

Budgeting Basics Workshop

Our Top Tips for Budgeting

1 Start clean. If you have a budget that isn't working for you, don't be afraid to start over with the basics. What are your monthly living expenses? How much do you want to save/set aside for retirement? Set some categories and make a plan for how you're going to spend each dollar.

Prioritize debt. No matter your financial situation, prioritize paying off debt. It's a good idea to pay off debts with the highest interest rates first. Even if you think you can only pay minimums, you'll save a ton in interest by paying off as much as you can each month.

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3 Know your weaknesses and adjust accordingly. For example, if eating out a lot is a temptation, set aside a designated amount of cash for that each week. Once that cash is gone, you know you've reached your budget limit. Over time, try and decrease the amount you put aside.

Take your savings off the top. Instead of saving what's left over each month, save first. An easy way to do this is to set up a monthly automatic transfer to your savings account. This way you know your money is being saved before you even have a chance to spend it.

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5 Find a tool that works for you. Whether you use an app that tracks your spending, or you prefer to keep your checkbook reconciled, get a method that you find easy to use and can stick to. Also set up a regular time to go over your budget whether that's weekly or monthly.

Further Reading

Your Guide to Financial Planning - Step 1

<http://blog.centralnational.com/2017/10/financial-planning-step-1/>

Don't Fall Into these Money Mistakes

<http://blog.centralnational.com/2017/09/dont-fall-for-money-mistakes/>

