



## Money Saving Tips

**Child Care:** Check into a government provision that allows individuals to take pre-tax money and set it aside in a flexible spending account to pay for child care expenses. (Cafeteria Plan)

Is there a YMCA or Boys/Girls Club that would be less expensive than a current child care provider?

Is having a family member watch the children an option?

**Clothing:** Look for bargains at consignment shops, thrift stores, etc.

Name-brand conscious individuals should shop at stores like TJ Maxx, Ross, etc.

Avoid going to the mall to pass time (usually you don't want what you haven't seen).

Don't buy new clothing items just because they are on sale, instead buy on a need basis.

Avoid buying clothing that requires dry cleaning.

**Medical:** Check into a government provision that allows individuals to take pre-tax money and set it aside in a flexible spending account to pay for medical expenses. (Cafeteria Plan)

Exercise, eat right, and practice good dental hygiene to help keep the medical bills down.

Consult with your doctor about generic medications vs. name brand medications.

Check with your insurance to see if you can receive maintenance medications at a discount if you order a 3 month supply by mail.

Stop smoking: benefits include better health and more \$ to apply elsewhere.

\*\*Information obtained from [www.consumercents.com](http://www.consumercents.com)

**Other:**

Utilize a holiday and travel budget planner to curb excess spending.

Avoid ATM usage.

Get a set amount of cash out at the beginning of each week and make it last.

Any leftover money at the end of the week should be added to your savings.

In a 2+ car household, consider selling one car and replace with public transportation or car pooling. This will reduce car payments, insurance, gas, and maintenance expenses.

Trade an expensive car in for a more economical one.

Determine the cheapest route to daily activities such as work and school. Try to avoid major, crowded highways (which could eat up gas).

**Entertainment:**

Renting a movie generally costs half as much as going to the movies.

Invite friends over to play board games, or to watch a movie or sporting event.

Do free stuff like: visit local parks and museums, attend public concerts, or going on picnics. There are also many websites that will provide local low/no cost event information.

Use your spare time to volunteer or be a mentor.

Considering getting a part time job (especially during seasonal sales) to increase cash flow and reduce idle time.

Take advantage of library resources (rent books, CD's, movies vs. buying, free internet access etc.)

Join a company or community sponsored sports team.

Have a romantic "date" at home. Be creative.

\*\*Information obtained from [www.consumercents.com](http://www.consumercents.com)

**Eating Out:**

EAT AT HOME.

Bring lunch to work (also a good way to use leftovers).

Go out to eat only on special occasions.

Use coupons (buy one entrée - get one free, 15% off bill, etc.)

If you have children and must eat out, choose restaurants where kids eat free.

**Groceries:**

Use coupons, and buy only what you use; don't buy just because you have a coupon.

Shop lowest price stores (avoid convenience stores)

Prepare low budget meals (spaghetti vs. steak)

Plan meals in advance, and then stick to your shopping list. This helps avoid impulse purchases.

Limit trips to the grocery store to no more than once a week, and try to do with out items you forget.

Eat or Freeze leftovers for another meal.

Don't shop on an empty stomach, or when you are tired, depressed or stressed.

Review cash register receipts for errors (especially to ensure sale items were priced correctly).

Don't buy non-food items at the grocery store (ie: toothpaste, beauty products, cleaning products).

Spend as little time as possible in the store; the more you look, the more you buy.

Compare prices on different brands of the same item on weight rather than package size.

Plant a garden if feasible.

**“Nobody ever wrote down a plan to be broke. Broke happens when you don't have a plan.”** *Larry Winget Author of “You're broke because you want to be!”*

\*\*Information obtained from [www.consumercents.com](http://www.consumercents.com)