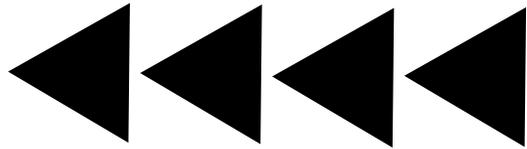


TIPS & TRICKS



Home

Furnishings/Repair

- Utilize discount stores & garage sales to find great deals. But go in with specifics on what you need so you don't get sucked into impulse purchases
- Facebook many times has people trying to get rid of furniture- many times very gently used

Rent/ Mortgage

- Don't buy a home before you're ready. An apartment is a great alternative that allows you financial flexibility and less responsibility so you can focus on paying off credit card & consumer debt before taking on the responsibility of a mortgage
- If you have at least 20% equity check with your mortgage company to make sure you are not still paying private mortgage insurance- you are no longer required to have it
- Single? GET A ROOMMATE! Don't want someone in your space? Think of it as a tax free second job that pays you 1/2 your rent and utilities. Community builds fruit of the spirit!
- Don't buy the extra bedroom for the one time you have visitors! No need to pay for an extra room that is empty 355 days of the year

Home Insurance

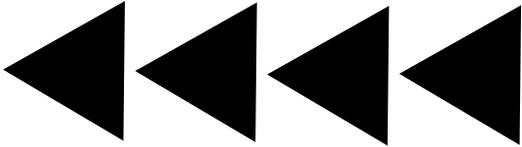
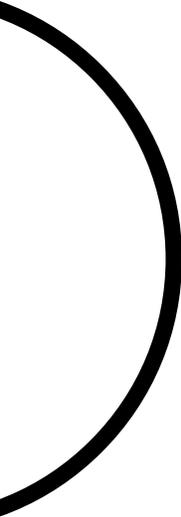
- As with all insurance. Shop around!! It is worth your time to make sure you have the best deal on your insurance

Property Tax

- Know how to contest your property assessment. It is fairly easy to do and all information is available on the web.

Home Services

- Look into going in together with neighbors when shopping for services. Sometimes you can get better deals if you go to a vendor with multiple clients.



TIPS & TRICKS

Automobile

Many car purchases are made out of emotion, frustration with repairs, a craving for something new, or because the car looks out of date. Examine yourself for these motivations before stepping on the car lot.

Car Payment

- Make sure you do considerable research before purchasing a car. The best deal is a low-cost used car
- The smaller the car, the more economical to operate. Do not fall into the illusion that you need more space than you actually do when driving.
- Identify your budget for your car before you do any shopping- budget for gas, insurance and upkeep & identify what your price is (Ideally you are paying cash! If not get your price as low as possible and finance the least amount possible and get to snowballing!)
- After you've paid off your car resist the urge to buy a new one. Your greatest value in your car is in years 5-10. Continue making car payments to yourself and in 3-5 years you can buy a replacement car for cash!

Auto Insurance

- Shop Around!
- Ensure you are not over-insured – if your car is over 5 years old consider a higher deductible – kbb.com can give you the average private party and trade in value- if your annual payment is more than 10 % of this value and your emergency fund is fully funded (enough to replace a car in emergency) you can consider dropping your coverage to liability
- Drive defensively & following traffic rules! While accidents do happen by driving safely you can reduce the likelihood that you are in one.

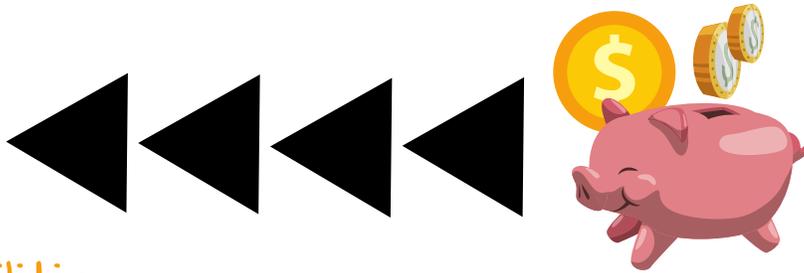
Gas/ Fuel/ Tolls

- Use the correct fuel
- Drive speed limit- driving over 60 MPH will burn more gas
- Keep your tires inflated
- Carpool
- Many gas stations are rewarding loyalty with gas discounts- be wary of spending money to get "points" but if you are already purchasing groceries somewhere, utilize points to get \$ off gas
- Get Off the TOLL ROAD!! Plan ahead and take your time on the road!

Service/Parts

- Develop a relationship with your car servicer
- Consider putting together a car maintenance "co-op" families that come together to help each other perform routine car maintenance.

TIPS & TRICKS



Utilities

Home Phone

- Many do without a landline at home today. Identify if it is better for you to not have home phone service at all
- Look into VOIP and other alternatives to your traditional phone line
- Identify if you really need call-waiting and caller id on your land line- especially if you have mobile phones in the home.

Internet

- Shop around and understand your internet speed needs.
- If you have a cell phone is it more affordable to use a hot spot as needed

Cell Phone

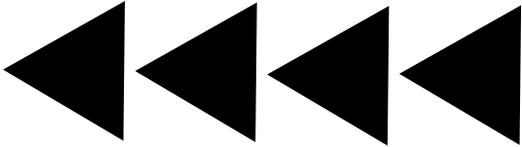
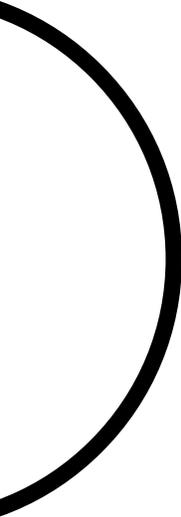
- Know your usage and get a plan that fits your usage. Unlimited plans are not always necessary. Identify if you could fit your usage within a capped plan.

Television

- Cable is not the only way for entertainment. Investigate new web based services like HULU, Netflix, Youtube, Disney+
- Water/Sewage
- Water your lawn only 1x per week
- Shorten your showers. Avoid daydreaming in the shower
- Don't keep the water running while brushing teeth or washing dishes. Save money & the planet!

Gas/Electric

- Air conditioning and heat- consider turning up/down your thermostat 2-3 degrees to save considerably on your electric and gas bill.
- Close blinds during the day in the summer to keep heat out & keep them open in the winter.
- Unplug items that are not being used. If it has a red light its using electricity
- Wash clothes on cold to save on water heating costs
- Utilize fans during the summer

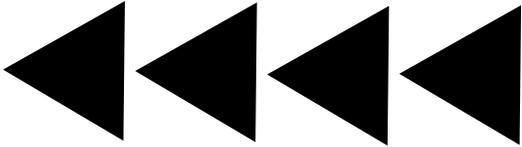
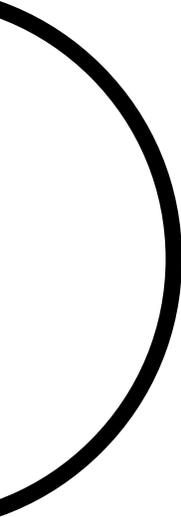


TIPS & TRICKS

Food

Groceries

- Shop your pantry and refrigerator first! Do you have food aging or going bad? Build your meal plan around those foods.
- Prepare weekly/monthly menus to develop your needs for the week.
- Always use a written list of needs & stick to it. Be aware that stores are built to try to drive impulsive purchases. Utilize circulars to understand what is on sale and build your list and meal plan around sale items.
- Avoid going to the store multiple times a week to pick up “one little thing” many time your “one little thing” multiplies on you.
- Use a calculator in the store to help you keep a running total of your purchases as you place in the cart.
- Reduce or eliminate paper products
- Fresh Produce – ethnic grocery stores scan bank great deals as well as buying fruits and vegetables that are in season (see in season sheet)
- Cereal- goes on sale frequently - try to wait & stock up during sales
- Bread & Baked Goods- are discounted later in the evening- speak to the baker to get a sense of what time they mark down for the evening
- Canned Vegetables & Soup – check out stores that get “close out items” think Dollar channel (Big Lots Dollar Stores) they get deals when manufacturers have too much inventory.
- Avoid wasted food! If you buy in bulk identify how you are going to ensure food doesn't go bad.
- Package leftovers into serving sizes that can be easily taken for lunches. By planning your lunches and bringing from home you can save hundreds of dollars a month.
- Store brands- identify items where you can switch to store brands where you can save 20-40% from name brands
- Use manufacturer coupons if you were going to purchase the item anyways.
- Ready to eat food has considerable mark-ups. Learn to cook yourself and prepare your items for savings and a healthy alternative to processed foods.
- Leave children and hungry spouses at home if they distract from the list.



TIPS & TRICKS

Food continued..

Fast Food/ Coffee Shops

- Plan & bring your lunch
- Identify when the “meal deal” is not the best deal. Substitute water instead of sodas. Buy larger sizes and split for items like French fries.
- Make your own coffee- stay out of specialty coffee shops!

Restaurants

- Split meals where possible
- Order water, Restaurants make most of their money on the drinks, save money & calories!
- If you're going to a restaurant to socialize, eat first at home and plan to either have a beverage only, small snack, or fellowship only!
- Talk to your friends about other free places to hang out!
- Identify restaurants where your family is able to get in and out within your budget, utilize this to pick restaurants during different seasons
- Take a fast from restaurants for a season. Get creative in the kitchen!
- Remember you're not going to starve if you wait until you get home! (Think about Esau selling his birthright! Don't sell yours!)
- If you are a veteran or a senior find out which restaurants may offer discounts for you!

TIPS & TRICKS

Kids

Baby Supplies

Consider store brands or amazonmom subscribe and save programs that can get you discounts on key items like diapers & baby food.

Babysitter & Daycare

Know your budget & shop around.

- For babysitters consider a co-op with friends where you give each other date nights by sitting for each other every other week

Kids Activities

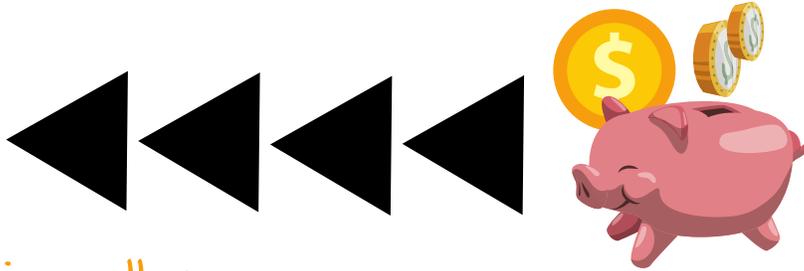
- Don't feel compelled to have your child in everything.

Toys

Toy swap with other kids! Many times this refresh of the toy box is all kids need.

- Don't yield to in store pressure from kids. Either don't bring them in the store, or begin to set expectations that they will not be purchasing items in store (and stick to it).
- Have them budget their own allowance (even if its \$1 a week) to save up for what they'd like to buy.

TIPS & TRICKS



Miscellaneous

Hair

- Learn how to do your hair in between appointments. It is never to late to learn!
- Make sure your daughters know how to do their own hair so you don't make them dependent on a hairstylist early in life.
- Go longer between chemical treatments.
- Beauty schools give great deals for the more adventurous!

Books/ Movies

- Library Library Library!!! It is your best friend I promise!

Clothing

- Make a written list of clothing needs that you can utilize to shop during off-seasons
- Select outfits that can used in multiple occasions. Avoid faddish clothes and select things that will last from season to season
- Avoid buying things just because they are a "deal" if its not in the budget do not buy!
- Consider full cost of garment, including specialty cleaning costs.
- Share! Identify people with whom you can do clothing swaps.

Amusement

- Investigate your local parks & Rec activities
- Get creative. Most of the time the people are more important than the activity. Think outside of the box on how to create fun adventures without breaking the bank
- For special holidays (anniversaries/birthdays) Make the budget a fun part of the activity "ie. Most fun we can have for \$20 or less"

Vacation

- Plan vacations during off –seasons and be flexible on dates
- Camping vacations can be great & affordable
- Consider stay-cations and locations off the beaten path!
- Consider taking vacations with multiple families where you can pool resources

Health & Fitness

- Practice preventative medicine. Rest, exercise & nutrition can save you thousands of dollars over your lifetime by helping you avoid preventable (and expensive) diseases
- Discuss drug costs with dr. as they are prescribing. Ask for any coupons they may have for name brands
- Understand you plan and identify the best route for drug purchase
- Mail order pharmacies have great deals on ongoing medicine
- Utilize a HSA if it is available through your medical plan