Where to use CDC vouchers: Unexpected ways to spend them in Singapore

The Community Development Council (CDC) vouchers scheme is a widely appreciated government initiative aimed at supporting local households and boosting neighbourhood businesses in Singapore. While most Singaporeans typically redeem these vouchers at heartland food stalls, neighbourhood bakeries or mini-marts, the potential of these vouchers extends far beyond the usual suspects.

In this article, we’ll delve into creative and often-overlooked ways of spending your CDC vouchers, shedding light on underutilised avenues that can elevate the value of your redemptions. Whether you are seeking to stretch your household budget or simply make more thoughtful, community-driven spending choices, this guide will serve as an insightful companion.

## Understanding CDC Vouchers: A Brief Recap

Launched in 2020 as part of COVID-19 support measures, the CDC voucher scheme has evolved into a recurring national initiative. As of 2025, each Singaporean household is entitled to a fresh tranche of CDC vouchers – with a total of **$500** issued in digital format, split into **$250 for use at participating heartland merchants and hawkers**, and **$250 for supermarkets**.

Redemption is fuss-free through the CDC Vouchers website or via mobile. Once downloaded via Singpass, the digital vouchers can be scanned at participating outlets, which display the “CDC Vouchers Accepted Here” decal.

But now to the crux: how can you spend your vouchers in ways that are both unexpected and rewarding?

### 1. Support Local Craftsmen and Hobby Shops

You might be surprised to learn that many traditional provision stores and hobby retailers accept CDC vouchers. Think of shops selling sewing supplies, tools, paint, stationery, and even model kits. These small enterprises are often family-run, brimming with character, and found in heartland estates such as Ang Mo Kio, Bedok or Toa Payoh.

**Example:**

* **Lee Huat Radio & Electrical (Ang Mo Kio)** – You can pick up tools, electrical parts or even batteries and household repair items.
* **Hobby Art Gallery (Bedok)** – Offers model kits, paints, and tools for hobbyists. While niche, they’re CDC-accepted and perfect for a creative project.

Using your vouchers here not only supports niche local businesses but also opens up new hobbies or helps you maintain home appliances at minimal cost.

### 2. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and Herbal Shops

Beyond Western pharmaceuticals, many older Singaporeans turn to Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) shops. Surprisingly, a good number of these outlets – especially those embedded in heartland estates – accept CDC vouchers.

You can purchase:

* Herbal teas and remedies
* Po Chai pills or medicated oils
* Cough mixtures
* Dried goods like goji berries, red dates, and ginseng

This is a smart and often economical alternative to over-the-counter Western remedies, especially for chronic minor ailments.

### 3. Florists and Gardening Supply Stores

Buying flowers might not be the first thing that comes to mind when you think of vouchers meant for household essentials. However, florists and gardening supply vendors participating in the scheme offer an uplifting use of your vouchers.

**Use your vouchers to:**

* Buy fresh bouquets for loved ones
* Purchase potted plants to brighten your home
* Invest in fertiliser or soil if you enjoy home gardening

Gardening has been shown to support mental well-being, and vouchers spent this way bring joy and a greener touch to any living space.

### 4. Bicycle Repairs and Accessories

Cycling is growing in popularity in Singapore, especially with the expansion of park connectors and active mobility initiatives. Some bicycle repair shops and accessory retailers participate in the CDC scheme, especially in residential areas.

Whether it’s a punctured tyre, a new helmet, or replacing a bike light, these vouchers can go towards keeping your commute safe and eco-friendly.

### 5. Pet Supplies and Grooming Services

Pet ownership is on the rise, but many owners may not realise that pet-related businesses – including local grooming salons and supply shops – may accept CDC vouchers.

You can use your vouchers to:

* Purchase kibble or treats
* Get basic grooming for your cat or dog
* Stock up on kitty litter or shampoo

Just ensure the store is a registered CDC participant (a quick search on the CDC voucher site can confirm this).

### 6. Wet Markets and Fresh Produce Vendors

While supermarkets dominate daily grocery runs, wet markets still offer unbeatable prices and freshness. From live seafood to seasonal fruits, many stalls within these markets accept CDC vouchers.

Why this matters:

* You can save more by buying bulk or seasonal produce
* Supporting older hawkers who are less digitally savvy but have joined the scheme
* It promotes a more sustainable, local food system

Some stalls even offer bundle deals or throw in freebies for loyal customers, making your dollar stretch even further.

### 7. Kopitiam Fare Beyond the Obvious

Of course, CDC vouchers are accepted at most hawker stalls and kopitiams – but go beyond the usual chicken rice and nasi lemak.

**Spend your vouchers on:**

* Heritage snacks like tutu kueh, putu piring, or muah chee
* Traditional kopi brewed with sock filters
* Artisanal bak chor mee or gourmet prata

Not only are you eating well, but you’re also supporting the preservation of Singapore’s rich hawker culture.

### 8. Tailor and Alteration Services

In a world of fast fashion, tailoring is often neglected – yet extremely practical. Local alteration shops, found in most estates, are often part of the CDC network.

You can use vouchers to:

* Mend torn clothing
* Resize pants or dresses
* Shorten school uniforms

A great way to extend the lifespan of your clothes while keeping costs down.

### 9. Children’s Enrichment and Stationery Supplies

Some small tuition centres or enrichment class providers (particularly for arts and crafts, or language classes) also accept vouchers, especially if they operate out of community centres or HDB void deck premises.

Similarly, neighbourhood stationery stores are also voucher-eligible. Stock up on:

* School supplies
* Art materials
* Educational books or charts

Ideal for families with school-going children or for those who homeschool.

### 10. Haircuts and Personal Grooming

Many traditional barbers and budget salons now accept CDC vouchers, which can be a lifesaver for those looking to save on basic grooming.

From $10 haircuts to eyebrow threading or even basic facials, look out for participating beauty and grooming outlets in neighbourhood malls.

### 11. Homeware and Kitchen Essentials

Neighbourhood shops selling everything from crockery to rice cookers often accept CDC vouchers. Known colloquially as "homeware treasure troves", these outlets offer:

* Affordable pots and pans
* Plastic containers and lunch boxes
* Towels, bedding, or hangers

Spending your vouchers here means you can upgrade your kitchen or bedroom without dipping into your savings.

### 12. Mobile Accessories and Electronics

While you can't use CDC vouchers for big-ticket electronics, many heartland phone repair shops or electronics kiosks accept them for accessories.

Buy:

* Charging cables or earphones
* Phone cases or screen protectors
* Basic tech items like portable fans or USB lights

This is particularly useful for students or the elderly who may need replacements but are watching their budget.

## Making the Most of Your CDC Vouchers

Here are a few smart tips for effective use:

* **Plan ahead**: Check the CDC Voucher Merchant Listing for updated participants.
* **Bundle purchases**: Combine multiple small items into a single transaction to fully utilise voucher denominations.
* **Support the elderly and less digital-savvy**: Help neighbours redeem their vouchers or recommend participating merchants they might overlook.
* **Engage with merchants**: Many heartland vendors go the extra mile – talk to them, and you may receive deals or even pick up community stories.

## Final Thoughts

The CDC vouchers scheme is more than just a government disbursement; it's a community-building exercise. By spending wisely and creatively, we can uplift small businesses, revive interest in traditional trades, and improve the quality of our daily lives.

So, the next time you think of where to use your CDC vouchers, go beyond the norm. Seek out the unexpected – a florist, a tailor, a pet groomer – and you might find joy not just in what you buy, but in who you’re supporting.

**Singapore’s heartland has more to offer than we think – and your CDC vouchers can unlock that hidden potential.**