

# BBO Guide – Part 1

# Start Your Own Brown Bag Outreach!

Our Brown Bag Outreach isn't exclusive just for us! We got our idea from the "Backpacks & Brown Bags" ministry of Necia Freeman. We want everyone to get involved with the needy in their local communities. A brown bag type of outreach is a perfect way to start, and also has the potential to grow into something big!

Our program is simple and straightforward enough to get anyone well on their way to helping their local homeless. Below, we will cover the basics from planning, shopping, and some tips for while you're on your own route! There is also a set of downloadable resources that cover everything in our guide, including this guide itself!

Here are the Basics (with a team of 3):

- Shopping Time: < 1 hour
- Prep Time: 30 min. – 1.5 hours
- Outreach Time: 1 hour – 3 hours
- Weekly Spending: \$50 – \$75

Here are the sections to our 3-part guide:

- [Part 1: The Stuff](#)
- [Part 2: The Prep](#)
- [Part 3: The Outreach](#)
- [Appendix: Resources](#)

## Part 1: The Stuff

### THE Brown Bag

Here is the list of item types that we include in each of our brown bags, and the specific item we personally use for our own outreach. Feel free to substitute as you wish. The items we chose were based

on efficiency and price (see shopping section below).

- 1 lunch bag: Generic brown paper bags, size 6#
- 1 sandwich:
  - 2 bread slices: Oroweat Country Buttermilk Bread
  - 2 ham slices: Kirkland Signature Sliced Extra Lean Ham
  - 1 cheese slice: Kraft American Cheese Singles
- 1 sandwich bag: Generic non-zipper plastic sandwich bag
- 1 chip/snack: Pringles On-The-Go or Frito-Lays Variety Pack Chips
- 1 candy: Kirkland Signature Funhouse Treats Assorted
- 1 napkin: Generic disposable paper napkin
- 1 set of condiments:
  - 1 mayonnaise packet: First Street Mayonnaise Packets
  - 1 mustard packet: First Street Mustard Packets
- 1 invitation card: Custom printed from Microsoft Word (template below)
- 1 beverage: Kirkland Signature 8 oz. Mini Bottled Water
- Anything extra that gets donated or you want to add

## Shopping

We like to be as efficient as possible, so that means shopping for all

our items in the least number of stops. We also want to be as efficient as possible with the quantity of items we buy. We try our best to use all the items we buy at each week's outreach (save for a few bulk items, of course).

This guide preps for 48 brown bags, which works out perfectly with the quantity of items we buy as you will see. If you go with a different brand, the quantities will of course be different and you will need to adjust accordingly. If you want to buy in bulk and separate the items for each week, you can do that too. Make it your own!

We purchase all of our items at Costco Warehouse and Cash & Carry/Smart & Final.

## The Bag: Generic 6# brown paper bags



Any brown paper bag will do. We find that 6# (6 pound) bags are just the right size for mobility and space for all the items we need to put in it. You can even go with plastic bags if you like, though paper bags are more environment friendly (God created the world so let's love it), even if they are more expensive. Finally, in our area, white or other colored bags were more expensive than the brown.

The bags come organized in sets of about 50 placed every other way, with 12 sets total. I say "about" because there aren't always 50, so I'd double-check before taking only one set. The 12 sets would ideally last you 3 months.

# The Bread: Oroweat Country Buttermilk Bread



Costco sells these bad boys in sets of two loaves. Each loaf has 24 slices. We buy two bags of two loaves each. That will allow you to make exactly 48 sandwiches, including the ends. Some people love the ends, some people don't. We believe food is food, and so we include them as part of the 48. Sometimes we mix and match so one person will get one end piece and a regular slice, just to keep everyone happy.

## The Meat: Kirkland Signature Sliced Extra Lean Ham



Costco also sells these two-packs of ham. They come already sliced in 24 slices per pack. We purchase two of these two-packs, which allow us to put two slices of ham per sandwich. If you want to do only one slice of ham per sandwich, purchase only one two-pack.

## The Cheese: Kraft American Cheese Singles



These come in a single box of 96 individually wrapped slices of cheese, divided into four packs. We buy one box for two week's worth of outreach, taking two packs out each time. The individual wrapper is somewhat annoying to remove, but buying bulk cheese was more

inefficient and once you find the key to unwrapping them, you won't have too much trouble.

## The Sandwich Bag: Generic non-zipper plastic bags



The key here is non-zippered. We used to use the zippered kind, but you have to unzip each bag before you stick the sandwich in, and the sandwiches don't always want to fit. The fold and close top allows for much more flexibility and faster packaging. Buy a bulk box and let it last for many outreaches to come.

## The Chip/Snack: Pringles On-The-Go



Costco sells these in a variety pack of 48. They don't always have them, so in that case we go with our backup (see below). 48 is the perfect number for 48 brown bags! They are slightly more expensive than the bagged chips, but sometimes they are on sale.

Remember, you can always substitute anything for the snack or chips!



This is our backup when the Pringles aren't available. These come in a 54 variety pack. We take 6 out each week, and bring the entire box. The 6 left over we keep each week until we have enough to make 48. These are also available at Costco.



# The Dessert: Kirkland Signature Funhouse Treats Assorted



Is it healthy? No, but it sure does taste great! We purchase these at Costco. They sell them by weight, so there aren't always the exact number of candies in them. However, we found that on average, we can pre-pack 4 gallon-size ziplock bags of 48 treats each. We put in one piece per bag.

Costco also sells a chocolate variety pack version, but chocolate tends to melt in the heat and won't last as long as these hard/chewy candies.

## The Manners: Disposable napkin



This is, of course, totally optional. But we believe that it really does matter to the recipient the amount of care and thought that goes into each bag. Including a napkin goes a long way into sharing some of the motherly (or fatherly) love that went into your lunch.

We buy this four-pack of Kirkland napkins from Costco, and pinch a few in each bag (one per bag takes a little too long to separate).

## The Condiments: First Street Mayonnaise/Mustard Packets

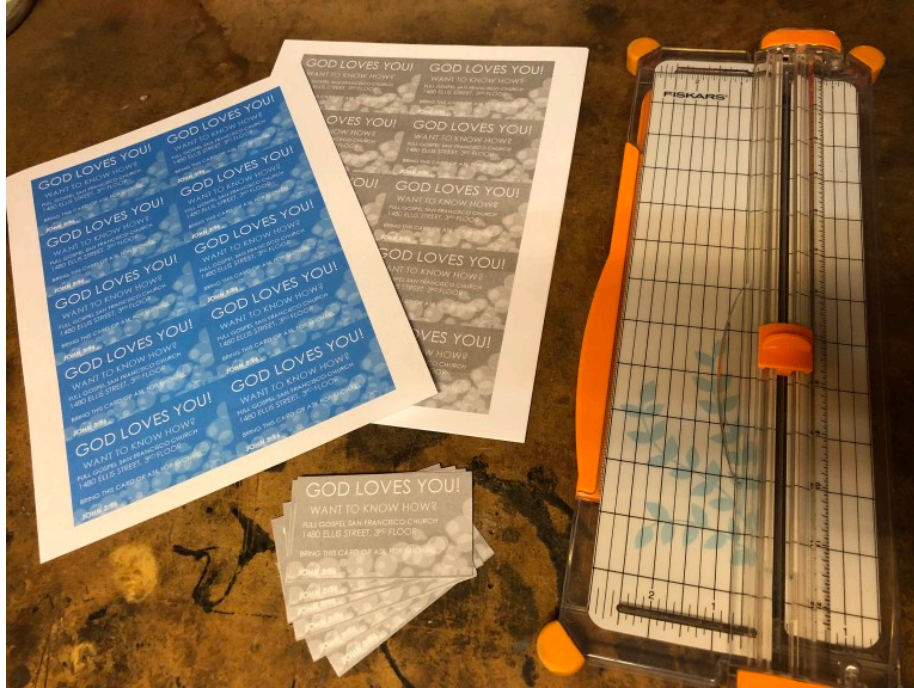


I don't know about you, but I'm definitely a saucy kind of guy. Sandwiches need some extra flavor! We used to do mayonnaise, mustard, and ketchup, but we quickly found out that no one really uses ketchup in their sandwiches. You can buy a box of these at your local Smart & Final or Cash & Carry, and I believe they're carried at Sam's Club as well. Obviously, you will run through two mayo boxes per mustard box so you may want to stock up!

At one point, some of our members thought we should scrap the

condiments altogether because no one was using them. But one day, a homeless friend of ours told us we were the only free lunch out there that included the condiments – and that was that.

## The Invitation: Custom printed cards



We include these invitation cards to invite them to our Sunday service each week. We include our address, the time of our service, and the person they should ask for (in case your church isn't used to homeless showing up). Obviously this assumes that your church is open to receiving the homeless to their services (you'd be surprised!).

The color printed cards look way better, but at some point the cost of color printing weighs in. I use a small Fiskars paper cutter to make neatly cut cards. Find a template of our cards in the resource section at the end of the guide!

## The Drink: Kirkland Signature 8 oz. Mini Bottled Water



This is an essential. Our friends are THIRSTY. We used to provide juice, but we quickly found that by providing water, they could use it for other things (hygiene, etc.) instead. These come in a pack of 80 at Costco, so we pull out 48 and save the rest. When the left overs total 48, we skip buying them that week and just bring the ones we have. These 8 oz. bottles fit perfectly inside our brown bags.

Feel free to include juice like Caprisun, or juice boxes instead! Make it your own!

## Anything else?



As I've said already many times, we want you to be able to make this your own! Feel free to add extra things, or substitute for others. These are some of the items we include as extras each week depending on the amount of money we have on hand. Each of these are also bought at, you guessed it, Costco.

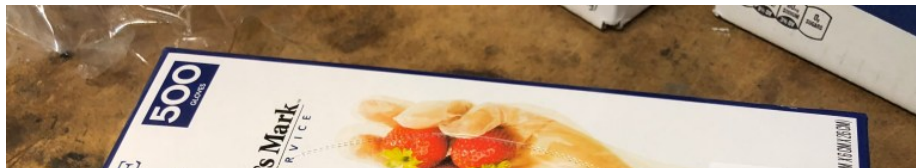
## Other Important Items

Here is the list of items we like to keep with us to help us prep the bags and keep everything sanitary, as well as help us distribute the bags on our route!

- Disposable plastic gloves (for all hands touching food items!)
- Disposable wipes (to clean the tables before and afterwards)
- Paper towels (to wipe up messes and spills)
- Large tray or clean disposable table sheet (to prep sandwiches on)
- Scissors or Knife (to open boxes and packaging)
- Personal grocery cart (to carry brown bags)
- Large reusable bags (to carry extra brown bags or other items like socks)

Some items that require a special note are shown and discussed below:

## Disposable Plastic Gloves



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Keep it sanitary! Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, then use some disposable gloves when you're handling any

of the food items. Our friends already have a lot to defend themselves from, so let's not make it harder for them!

## Large prep tray or Clean disposable table sheet



We use commercial size baking trays to prep our food, which we dishwash afterwards. When we first started, however, we used large sheets of clean art paper to cover the table before we began. Use whatever method you need to keep it clean and safe!

## Distribution: Personal grocery cart or Large reusable bags



We used to carry all our bagged lunches in 4-5 large reusable bags every week. However, that got to be a bit tiresome so we purchased a personal grocery cart (above, left) at Smart & Final for about \$20. All 48 brown bags fit in there when packed correctly, and it's much less weary on the body.

We still bring one reusable bag with us, usually to carry socks or other items we are handing out, or some of the brown bags when they won't all fit in the cart (sometimes we have extra items in the bags that make them bigger than normal). That being said, IKEA has the best reusable bags. They have a large and an extra long large bag made of the material that won't rip. Our homeless friends are using them to move around, so you know they're tough!

## **Continue to Part 2: The Prep ->**