Top Tips on Managing your Budget

cyngor ar bopeth | citizens advice | Rhondda Cynon Taf

A budget is a key tool to managing your day-to-day finances.

Creating a budget helps you:

- Keep track of where your money is going
- Avoid going into unmanageable debt
- Take control of your finances and decide if you can afford something
- Avoid unnecessary interest costs that often come with using overdraft and other forms of borrowing money
- Work out how much money you can save creating a ‘safety net’ to manage life events more effectively i.e new home, having a baby, starting a new job

What do I need to create a budget?

You will need to gather much information as possible around your household income and expenses. It is useful to split these into two categories

1. Income

This covers any money that is going in to your account such as income from work, benefit payments, money from a friend or family member. Anything that is adding value to your bank account.

2. Outgoings

This covers any money that is coming out of your account such as:

- Bills – energy bills, rent/mortgage, council tax etc
- Paying back debts
- Food costs – remember to include takeaways and eating out!
- Clothing costs
- Childcare
- Entertainment i.e streaming services, trips out
- Personal expenses – i.e haircuts, purchasing cosmetics
- Savings

What information do I need to gather?

- Bank statements (for tracking spending habits, tracking ingoing and outgoings)
- Payslips
- You could keep a spending diary to monitor your spending

The more accurate this information is, the more accurate your budget will be.

We have attached a budgeting sheet at the end of this document. Please fill this out and reach out to an adviser if you need further support around your budget.

What does your budget tell you?

If you have money left over, you should try to save this for emergencies, or to go towards a goal of yours i.e saving for a new car.

Money Helper has a savings calculator which is very useful in planning for the future. Click here for the savings calculator.

These websites are good place to start when you're looking for a savings account:

- Which?
- MoneySavingExpert
- MoneyHelper.org.uk

If you have no money left after accounting for your outgoings, or if you spend more than you have coming in, then you are in a deficit budget.

Becoming aware of this is the first step of taking control of your finances. We can help to find ways for you to maximise your income, or cut down on costs.

Cutting down on your bills and spending, including cost of living support

Information and support available for the cost of living

- Help if you're on a low income
- Cost of living survival kit
- Everyday money

Housing and Council Tax

- Can you cut down your mortgage costs
- Can you get help with your rent costs
- Check if you can pay less Council Tax
- Could you ask your local authority to pay Council Tax over 12 months instead of 10
- Council Tax & Government grants

Gas, Electricity and Water

- Can you save money on your gas and electricity
- Could you get any grants, discounts or extra help from your supplier
- Save money on your gas and bills
- Money saving expert energy tips
- Heat the human not the home
- Energy at home
- Can you get help paying your water bills
- Check if you can save money by changing to a water meter

Insurance - Shop around for the best insurance deals for all of your insurance; including your house (building and contents), life, car, travel and health. Check if you still need your insurance and whether it gives you more cover than you need.

- Money Helper insurance tips
- Money Saving Expert insurance tips

Banking and financial services - The linked information covers types of bank accounts, choosing a bank account, banking problems and more.

- Citizens Advice
- Money Helper
- Money Saving Expert
- Getting independent financial advice

Landline, TV, internet and mobiles

- Can you get a better deal by switching provider
- If you're on benefits, you can check if you qualify for a social tariff
- Money Saving Expert - Broadband and TV
- Money Saving Expert - Mobiles

Travel

- Check if you can get help with travel for NHS treatment
- If you travel by train, can you get a railcard
- or a refund for a cancelled or late train?
- Can you split your train ticket to save money?
- Check whether you can reduce the cost of travel if you're disabled
- Money Helper - Cutting travel costs
- Money Saving Expert - Travel

Health - Can you save money on prescriptions? If you're on benefits you may also get help with health costs, dental treatments and sight tests

NHS low income scheme
Help with health costs
If you're pregnant or have young children, check if you can get free vouchers to buy food and milk

Budgeting - Use budgeting tools, planners and guides, including calculators that help you plan for life changes, such as saving, planning for a baby or retirement, or planning for Christmas

- Citizens Advice - work out your budget
- Money helper - budgeting
- Money Saving Expert
- Money Helper - tools and calculators
- Money Saving Expert - Shopping

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Budget Sheet

Registered Charity No. 1074801 Company Limited by Guarantee No. 3717793
Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority FRN: 617707

Address:
Postcode:

Frequency of payments: ____________________
(Monthly, Fortnightly, Annually, Weekly etc…)

Income	**Amount**	**Expenditure**	**Amount**
Salary or wages *(take home)*	£	Rent/Mortgage *(Please circle)*	£
Partners salary or wages *(take home)*	£	Ground Rent/Service Charge	£
Other earnings	£	Secured Loans	£
Universal Credit	£	Council Tax	£
Job Seekers Allowance	£	TV Licence	£
Income Support	£	Gas	£
Working Tax Credit	£	Electricity	£
Child Tax Credits	£	Water	£
Child Benefit	£	Maintenance/Child Support	£
Employment & Support Allowance	£	Public Transport/Taxi's *(Please circle)*	£
Personal Independence Payment	£	Hire Purchase *(vehicle)*	£
Carers Allowance	£	Car Insurance	£
Housing Benefit	£	Car Tax	£
Council Tax Reduction	£	MOT/Ongoing Maintenance	£
Other Benefits/Tax Credits	£	Fuel, Parking and Toll Charges	£
State Pension	£	School Uniform	£
Private/Work Pension	£	After School Clubs/Trips	£
Other Pensions	£	Pension Payments	£
Maintenance/Child Support	£	Life Insurance	£
Boarders/Lodgers	£	Building and Contents Insurance	£
Maintenance/Child Support	£	Home Phone, Internet Packages etc..	£
Non-Dependent Contributions	£	Mobile Phone	£
Student Loans/Grants	£	Hobbies, Leisure & Sport	£
Total:	£	Gifts	£
Additional Information:		Pocket Money	£
		Groceries *(including pet food)*	£
		School Meals & Meals at Work	£
		Laundry & Dry Cleaning	£
		Alcohol	£
		Smoking Products	£
		House Repairs & Maintenance	£
		Clothing & Footwear	£
		Hairdressing	£
		Toiletries	£
		Total:	£

Contact Us

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If you require this pack in a larger font, please contact us.