

Cut Your Spending Checklist 1

BANKING

- Opt out of Overdraft Protection for my checking account(s).
- Check my payment accounts often to be sure I have enough to pay my auto pay bills. Set a few reminders in my phone to help with this.
- Set up auto pay for bills from my account to avoid late fees.
- Pay my credit card payment ontime. Set up an autopay or reminder to help.
- Only use my credit card for what I can pay off in full at the due date.
- Find and note the locations of ATMs where I can withdraw cash for free. Then when I need cash, I will know where to go.
- Shop around for a no fee checking account.
- Shop around for a high earning savings account.

Cut Your Spending Checklist 2

TRANSPORTATION AND TRAVEL

- Check what maintenance my engine is due for and either schedule an appointment or set a reminder in my phone.
- Inflate tires to proper pressure and set a reminder to check them monthly or bi-monthly.
- Shop around for gas. Identify the cheapest spots on my most frequented paths of travel.
- Think about how I am starting and stopping my car this week. Be intentional with starting and stopping gradually to maximize my miles per gallon.
- If I pay for parking at work or for other reasons regularly, check for a monthly or yearly pass at a reduced rate. Purchase or save up to purchase one.
- Look into financial incentives for carpooling or riding my bike. Seek out others at work to carpool with.
- If I ride the bus, lightrail, train, subway, or other transpot, check for monthly or annual passes that will save me money. Purchase or save up to purchase.
- Check my credit score prior to taking a car loan. If I wait a few months and work to raise my score, I may get a better rate on my loan.
- Check all airlines for cheap fares. Explore sites like Kayak.com or search for travel agents so I know where I can go when I am ready to travel.
- If I am military, explore travel discounts that I can access for my next trip.
- Travel light. Print out a few travel tips guides to help downsize on my packing for my next trip.
- Check which of my memberships offer travel discounts so I know where to compare prices when I am next planning travel.

Cut Your Spending Checklist 3

ENTERTAINMENT

- Find the best places in my area for free entertainment. Bookmark the best websites so I am able to check them often.
- Cut the cord on cable by moving to only using streaming media. Research which works best for my family's needs.
- Check bank and credit card statements for any monthly or yearly subscriptions I forgot about. Cancel them immediately.
- Get a library card. Then have a librarian show me all the services that I can access with my card, both digital and tangible.
- Check the local high school and college schedules for sports I enjoy watching. Find out the policies on the local community attending or how to get tickets.
- Look into the cheapest way to get movie tickets. Check with my membership club or look into the summer movies for families programs.
- Find a family or two that I can trade babysitting nights with. Get at least one on the calendar for each of us to have an adult night out without the cost of babysitting.
- Go through the house and find things I can sell. Start selling them to pay for your next fun family outing.
- Find all the free and low-cost summer activities I can. Visit Fablifenow.com for this or research in your local area.

Cut Your Spending Checklist 4

CLOTHING

- Check for clearance outlets near me so I know where to go when I need something new. Then of course head for the clearance racks first.
- Explore the thrift stores in my area. Find out what discount days or systems they have in place to save.
- Clean out my and my kids' clothes that don't fit but are still in great shape. Try to sell them to a near by resale shop or try my hand at consignment sales.
- Set a reminder in your phone to check the end of season clearance racks for clothes for my kids for next year.
- Ask other parents or explore myself for the shops that have the best deals for end of season or with coupons. Head there the next time my kids need a new outfit.
- Spend a little more for quality that will last as long as my kids will fit in the item, or several years for you.
- Identify some friends that might be interested in trading clothes. Host a trading day for adult or kids size clothes.
- Start buying more basic neutral pieces that will go with anything I have or purchase in the future. Add some bright colorful accessories to add interest.

Cut Your Spending Checklist 5

FOOD

- Buy coffee and an awesome travel mug to make coffee and bring it from home instead of stopping at Starbucks or Dutch Brothers.
- Plan and shop for lunches. Pack a lunch at least 4 times a week to reduce eating out.
- Create a meal plan for the week or month. Get my family involved in choosing the meals. Include a night for leftovers each week. Then, stick to it.
- Make a list and stick to it as I shop.
- Try online shopping for groceries to help me watch my total as I fill the cart. This will help me stick to a set budget amount.
- Brainstorm the items that are my family's staples, the ones I use all the time. Scan ads for low prices. Stock up when they are at their lowest.
- Buy only what I need. Explore freezing guides to understand what I can freeze to extend its life if I haven't been able to use it.
- Research money saving apps or plans. Try using it for a month to see if it works for you. Like Ibotta, or Kroger digital coupons.
- Use the current ads to plan my meals around sale meats and produce.
- Choose store brands instead of name brands, especially on staples.
- Plan a few easy options and stock the supplies in my fridge or pantry. This will save me on nights that I am running behind and keep me out of the drive through.
- Decide how I will limit my eating out. Times per week/month or to a dollar amount. Explore restaurants that have discounts or nights for kids free to stretch that dollar.

Cut Your Spending Checklist 6

SOCIAL LIFE INCLUDING PHONE

- Make a list of birthday, anniversary, and Christmas gifts I would like to give this year. Carry that list with me to scan clearance racks all year for possibilities.
- Discuss limits for spending on gifts with friends and family.
- Plan an outing or fun activity instead of giving gifts with my family or friends.
- Plan a potluck to socialize with friends instead of going to a restaurant.
- Make sure I am not paying for extras on any of my bills that you don't use or need.
- Keep my phone even after it is paid off. Put the money saved into savings to apply to the next upgrade. Try to hold out for a year or more.
- Check to see if you are bundling services I don't use and cancel them.
- Brainstorm free or low-cost outings for date nights or nights out with friends. Then I will have several suggestions for the next get together.

Cut Your Spending Checklist 7

INSURANCE

- Shop around and compare premiums for auto and home insurance if I haven't in a few years.
- Raise my insurance deductibles as my emergency savings is increased enough to cover them.
- Assess my needs for life insurance. If I have more than I need, reduce my policies.
- If I have a Whole Life policy or a policy sold as an investment, assess its value. Am I going to get out of it what I need or can I do better elsewhere?
- Consider dropping credit insurance for my installment loans when I have enough assets to cover the debt in the case of your death.
- Shop around and compare rates for my life insurance needs. Use a broker to see if I can get a better deal.
- At open enrollment for my company explore all the options, compare my out of pocket cost and consider all benefits carefully.
- Look into options for health insurance that I may not have considered before. Such as from [healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) or from healthshare companies.

Cut Your Spending Checklist 8

HOUSING AND UTILITIES

- Research refinancing my home. Is it a way to reduce my monthly payment and overall interest?
- If I am moving, consider the smallest home that will work for my needs, rather than the largest to reduce the cost of square feet I don't need.
- Look for a home to rent or buy as close to my workplace as possible to reduce the cost of my commute.
- Check with your energy provider(s) about the possibility of a low-cost energy audit to see where I can save in my home.
- Tightly caulk around windows, door frames, sill plates and wherever air might leak through exterior walls, floors or ceiling to keep the heat or cool air in the home.
- Purchase and hang window coverings that can block or let in the sunlight, depending on the season.
- Use a programmable thermostat to align with my lifestyle. Set it to drop or raise when I leave or return home, or when the peak and off peak hours change.
- Research my energy company's billing options. Make sure I am on the one that is cheapest for my useage.
- Raise or lower my thermostat a few degrees from where I normally keep it. Then use ceiling fans to maintain my comfort level.
- Change to all LED light bulbs in my home. If I can't do the whole house at once, plan to do it one room a month until they are all changed.
- Plant low water shade trees near my windows. Some energy companies provide them free to homeowners, check with mine for programs like this.
- Check with my energy company for any discounts or rate decreases I may be eligible for, especially if I have low income.