PM  
**CJ's At The Lake**  
Cjatlake.com • 402-388-4267 • PARTIES WELCOME!  
11 miles from Yankton • 9 from Crofton • NE Side of Lewis & Clark Lake  
**GREAT FOOD - FANTASTIC VIEW AWESOME WILD ANIMAL DISPLAY!**  
[cjatlake.com](http://cjatlake.com) click on weather for live web cams of the lake

**A-1 Computers & Consulting**  
**COMPUTER SPYWARE & VIRUS REMOVAL**  
Starting at \$49.99  
515 E. 4th St., Yankton • 605-665-3182