

How to Save Money: 22 Simple Tips

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By [Ramsey Solutions](#)



Do you ever feel like no matter how hard you try it's *still* impossible to find ways to save money? You mean well and try to spend less, but something *always* comes up. Life gets in the way—the car needs new tires, the teenager needs braces, the house needs a new roof—and just like that, saving money takes a back seat. Sound familiar?

The truth is, you don't need everything to magically line up perfectly before you start saving money. Spoiler alert: If you wait for the “right time” to roll around, it's never going to show up. The best time to start saving is *right now*.

The good news is there are *plenty* of straightforward ways to save money and breathe some fresh air (*and* fresh cash) into your budget. Here are 22 money-saving tips to help you tweak your spending and get on the fast track to saving money in no time.

22 Practical Ways to Save Money

1. Say goodbye to debt.

Monthly debt payments are the biggest money suck when it comes to saving. Debt robs you of your income! So, it's about time you get rid of that debt. The fastest way to pay off debt is with the [debt snowball method](#). This is where you pay off your debts in order from smallest to largest. Sounds kind of intense, right? Don't worry, it's more about behavior change than numbers. Once your income is freed up, you can finally use it to make progress toward your savings goals.

2. Cut down on your grocery budget.

Most people—after they do a budget—are shocked to find out how much they're actually spending at the grocery store each month. And if you're the average American family of four (with two kids 5 and under), you're probably spending around \$928.¹ Yikes! It's so easy to walk through those aisles, grabbing a bag of Oreos here and a few bags of chips there, and then top it off with the fun goodies at the register. But those little purchases (aka budget busters) add up quite a bit and end up blowing the budget every single month.



[Start budgeting with EveryDollar today!](#)

[Save money on groceries](#) by planning out your meals each week and taking a good look at what you already have in your pantry *before* you head to the store. Because why would you want to buy more of what you already have? And if you *really* want to stick to your list—leave the kids at home.

Want to save money *and* time? Try [online grocery pickup or delivery](#). Most major grocery stores offer it these days (sometimes even for free), and it can save a ton of money. Picking up your groceries gets rid of the temptation you would've had when you caught a whiff of those freshly baked chocolate chip cookies floating through the aisles. In other words, you're forced to stick to your list and avoid those impulse splurges.

3. Cancel automatic subscriptions and memberships.

Chances are, you're paying for multiple subscriptions like Netflix, Hulu, Spotify, gym memberships, trendy subscription boxes and Amazon Prime. It's time to cancel any subscriptions you don't use on the regular. And make sure that you turn off auto-renew when you make a purchase. If you cancel it and decide you can't go without it, subscribe again—but only if it fits into your new and improved budget.

And for those subscriptions you *do* want to keep around, think about sharing memberships with some family or friends. A lot of streaming services, like Netflix and Hulu, let you watch your favorite shows from two or more screens (with an upgraded account). That way, everyone wins—and saves!

4. Buy generic.

Hands down, one of the easiest ways to save money is to give name brands the boot. In most cases, the only thing that's better about brand-name products is the marketing. *I mean, look at that box! The logo is so fancy!* And that's about where it ends. Generic brands of medicine, staple food items (like rice and beans), cleaning supplies and paper products [cost far less than their marked-up brand-name](#) friends—and they work just as well too.

5. Cut ties with cable.

It's no secret that cable prices are rising like crazy. The average monthly price for cable TV is about \$217 a month including all the fees—which adds up to over \$2,600 a year!² Here's the good news: Cable isn't the only way to watch your favorite shows these days. Cut the cord and find out how to save big with [alternatives to cable](#) like network apps and streaming services.

But remember—don't go subscription service happy here. Only sign up for the streaming services you'll actually use. If you sign up for everything out there, you could end up actually spending *more* than cable!

6. Save money automatically.

Did you know that you can save money without thinking about it? Yup—you can set up your bank account to automatically transfer funds from your checking account into a savings account every month. If that sounds scary to you, you can also set up your direct deposit to automatically transfer 10% of each paycheck into your savings account. *Boom!*

7. Spend extra or unexpected income wisely.

When you get a nice work bonus (way to go!), inheritance or tax refund (or random stimulus!), put it to good use. And when we say “good use,” we aren't talking about adding that fancy new stamp to your stamp collection or even just putting it in the bank to camp out.

If you've still got debt in your life, you'll be better off using those funds to pay off your student loans or the balance on your credit card instead of stashing that money away. If you're debt-free, use those extra dollars to build up your [emergency fund](#)—you know, for emergencies.

Bonus tip: If you get large tax refunds every year, it's time to [adjust the withholding on your paycheck](#) so you can bring home even more money each month. Plus, you don't want to give the government any more of your money than you have to, right?

8. Reduce energy costs.

Did you know that you can save money on your electric bill just by making a few tweaks to your home? Start with some simple things like taking shorter showers (nope, we didn't say fewer), fixing leaky pipes, washing your clothes in cold tap water, and installing dimmer switches and LED lightbulbs.

While new, energy-efficient appliances are a great way to [save money on your electric bill](#), they're expensive! But if you work it into your monthly budget, you can save up and pay cash for those improvements over time.

9. Unsubscribe from emails.

Email marketers are really good at what they do. They know the irresistible temptation of a 24-hour sale or exclusive coupon. And talk about those flashy GIFs!

If you just can't resist shopping when you see a special offer, click the unsubscribe link at the bottom of the email. *Do it!* You'll be less tempted to spend, *and* your inbox will be a lot less cluttered. It's a win-win!

10. Check your insurance rates.

No, *really*. Did you know people save an average of \$700 when they have an Endorsed Local Provider (ELP) [check their insurance rates](#) for them? *\$700!* You owe it to yourself to at least have them look things over for you and see what savings they can dig up.

11. Pack lunch (and eat at home).

Get this—the average household spends about \$3,526 on food *outside* of the home each year.³ That's \$294 per month! Buying lunch a few times a week may seem harmless in the moment (especially when your favorite restaurant is walking distance from your office), but you can save quite a bit of money just by packing a lunch.

Not only that but a lot of times you can buy a solid week's worth of groceries for the same price as two dinner meals out. Instead, prepare your food at home and watch your savings pile up month after month.

12. Ask about discounts (and pay in cash).

You never know until you ask—and you should always ask. Next time you're getting tickets at a movie theater, museum or sporting event, check to see if they have any special discounts for seniors, students, teachers, military or AAA members. If not, never underestimate the negotiating power of cash!

13. Take advantage of your retirement savings plan.

If your employer offers a [401\(k\) match](#) and you aren't taking full advantage of it, you're missing out big time! Talk to your HR department to set up an account. But remember, you should wait until you're completely debt-free (except your mortgage) and have a fully funded emergency fund of three to six months *before* you start saving and investing for retirement.

14. Lower your cell phone bill.

If your monthly cell phone bill competes with your monthly grocery budget, it's time to find ways to cut back. [Save money on your cell service](#) by getting rid of extras like costly data plans, phone insurance and useless warranties. And don't be afraid to haggle with or completely switch your provider! It might require a little persistence and research, but the savings are worth it.

15. Try a spending freeze.

Don't buy any nonessential items for a week—or even a month! Think about it as a [contentment](#) challenge. While you're at it, take inventory of what you're grateful for each day. This should help kick your “want-itis” in the pants!

Make your spending freeze work by prepping meals with the food you already have, avoiding stores where you tend to impulse buy (did someone say Target dollar spot?), and saying no to anything that isn't a basic necessity.

16. DIY . . . everything!

Before you shell out the cash to pay for a new backsplash, fancy light fixture or bench, think about doing it yourself! Usually, the cost of materials and a simple Google or YouTube search will save you a ton of money on your [latest home project](#). Plus, you won't have to pay someone to do something you can most likely do yourself. But if you're the type that can't seem to hit the nail on the head, you might want to ask a friend or neighbor for help so you don't have to spend money on new drywall.

Oh, and when you need to do some DIY work (or any kind of work), borrow what you need from a friend or neighbor *instead* of going out and buying it.

17. Skip the coffee shop.

Ouch. This one is painful—we get it! But instead of spending \$5 on that daily latte, you can save money by just making your coffee at home. Listen, we're not saying you should only drink instant coffee (unless you're into that sort of thing). But even purchasing a bag of local beans from your neighborhood coffee shop and brewing it at home will [save you a lot of money](#) in the long run.

18. The library is your friend.

Before you click “add to cart” on that brand-new book, check your local library to see if you can borrow it! Most libraries also have audiobooks and digital copies of your favorite books for rent. It’s an easy way to get your reading in without breaking the bank.

We get it, though—because we love reading too! In our [National Study of Millionaires](#), 81% of millionaires surveyed read 11 or more books *per year*. Like Dave Ramsey always says, “Readers are leaders.”

Bonus tip: Check sites like Alibris and Thriftbooks for major deals on like-new or even well-loved books . . . for next to nothing!

19. Try a staycation.

When your goal is to save money now, a vacation is the worst thing you could spend your money on. Instead of whisking your family off to the Greek Isles, try being a [tourist in your own city](#). Not only will this save you hundreds (or potentially thousands) of dollars, but you can also explore your neighborhood with fresh eyes and have some fun while doing it.

20. Use cash back apps and coupons.

Nothing beats a good, old-fashioned 20% off coupon when you’re buying something. But did you know there are plenty of [cash back apps](#) out there to help your savings go even further? Check out Ibotta, Rakuten and Honey (a browser extension).

21. Refinance your mortgage.

With rates so [low these days](#), run the numbers to see if refinancing could help save you money and cut years of interest off your mortgage. Reach out to one of our trusted [Endorsed Local Providers](#) (ELPs) to see if a refinance is worth it for you.

22. Sell everything (that doesn’t bring you joy).

Marie Kondo has the right idea. Declutter the things in your home that you don’t need and are willing to let go of for the sake of your financial future. That vintage chair your aunt gave you? [Sell it](#). That crystal vase you found at an antique shop? Sell it. You’d be surprised at how much clutter you have in your home (that you don’t even use or think about). And the cash you can make on those things can be the difference between living paycheck to paycheck or *not*.

How to Start Saving Money

You'll only start saving money when you learn healthy money habits and let your future *needs* be more important than your current *wants*—aka when you make saving money a priority. So do it! You can stop the cycle of [living paycheck to paycheck](#) with a simple secret: Make a zero-based budget before the month begins.

A budget is all about being intentional. It helps you create a plan so you can see where your money is going and find out how much you can actually save each month. When you make a zero-based budget, you're giving every single dollar a name—or assigning it a job to do—before you save or spend it. Remember: It really doesn't matter how much money you make—what matters is how you *spend* and *save* the money you make.

Need help staying on top of your spending? Get our free budgeting app, [EveryDollar](#). It's the best way to keep track of all your expenses (and your savings) in one place!