



## **MONEY SAVING TIPS**

We all know how hard it is to save more, and spend less. There always seems to be somewhere else to spend money -- that is why so many people don't save as much as they should.

To help improve your saving money habits, here are some tips and advice.

### **Look for Recreation Instead of Entertainment**

Movies, shows, concerts and theme parks are not only expensive but also only last for a few hours or one day. If you start thinking about recreational activities such as hiking, camping, beachcombing or low cost hobbies, you'll find many of these activities offer a no cost or low alternative to high cost entertainment.

### **Go to the Library**

Did you know that you can find not only movies but also video games at your public library? If you are an internet fiend, you can do all of your email and net surfing on the library system and even tap into fee-for-service databases for different types of research. Don't buy that latest book but check out the library shelves. With most paperback books retailing at \$5 - \$25 and hardcover books selling at \$20 - \$35, you can realize savings quickly.

### **Avoid impulse buying**

Impulse buying can be the downfall of any attempt at savings, but if you don't go browsing then chances are those impulse purchases won't show up on your credit card statement a month later or take away from other items such as food or rent. When shopping, only purchase what you planned on buying. If you find something else you want, hold off on the purchase until the next time. That way, you can have some time to think if the item is really something you need. Also, you can then check if it is within your budget.

### **Shop the outer aisles of grocery stores**

Take a good look at your grocery store. Produce, dairy, and meats tend to be placed on the outer aisles with all the junk food and processed products in the center aisles. Avoid as many of those inner aisles as possible and you'll see both your waistline and spending drop.

### **Skip the chai tea, pizza deliveries, lattes, specialty shops, and gourmet aisles**

Ok, we've heard that speech before but we also know that life is meant to be lived and enjoyed. So as Ben Franklin advised, use moderation in all things even moderation. Though, don't deny yourself too many treats or you'll never stick to that budget. How about giving up two lattes a week for a savings of \$40 a month and two pizza deliveries for a savings of another \$40? Start switching out items that break the budget and don't give them up all at once but instead just buy some or a few on occasion as a treat instead of making each one a weekly ritual.

**Prepare Meals at Home**

Instead of eating breakfast on the way to work, try eating breakfast at home instead. Also, make your own lunch at home and bring it with you to work. It is amazing how much money you will save by preparing your own meals.

Also, instead of drinking soda, drink water instead -- it will also help you watch your weight. Snacks are something you can bring from home as well. Choose healthy snacks, such as fruit. This goes for the kids too.

**Avoid Convenience Stores**

Try not to spend money on groceries at convenience stores unless it is really necessary.

**Do Price Comparison**

Check prices before making any large purchases. Online prices are very competitive, and by checking prices online first, you will know if buying at your local store makes sense or not.

**Turn Down the Temperature**

Turn down the temperature in your house or apartment in the winter, and raise it during the summer. Also reduce the temperature of your hot water heater if you have one.

**Pay Off Credit Card Debt**

Credit card debt has one of the highest rates of interest you can pay. Don't just pay the minimum monthly amount, but try to pay your credit card in full or as much as you can.

**Keep a Budget**

A great way to help save money is to create a budget, and then stick to it. Just by tracking where the money is going, you will be more aware of your spending habits, and stop unnecessary spending.

**Swap Toys**

Instead of buying lots of expensive toys for the kids, consider buying fewer toys, and then swapping toys with friends and family. Kids often lose interest in their toys, but have a greater interest in new toys. By swapping, you can increase the frequency of new toys without spending any additional money.

**Set Savings Goals and be Smart!**

When it comes to setting your savings goals, be SMART --- Make goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and can be accomplished on a timed basis. It's your money so have some fun with the process and above all, be creative!

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