Retrieved from <http://divagirlusa-ivil.tripod.com/austinitecouponers/id29.html>

Coupon Decoding 101

Look closely at the barcode on the coupon. That is what tells the POS (point of sale) computer how much credit to give you. The barcode does not always agree with the printed words. You may be able to save money by using the offer that's encoded in the barcode instead of the wording.

Anatomy of a coupon barcode:

1-22222-33344-5 (6666)7-88888 and possibly 9999

1 - usually a 5 or 9 (sometimes 99) for mfr coupons. I've seen a zero here for most store coupons, I think I saw or heard about a 4 also for a store coupon. A coupon that starts with a 5 can double, even if it says "do not double" (dnd) on it. A coupon that starts with a 9 will not automatically double, but of course it can be done manually.

22222 - five-digit manufacturer code

333 - three-digit family code; when used with the mfr code, it tells which item(s) the coupon is good on. Often the coupon's family includes many items that are not listed on the coupon, but the POS will recognize them.

A zero digit in the family code is used like a wildcard. So, if you know that Product Z is in the 146 family, then you could use any of these family-coded coupons on Product Z: 146, 140, 100, 000. If the family code is 000 then the coupon is good on ANY product from that mfr. GamblinGal16 has compiled an extensive list that illustrates this point, you can find it in this thread.

Family code 992 is for "no product verification". Technically, the 992 is a message to the \*computer\* to not verify whether you bought the item. Its intended use is for things that don't fall into a 'regular' family - like '$1 off any Heinz X or Campbell's Y or BallPark Z'. Wine tags are often 992's because if you get to save off \*any\* seafood, there's no way to know which seafood you will choose, and no other way to encode it.

44 - two-digit value code. This tells the computer how much credit you get for the coupon. The one value code that always raises a flag is 00, which is specifically for checker intervention. No matter what, this coupon will beep - even if it's a 992. Many stores will also flag frees (01) so that the actual price may be written in. There is at least one chain that flags ALL frees, even b1g1f (14), b2g1f (16), b3g1f (19), b4g1f (02). Monga has some really good links here

including a link to the table of value codes. Print this out and keep it in your coupon binder, it's a great reference tool.

Often the value code does not match the printed words. As you look through the table you just printed, you'll notice there are NO codes that require a purchase of more than 4 items. The next time you see a coupon that tells you to buy 6, check the value code - chances are good that you only need to buy 3 or 4 for the POS to give you the credit.

There is no way to encode "buy this, get that free" unless it is in the offer code (see below). Those coupons are encoded as "get that free" (or "checker intervention"). Again, frees may be flagged at your store.

5 - single "check" digit, used by the computer to help it verify that it scanned the barcode correctly.

(6666) - code for which coupon format and/or redemption clearinghouse to use.

The expiration code appears as part of the second set of bars (starting with the 6666 as listed above), making that set physically longer than the first set. If there is no expiration date encoded, then the POS cannot tell whether the coupon has expired. Of course the default setting is to assume that it has NOT expired

7 - additional digit to identify the mfr

88888 - offer code, supposedly for mfr's use. May contain further data about the coupon offer, may be readable by the store. YMMV.

9999 - optional. If it appears, it is the expiration date, coded as MMYY. All coupons expire at the end of the month, there is no way to encode a specific date. Not all stores can read this info.

Keep in mind that different stores may have programmed their POS systems to handle coupons differently. What works at Store X may not work the same at Store Y. It will probably take some experimenting to determine what your store's POS does.

\*\*\*\* PLEASE DONT ASK ME TO GO INTO DETAILS ABOUT ALL OF THIS. I GOT THIS INFO FROM ANOTHER SOURCE AND ITS STILL A BIT CONFUSING TO ME TOO..

There are two major retail barcode standards - UPC-A (12/13 digits) and UPC-E (8 digits).

UPC-E uses a rather convoluted, but quite effective, method of compressing out unnecessary zeros. Keep in mind that in UPC-A there are five characters for the manufacturer code and five characters for the product code. The trick is to reduce all 10 characters into just 6 characters.

HOW TO CONVERT A UPC-A CODE TO UPC-E

If the manufacturer code ends in 000, 100, or 200, the UPC-E code consists of the first two characters of the manufacturer code, the last three characters of the product code, followed by the third character of the manufacturer code. The product code must be 00000 to 00999.

If the manufacturer code ends in 00 but does not qualify for #1 above, the UPC-E code consists of the first three characters of the manufacturer code, the last two characters of the product code, followed by the digit "3". The product code must be 00000 to 00099.

If the manufacturer code ends in 0 but does not quality for #1 or #2 above, the UPC-E code consists of the first four characters of the manufacturer code, the last character of the product code, followed by the digit "4". The product code must be 00000 to 00009.

If the manufacturer code does not end in zero, the UPC-E code consists of the entire manufacturer code and the last digit of the product code. Note that the last digit of the product code must be in the range of 5 through 9. The product code must be 00005 to 00009.

VALUE CODE TABLE

Here is a simple value code table. Enjoy!

Code Face Value

00 "BEEP" Manual Input Required

01 Free Item

02 B4G1

03 $1.10

04 $1.35

05 $1.40

06 $1.60

07 B3 $1.50

08 B2 $3.00

09 B3 $2.00

10 $0.10

11 $1.85

12 $0.12

13 B4 $1.00

14 B1G1

15 $0.15

16 B2G1

18 $2.60

19 B3G1

20 $0.20

21 B2 $0.35

22 B2 $0.40

23 B2 $0.45

24 B2 $0.50

25 $0.25

26 $2.85

28 B2 $0.55

29 $0.29

30 $0.30

31 B2 $0.60

32 B2 $0.75

33 B2 $1.00

34 B2 $1.25

35 $0.35

36 B2 $1.50

37 B3 $0.25

38 B3 $0.30

39 $0.39

40 $0.40

41 B3 $0.50

42 B3 $1.00

43 B2 $1.10

44 B2 $1.35

45 $0.45

46 B2 $1.60

47 B2 $1.75

48 B2 $1.85

49 $0.49

50 $0.50

51 B2 $2.00

52 B3 $0.55

53 B2 $0.10

54 B2 $0.15

55 $0.55

56 B2 $0.20

57 B2 $0.25

58 B2 $0.30

59 $0.59

60 $0.60

61 $10.00

62 $9.50

63 $9.00

64 $8.50

65 $0.65

66 $8.00

67 $7.50

68 $7.00

69 $0.69

70 $0.70

71 $6.50

72 $6.00

73 $5.50

74 $5.00

75 $0.75

76 $1.00

77 $1.25

78 $1.50

79 $0.79

80 $0.80

81 $1.75

82 $2.00

83 $2.25

84 $2.50

85 $0.85

86 $2.75

87 $3.00

88 $3.25

89 $0.89

90 $0.90

91 $3.50

92 $3.75

93 $4.00

95 $0.95

96 $4.50

98 B2 $0.65

99 $0.99

BxGy = Buy x or more, Get y free (same product)

Bx $z = Buy x or more, Get $z off

Codes that are reserved for future use are not listed

Here's a homemade list. Keep in mind that some mfr's have multiple codes, and that some products with the same mfr name may have different mfr codes.

HUH? Ok, examples: P&G has several mfr codes. So just because you have a coupon for one P&G product, that doesn't mean it will work on a different product since the 2 P&G items might have different mfr codes. As in, Crest 37000; Crest Spinbrush 66878; Pantene 80878; Infusium 89165; Nyquil/Vicks 23900; etc. Next example: Dove. Most Dove stuff is 11111, but the cleansing cloths are 00521 (like Vaseline) and the antiperspirant is 79400 (like Suave).

Given that, you have to understand that a list of "the common ones" would have to be either very long, or very incomplete. Being somewhat lazy, I'm opting for the latter...

08137 Johnson & Johnson, Band-Aid, Aveeno

11111 Surf, All, most Dove, Lever 2000

12000 Pepsi

13000 Heinz

15000 Gerber

16000 General Mills, Betty Crocker

18000 Pillsbury

21000 Kraft

24000 Del Monte

28000 Nestle (some!)

28400 FritoLay, Taco Bell

29000 Planters, Parkay, Egg Beaters, some Fleischmann's

30000 Quaker

30100 Keebler

34000 Hershey

35000 Colgate-Palmolive

36000 Kimberly Clark: Kleenex, Cottonelle, Huggies, Kotex, Depends/Poise

37000 P&G: Cheer, Gain, Tide, Joy, Dawn, Cascade, Swiffer, Ivory, Zest, Safeguard, Downy, Febreeze, Bounce, Dryel, Mr Clean, Charmin, Puffs, Bounty, Pampers, Always, Luvs, Head & Shoulders, Pert, Secret, Sure, Crest, Scope, Metamucil, Thermacare, Pringles, Torengos, Fixodent. (Quite a list, and that's not nearly all the P&G products!)

37600 Hormel, Spam, Chi-Chi's

38000 Kellogg's

39000 Ortega

40000 M&M/Mars

41000 Lipton, Wishbone

41500 French's, Frank's

42000 Dixie, Northern, Brawny

43000 Post cereals, Jello, Maxwell House, GFIC, Minute Rice, Stovetop, Koolaid, Cool Whip

44000 Nabisco

44600 Clorox, Tilex, Fresh Step litter

44700 Oscar Mayer, Claussen

46500 Glade, Shout, Pledge, Grab-It, Armstrong, Brite, Raid, Edge, Skintimate

48001 Hellmann's, Best Foods, Skippy, Knorr

49000 Coke

50000 more Nestle, Fancy Feast, Friskies, Chef's Blend, Come 'n Get It, Mighty Dog

50100 Healthy Choice, Banquet Homestyle Bakes (what a combo!)

51000 Campbell's, Swanson, Franco-American, V-8, Prego

79400 Suave, Rave

And that's my SHORT list. No, I don't have a long list... I just typed this in now. If anyone else wants to add data, please do!

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