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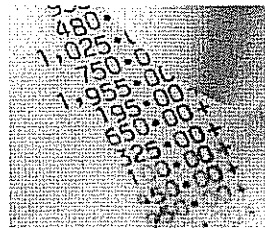
7 Simple Ways to Save Money

By Alina Dizik

While figuring out what to cut out of your budget isn't always simple, there are plenty of ways to save money without giving up the services you enjoy. For example, having annual newspaper subscriptions or being part of loyalty travel programs can sometimes help save money in the long run. "Look at your activities and then scale back," suggests Morris Armstrong, a Connecticut based financial planner. Here are some other ways to save cash on pricey services.

Editor's Picks

- The Best Bills to Pay Last
- 10 Money Lessons From the Great Depression
- Back to Basics: 7 Easy Ways to Save \$100 a Week
- Tame Your Credit Card Interest With Transfers
- 4 Ways to Beat Your Fear of Inflation



Reassess Your Workout

Annual gym memberships can add up to thousands of dollars per year, but local community centers often have deals where you can exercise for less than half the price, says personal finance expert Harrine Freeman, who suggests logging onto www.ymca.net to find nearby alternatives. Or, save on annual gym fees by signing up for 24-Hour Fitness pass available through your Costco membership, which lowers gym fees to \$199 for the entire year.

Bring Lunch

While you shouldn't completely avoid eating out with your co-workers, bringing your own lunch (and coffee) can help cut the high costs of restaurant service or that afternoon Dunkin' Donuts run, says Armstrong. "Brownbag it, and make your own coffee and bring it in a mug – savings add up," he says.

Skip the Salon

Since toenails are usually covered up in the winter, certified financial advisor Lauren Lindsay says frequent nail appointments may not be as necessary. "Skip pedicures in the winter if (you) live somewhere cold," she says. Or opt for a home pedicure kit, to keep your toes sparkling until summer.

Pay in One Sum

To keep costs low, avoid taking on new credit cards, repayment plans or anything else that can tack on hidden fees. Much of the time, store installment plans can leave you paying more for an already high-priced item. "If you need something, see if it's cheaper to pay an annual amount as opposed to monthly," suggests Armstrong. In an uncertain economy, prepaying for services can also help you maintain a healthy budget.

Cut Laundry Costs

For many in the corporate world, having work shirts pressed at the dry cleaners can tack on \$1 to \$2 per shirt. Instead, Lindsay recommends buying low-wrinkle dress shirts, which last longer between cleaning. "Invest in no-iron shirts, like the kind you can get at the Brooks Brothers outlet, (which) you can wash at home," she explains.

Check the Bills

While paying the bills is often an automatic monthly task, checking to make sure expenses are up to date is important. For example, if you're only using your cell phone to make long distance calls, canceling the long distance option on your landline can help you save money.

Today's Horoscope

Gemini (May 21 - June 21)



If you're taking the day off, welcome to the world of after-Christmas sales. If you're rejoining the workforce or trading crowd, make a new commitment to your moneymaking goals. Look at companies or economies whose operating rate is poised for a big increase. That's where you want your investment dollars to go.

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