



31 Tips For Saving Money

Creative Ways To Reduce Your Spending

When living on a budget, it doesn't hurt to find ways to spend less money. Here is a list of suggestions to make each dollar go further.

1. **Live on a budget.** Tell your money where to go and make sure you spend less than you earn.
2. **Cook at home.** Eating out is expensive and unhealthy. Try to cook at home as much as possible. Instead of buying lunch, bring a sack lunch.
3. **Make your own coffee.** It's easy to blow \$3-5 (or more!) at Starbucks. Save money; brew your own!
4. **Make a list before going shopping.** Otherwise you will buy on impulse and spend more than you budgeted.
5. **Go grocery shopping while you are in a hurry.** Squeeze your grocery shopping in before another commitment so you are less likely to linger and buy things you don't need; you'll be forced to stick to your list that way!
6. **Buy in bulk whenever possible.** When it comes to non-perishables that are on sale, such as cereals, canned goods, rice, beans, pasta, toothpaste, body wash, shampoo, toilet paper, etc. Buy these items in bulk at a place like Sam's Club can save you oodles of money in the long run.
7. **Get in the habit of checking ads before going grocery shopping.** Many stores have great deals on things you need to buy anyway, so you might as well save some money! Many of these deals come in the form of a BOGO, or a buy one get one free. Publix is a great place to find BOGO deals.
8. **Shop multiple stores.** Check the weekly ads and figure out which stores have the best deals on specific products. It's worth a second stop if it will save you a significant amount of money.
9. **Frequently available online coupons make it even easier to save some money.** Sign up for rewards cards where you can add digital coupons to it before you shop.
10. **Buy generic products as much as possible.** Don't pay the extra money for a name when there's a generic item that's just as good.
11. **Use grocery store bags to line trashcans.** These are especially good for bathroom wastebaskets.
12. **Pay your bills on time and avoid late fees.** Get organized with your regular bills. If possible, set up automatic payments. Most utilities and other recurring bills can be set to be charged to a credit card or deducted from a checking account. Many banks also offer free bill pay programs. So there really is no excuse for forgetting to pay a bill on time and forking out the late fees. If, by chance you do forget a bill, if you are a first time offender, call the company and request politely to waive the late fees, and more likely than not, they will oblige.
13. **Be aware of your bank balance and avoid overdraft fees.** If you use your checking account often or have some bills that are paid automatically from your checking account, be aware of the balance and avoid overdraft fees.
14. **Avoid ATM fees.** Be aware of the ATM withdrawal fees charged by your bank. While some banks waive fees for all ATM transactions on any ATM machine, most don't. So be sure to use only those ATM machines where your bank will not charge the fees, or withdraw directly at your bank.
15. **Avoid credit cards with an annual fee.** If you have a credit card, pay it off each month. Credit cards with their cash back bonuses and reward points are a great way to save some money. Just make sure that the card does not charge you any annual fees! There is no dearth of cards that offer fee-free reward plans, so there really is no reason to pay the annual fees.
16. **Avoid carrying a balance on credit cards as much as possible.** If you carry any debt, pay it off as soon as possible. Money paid in interest is money thrown away! Why spend your hard-earned cash to make financial institutions rich?
17. **Instead of buying books, borrow books from friends or the library** - Whenever possible, borrow your books instead of buying them. The card to your public library is free and the libraries are generally well stocked.



18. **If you have to buy books, check if you can buy them used.** Used books do not quite give the same feeling as leafing through the crisp pages of a brand new book, but considering that you can get used books for almost as much as half the price of a new book, it is a small price to pay.
19. **Price check before buying anything expensive.** For items that are expensive, do a price check before buying the item. If you can wait for a while you can track the prices and grab a great deal when it comes along.
20. **Avoid impulse buying.** Make it a habit to avoid impulse buying. Many of the things you want to buy do not seem all that necessary if you wait for a day or two. Waiting also means you can check prices and make an informed decision to buy it at the best possible price.
21. **Avoid watching television.** You won't have to pay for cable, and most commercials convince you to buy things you don't need; read instead!
22. **Avoid the vending machines.** Almost everything that is dispensed via vending machines has a huge markup (and is rarely healthy). If you suffer from snack attacks at school, consider bringing them from home.
23. **Keep your car as long as possible.** When possible, try to keep your car as long as possible. Find the balance between the money spent on repairs versus the monthly installment on another vehicle and choose to run your old car as long as the repair costs are low.
24. **Do regular scheduled maintenance on your vehicles.** An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure! Do not skimp on or forget to do regular oil changes. Remember to check the air in your tires often. And use the grade of fuel that the owner's manual recommends. These small acts can significantly lengthen the life of your car, giving you years of use.
25. **Ride your bike or carpool whenever possible.** Save gas money any way you can!
26. **If you like watching movies at the theater, go before 6:00 pm or go to the Dollar Theater.** Same movie, much lower price!
27. **Regulate your electric use.** When not in use, unplug electric appliances. Apparently, unplugging the TV instead of just switching it off can save a lot of electricity! When not in a room, switch off the lights and the fan. Use a programmable thermostat to control your A/C and heater usage. If that's too much, at least know what each appliance uses and unplug a few of them.
28. **Buy clothes at Goodwill or Plato's Closet.** Don't knock it till you try it...one man's trash is another man's treasure.
29. **Look for after-season clearance sales.** Buy Christmas gifts in January for the next year. Buy seasonal clothing at discount after the season is over. You'd be amazed at the deals you'll find.
30. **Ask for practical gifts for Christmas/birthdays/etc.** New tires for car, gift card to hair salon, gas card, etc.
31. **Adjust the thermostat.** Especially at night and when you're gone, turn the heat down to at least 65 degrees (winter) or turn up the A/C to at least 75 degrees (summer) to save energy. Consider wearing a sweatshirt around the house in the winter so you can keep the heat turned down.