

KROGER CO  
Form 5  
February 17, 2012

**FORM 5**

**UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20549**

OMB APPROVAL

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Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).  
Form 3 Holdings Reported Form 4 Transactions Reported

**ANNUAL STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES**

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person \*  
HELDMAN PAUL W

(Last) (First) (Middle)

THE KROGER CO., 1014 VINE STREET

(Street)

CINCINNATI, OH 45202

(City) (State) (Zip)

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol  
KROGER CO [KR]

3. Statement for Issuer's Fiscal Year Ended (Month/Day/Year)  
01/28/2012

4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer

(Check all applicable)

Director  10% Owner  
 Officer (give title below)  Other (specify below)  
Executive Vice President

6. Individual or Joint/Group Reporting

(check applicable line)

Form Filed by One Reporting Person  
 Form Filed by More than One Reporting Person

**Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned**

| 1. Title of Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) | 5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned at end of Issuer's Fiscal Year (Instr. 3 and 4) | 6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4) | 7. Nature of Ownership (Instr. 4) |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| Common Stock                    |                                      |  |                                | (A) or (D) Price  | 320,142.4828<br>(1) (2)  | D  |                                   |

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

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**Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)**

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| 1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security | 3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5) | 6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year) | 7. Title and Amount Underlying Securities (Instr. 3 and 4) |              |                            |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|--|--|--------------|----------------------------|
|  |  |                                      |  |                                | (A) (D)   | Date Exercisable   | Expiration Date  | Title        | Amount or Number of Shares |
| Non-Qualified Performance Stock Option     | \$ 22.995  | Â                                    | Â  | Â                              | Â   | Â (3)  | 05/09/2012   | Common Stock | 13,33                      |
| Non-Qualified Stock Option                 | \$ 22.995  | Â                                    | Â  | Â                              | Â   | Â (4)  | 05/09/2012   | Common Stock | 26,66                      |
| Non-Qualified Stock Option                 | \$ 14.925  | Â                                    | Â  | Â                              | Â   | Â (4)  | 12/12/2012   | Common Stock | 80,00                      |
| Non-Qualified Stock Option                 | \$ 17.31   | Â                                    | Â  | Â                              | Â   | Â (4)  | 05/06/2014   | Common Stock | 40,00                      |
| Non-Qualified Stock Option                 | \$ 16.385  | Â                                    | Â  | Â                              | Â   | Â (4)  | 05/05/2015   | Common Stock | 40,00                      |
| Non-Qualified Stock Option                 | \$ 19.94   | Â                                    | Â  | Â                              | Â   | Â (4)  | 05/04/2016   | Common Stock | 25,00                      |
| Non-Qualified Stock Option                 | \$ 28.27   | Â                                    | Â  | Â                              | Â   | Â (4)  | 06/28/2017   | Common Stock | 25,00                      |
| Non-Qualified Stock Option                 | \$ 28.61   | Â                                    | Â  | Â                              | Â   | Â (4)  | 06/26/2018   | Common Stock | 25,00                      |
| Non-Qualified Stock Option                 | \$ 22.34   | Â                                    | Â  | Â                              | Â   | Â (4)  | 06/25/2019   | Common Stock | 25,00                      |
| Non-Qualified Stock Option                 | \$ 20.16   | Â                                    | Â  | Â                              | Â   | Â (4)  | 06/24/2020   | Common Stock | 30,00                      |
| Non-Qualified Stock Option                 | \$ 24.74   | Â                                    | Â  | Â                              | Â   | Â (4)  | 06/23/2021   | Common Stock | 43,40                      |

## Reporting Owners

| Reporting Owner Name / Address                       | Relationships |           |                            |       |
|--|---------------|-----------|----------------------------|-------|
|  | Director      | 10% Owner | Officer                    | Other |
| HELDMAN PAUL W<br>THE KROGER CO.<br>1014 VINE STREET | Â             | Â         | Â Executive Vice President | Â     |

CINCINNATI, OH 45202

## Signatures

/s/ Paul W.  
Heldman

02/17/2012

Signature of  
Reporting Person

Date

## Explanation of Responses:

- \* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4(b)(v).
- \*\* Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. *See* 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).  
Between January 29, 2011 and January 28, 2012, the reporting person acquired 1,587.6555 shares of Kroger common stock in the Company's employee benefit plans that are deemed to be 'tax-conditioned plans' pursuant to Rule 16b-3, to the extent disclosed on reports received by plan trustees.
- (1) Company's employee benefit plans that are deemed to be 'tax-conditioned plans' pursuant to Rule 16b-3, to the extent disclosed on reports received by plan trustees.
- (2) The total amount of securities directly owned by the reporting person includes shares in the Company's employee benefit plans that are deemed to be 'tax-conditioned plans' pursuant to Rule 16b-3, to the extent disclosed on reports received from plan trustees.  
These options will vest during the first four years from the date of the grant only if the Company's stock price has achieved a 55% appreciation from the option price. Thereafter, the options vest only if the Company's stock price has achieved a minimum 13% appreciation per annum from the date of grant or 185% appreciation, whichever is less. The options vest nine years and six months after grant, if not sooner vested.
- (3) appreciation per annum from the date of grant or 185% appreciation, whichever is less. The options vest nine years and six months after grant, if not sooner vested.
- (4) These options were granted under a long-term incentive plan of The Kroger Co. and vest in equal annual installments in whole amounts over a five-year period, at the rate of 20% per year commencing one year from the date of the grant.

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space provided is insufficient, *see* Instruction 6 for procedure. Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.