

A Budget Built Around You!

A budget can provide clarity. A detailed plan gives you control. Take command, reach your goals, and reduce stress with a budget. Get started now with these strategies and tips.



BUDGETING STRATEGIES

- **50/30/20 Rule**
Focus on proportions. Start by putting 50% of your after-tax income toward your needs (housing, groceries, bills, etc.), then allocate 30% to your wants (eating out, entertainment, subscriptions, etc.), and then put 20% toward savings. This strategy is a great exercise to help you differentiate between needs and wants. If your needs make up more than 50%, don't worry! You can adjust. Reduce your more flexible wants to put more toward your needs...or boost your savings.
- **Reverse Budgeting**
This strategy prioritizes saving. Start by allocating money to your savings goals. Use the rest to fund your needs, and then your wants.
- **Zero-Based Budgeting**
This method increases accountability. Assign every dollar a specific expense to create a detailed blueprint for your money. Allocating every dollar keeps you mindful of the choices you are making. If you want to spend more on one expense, you must justify realigning funds from another.
- **Envelope Budgeting**
Keep your spending under control. Divide your money into envelopes and label each with a spending category. Once an envelope is empty, you can't spend any more until payday. This is great for flexible expenses that tend to get out of control. (Envelope budgeting works well with cash and physical envelopes, but you can also use an app to manage your spending digitally.)

Try out each of the strategies to find what works best for you. They can be used separately or in combination with each other.

TIPS FOR STICKING TO YOUR BUDGET

- **Plan**
Set aside time to get it right. Start by making sure you know what's coming due. Often, irregular expenses tend to get left out. Review your calendar for any upcoming social activities, appointments, insurance premiums, and potential seasonal expenses. The more accurate and realistic your budget is, the easier it is to stick to the plan.

- **Keep Track**

In tandem with your budgeting strategy, keep track of money coming in (income) and going out (spending). Write it down, review it, and make adjustments on a regular basis. If you have less income or are spending more, look at your plan and reallocate funds to make sure your essentials are covered. If you have more money coming in or are spending less, use those funds to boost your savings.

- **Automate**

Take willpower out of saving and paying bills by automating the process. Set up direct deposit or an automatic transfer to savings and pay yourself first. This prioritizes your goals and makes it easy to save consistently without having to think about it. You can also set up auto-pay for your bills. This will ensure your obligations are met, avoiding penalties.

Budgeting takes practice, and the more consistent you are, the easier it'll get. Remember, this is your plan! You are in control and can adjust it as needed. You get to make the decision (not your money) to create the life you want. With a little support and knowledge, you can reach your financial goals with a good solid plan in place.

Resources

- Explore [Creating a Budget](#) through our Online Learning Center for more articles, videos, and tools to help you get started.
- Meet with a [Financial Coach](#) for extra support and guidance.

