

MGA 2026 BEST BAGGER CONTEST!



READY, SET, BAG!

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2026

12:00 - 2:00 PM

MALL OF AMERICA

ATRIUM ROTUNDA



GRAND PRIZES

1st PLACE

\$600 Cash & Trophy

Trip to the National

Best Bagger

Championship in

Las Vegas, NV

(up to \$1,500 value)

2nd PLACE

\$300 Cash

3rd PLACE

\$200 Cash



CRITERIA FOR CHOOSING A BEST BAGGER OF REUSABLE

Speed - - - - - 10 Points

Contestants should bag orders significantly quicker than the average bagger.

<u>Time</u>	<u>Points</u>
0- 53.00 seconds	10
53.01- 57.00 seconds	9
57.01- 61.00 seconds	8
61.01- 65.00 seconds	7
65.01- 69.00 seconds	6
69.01- 73.00 seconds	5
73.01- 77.00 seconds	4
77.01- 81.00 seconds	3
81.01- 85.00 seconds	2
More than 85.01 seconds	1



Distribution of Weight Between Bags - - - 5 Points

Contestants should know how to distribute groceries among sacks so that all sacks in an order are approximately equal in weight. To calculate the score, weigh each bag and record the weight. Take the heaviest bag weight, minus the lightest bag weight, and subtract the difference from the total points possible.

Example: The heaviest bag weighs 13.15 pounds and the lightest bag weighs 12.05 pounds. The weight difference between the two bags is -1.1 pounds. Subtract this difference from the total possible points. The total points to be awarded is 3.9.

Proper Bag Building Technique - - - - 10 Points

Contestants should be able to arrange groceries correctly within a reusable bag. Points will be deducted for improper bagging, damaged products, and missed items. Packing should involve these steps:

- (1) Placing heavy cans on the bottom of the bag.
- (2) Framing boxed items around the bag's walls to create a "cushion" for other items.
- (3) Placing crushable items, such as produce and eggs on the top.
- (4) Slipping small items, like packs of gum, in the spaces in the bag.



PRINCIPLES OF BAGGING

1. SIZE OF THE JOB

A good bagger looks over the order and plans the load. Begin by asking the customer which bagging container he she prefers (but don't overload it). The customer will appreciate it.

2. BAG SELECTION

Without forgetting material cost, decide how many and What size bags to use. As a rule, use the smallest bag that will complete the order. Do not double-bag if not Absolutely necessary, unless company policy specifically calls for it.

3. OPEN THE BAG CAREFULLY AND QUICKLY

Open the bag by putting one hand down through the center, squaring the bottom so they bag will stand upright without support. The temptation is to snap the bag open. Don't do it! It's dangerous, especially if the bag comer catches someone in the eye.

4. BUILD A SOLID FOUNDATION

Build a square foundation and distribute the weight in the center of the bag by placing cereal boxes, sacks of flour Or sugar, and canned goods in it. This strong, heavy base helps the bag to stand upright and makes it easier to carry. From this point, continue to build your load from heavy to light. Notice the word place. Never throw things into the bag. Place them with grace and speed, but never throw.

5. SPLIT THE ORDER FOR EQUAL WEIGHT

Don't overload the bag by putting the bulk of heavy merchandise in one bag. Balance the load by placing heavy items in two or three bags. The customer will appreciate this gesture, especially if the merchandise has to be carried up a flight of stairs.

6. SECOND-WRAP WET ITEMS

Insulate the outer bag from moisture by second-wrapping or small-bagging produce, cellophane meat (it leaks) and frozen foods. Dampness breaks down the fibers in paper bags and can cause them to collapse. Extra wrapping insures against collapse and gives the bagger a few items for foundation material.

BUILD UP THE WALLS

Make a trim, square package by solidly packing flat packages (cereal, soap powders), which builds up the walls, eliminates creases and gives the pack more strength. It also makes the bag easier to carry and forms a protective center funnel for breakable goods. Watch the sharp corner! Boxes should be bagged so sharp corner wont tear the bag.

PACK BREAKABLES IN THE CENTER FUNNEL

Keep milk cartons or glass bottles and jars off the top of the bag. Put them in the center funnel to ensure their protection. Always tighten caps on bottles before they are placed in the bag.

PACK IT SOLID

Fill in gaps with small merchandise. A solid pack prevents shifting and cuts down on breakage.

TOP YOUR STRUCTURE WITH CRUSHABLES AND BREAKABLES

Put lighter breakable good on top of more solid, heavies, non-breakables. Eggs, potato chips, soft fruits and vegetables, light bulbs, and bakery goods should be placed on top where they are free from pressure.

**SOME FOODS REQUIRE SPECIAL HANDLINGS:

- Ammonia and bleach should not be placed in bags with other foods. These chemicals are poisonous and will contaminate food. Avoid danger by putting these items separately to prevent spilling on foods.
- Hand-carry and don't bag sacks of potatoes, giant boxes of soap, cartons of soft drinks, and large bottle of bleach.
- Butter, yeast, and meat can absorb the odor of strong foods. Keep them away from garlic, onions, cheese, and other merchandise with strong odors.
- Fancy cakes should be placed in a separate bag, bottom side down and hand carried.
- Light bulbs and other fragile items should be double-bagged before being placed.
- Watermelons do not need to be bagged unless sliced.
- Celery and similar produce should be bagged by standing the stalk upright in a corner with no more than two or three inches showing over the top of the bag.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Some commonly asked technical questions about the Best Bagger Contest:

Q. What happens if a bagger drops an item during the contest?

A. A bagger must pick up any dropped item(s) to not lose points. No one is allowed to tell the bagger they have dropped an item, the bagger must see it on his/her self. If the bagger raises his/her hands to signal completion, the time will stop and he/she will no longer be able to pick up that item. Missing an item will cause an automatic two point deduction.

Q. What happens if a bagger raises his/her hands because he/she thinks he/she is finished bagging, but has left an item unbagged on the table?

A. Once the baggers hands have been raised, the time will stop and the bagger will no longer be able to pick up the item and place it in a bag or move items around in the bags. An automatic one point deduction will be taken for each item left on the table.

Q. What do you do in the case of a tie?

A. A tie score situation is relevant in two situations. The first would be when two or more contestants are tied for the finals. In this event, the total points the baggers earned for speed (10 points) will determine the winner. Should a tie remain at this point, the bagger with the most points for bag building technique (a possible total of 8 points) will be declared the winner. Should a tie remain at this point, the two bagger will have to bag again in a tie-breaker round for final elimination. The same tie-breaking criteria would hold true for second through fifth places.

Q. Who is eligible to compete?

A. Any new or past competitor that works for a grocery store who is a MGA member. Chain grocery stores can have up to 3 contestants. Each competitor will receive \$100 for participation in the competition.



SAMPLE GROCERY LIST

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1..... 16.3 oz. jar of peanut butter | 1..... 9 oz. bag of chips |
| 1..... 16 oz. glass jar of pickles | 1..... 24 oz. loaf of bread |
| 1..... 24 oz. glass jar of pasta sauce | 1..... 5.5 oz. tube of potato chips |
| 1..... 7 oz. box of snack crackers | 1..... 5.75 oz. bag of sunflower seeds |
| 1..... 16 oz. box of spaghetti noodles | 1..... Beef stick |
| 1..... 8.5 oz. box of crackers | 1..... 20 oz. package of cookies |
| 1..... 12 oz. box of cereal | 2..... 3.9 oz. box of pudding |
| 1..... 5 oz. can of cooking spray | 1..... 1.74 oz. bag of M&M's |
| 2.....15.8 oz. can of pasta | 1..... brick of coffee |
| 2..... 6 oz. can of tomato paste | 1..... 4 pack of fruit cups |
| 2..... 10 3/4 oz. can of soup | 1..... 1 oz. seasoning packet |
| 1..... 28 oz. can of baked beans | 1..... 1.5 oz. cup of oatmeal |
| 1..... 19 oz. BBQ sauce | 1..... paper towel |
| 1.....8 oz. plastic container of mustard | 1..... 4.6 oz. Knorr's pasta sides |
| 1.....5 oz. Can of tuna | 1.....Baby wipes |
| 1.....15 oz. Bag of Pretzels | |



SAMPLE ITEM ARRANGEMENT

(Using sample list from previous page)

Box of cereal	Fruit cups	Bag of chips	Paper towel	Can of pasta	Tube of potato chips
Box of pudding	Loaf of Bread	Jar of Peanut Butter	Box of snack crackers	Can of baked beans	Container of BBQ sauce
Glass jar of pasta sauce	Brick of Coffee	Can of soup	Can of soup	Box of crackers	Jar of pickles
			Mustard		Tomato paste
Baby wipes	Bag of pretzels	Cooking spray	Box of spaghetti noodles	Seasoning packet	Can of pasta
Knorr's pasta side				Cup of oatmeal	
Can of tuna	Can of tomato paste	Package of cookies	Box of Pudding	M & M's	Sunflower seeds
Beef stick					

