



Everyday Ways to Save

By making a few simple changes in your lifestyle, you can cut your spending by significant amounts. Here are a few ideas on everyday ways to save.

Food

- Save eating out for special occasions; instead make meals at home.
- Plan your grocery purchases ahead of time. Map out a week's menu and then create a shopping list from the week's menu.
- Clip coupons for items you use often.
- Join grocery store "membership clubs" that qualify you for automatic discounts.
- Buy generic brands instead of brand name.
- Shop at discount stores.
- If you typically use large quantities, buy items in bulk.
- Bring your lunch to work more often. Leftovers make great lunches!
- When eating out, skip the soda and opt for a free glass of water.
- Consider using a food buying club or a community garden in your area.

Clothing

- Look for sales instead of paying full price.
- Shop at consignment and thrift shops.
- Sell usable clothing you no longer wear at consignment stores or rummage sales.
- Save receipts so you can return clothing or shoes that have flaws or fall apart after being worn just one or two times.
- Make clothing last longer by learning to perform simple repairs with hand sewing, such as mending small rips or replacing buttons.

Transportation

- Determine how many vehicles your family really needs.
- Ride your bike when weather allows.
- Share rides within your family or coworkers to reduce gasoline costs.
- Combine your trips when you run errands.
- Use public transportation if it's available in your community.
- Perform timely car maintenance to reduce repair costs.

Utilities

- Decide whether you really need both a cell phone and home phone.
- Review services from telephone, cable, internet, and wireless companies. You may be paying for services you don't need.

- Look for telephone, cable, internet, cell phone bundles. Use one provider to save money.
- Consider the power usage of small appliances before making a purchase.
- Look for Energy Star symbols when buying appliances or light bulbs to spend less on electricity and qualify for rebates from many power companies.
- Turn off anything that isn't in use, ranging from the air conditioner to overhead lights.
- Buy a drying rack or put up a clothesline rather than using the dryer for some laundry.
- Run the washing machine or dishwasher with full loads.
- Use a programmable thermostat to automatically adjust the temperature when you're not home and when you're sleep. Even when you are up and about, try to set it a few degrees colder when the furnace is running and a few degrees warmer when the air conditioner is on.

Entertainment

- Borrow books, CDs, and DVD from the library instead of buying them.
- Visit rummage sales to find low cost reading material, movies, and recreational items.
- Read magazines and newspapers at the library and cancel subscriptions.
- Meet friends for weekly walks or low-cost craft sessions instead of shopping or lunch.
- Share spending tips with friends. Chances are they have ways to save.
- Turn hobbies into gifts for friends.
- Substitute local vacations for faraway travel. Explore regional tourist sites, take advantage of amusement parks nearby, or visit family.

Shelter

- Consider the size and type of home that best meets your needs (apartment, condo, duplex, single family home).
- Buy or rent the home you need, rather than the biggest dream house.
- Consider sharing your home to reduce expenses.
- Learn to make basic repairs and renovations yourself.

Miscellaneous

- Pay bills online to save on postage and paper.
- Manage your checking account carefully to avoid non-sufficient fund pay fees and pay bills in advance of the due date to avoid late fees.

16 Sweet Savings Strategies

1. Free up money to save by coming up with a plan and sticking with it to pay off debt.
2. Pay yourself first. Save something every payday. Before you pay your bills and withdraw cash for spending money, deposit a set amount in your savings account.
3. Put your savings habit on "auto pilot." Set up auto transfers from checking to savings.
4. Choose a savings target that fits your budget. Make your goal realistic so that you aren't pulling money from it to pay bills. Build your habit over time by increasing amount.
5. Start by savings a "windfall." Instead of spending your tax refund or bonus, save it.
6. If you don't have one, make an emergency savings account a priority. Set aside what you estimate you might need for unexpected expenses.
7. Tuck your emergency savings account away. Make it hard to get to. No online banking or ATM access.
8. Come up with a savings "gimmick." Example: set aside every \$5.00 bill you get or combine savings goal with weight loss goal.
9. When you go grocery shopping or dining out, go with cash. Then stash the left-over cash in a savings jar and watch it add up.
10. Budget for fun. Establishing a savings habit doesn't mean you need to give up spending on entertainment, but make sure you include these expenses in your spending plan.
11. Take the "impulse" out of purchases. Impose a one or two day timeout on purchases to decide whether they're needs or wants, whether you can afford them, and what you might be giving up to make this purchase.
12. Trade in short term splurges for bigger rewards. Brew your own coffee at home, bypass the coffee shop, and use the savings that accumulate over a couple months for a weekend giveaway. Subscribe to the most economical digital tv/internet plan you can find and set the savings aside to buy a new TV.
13. Get creative on free/low-cost date nights and entertainment. An evening around a board game can be more fun and more memorable than dinner out. Transfer what you didn't spend into savings.
14. Never pay for your own money. Use fee-free ATMs. Balance your check book regularly to avoid surprise overdraft fees. Pay bills on time to avoid late fees.
15. Comparison shop for cell phone, insurance, and household goods. Set aside the savings and watch it grow.
16. Find inspiration with savings calculators. Earning interest and growing your savings with compound interest is a long-term strategy, but you can use the



savings calculators online to compare savings at different rates and amounts.
Then establish your savings plan and watch it grow!