BUDGETING: A Visual Guide to How Small Cutbacks Lead to Great Savings

Don’t be discouraged by the word “budgeting” — it doesn’t mean your wallet is an inflexible medium which must be split into appropriately-sized “piles.” Your budget is actually able to expand and stretch in surprising ways. Many daily and so-called “small” purchases add up from chump change to wads of cash over the course of a year. In fact, a household could save more than $8,800 a year by adopting the following suggestions. Here’s a clever look at frivolous spending and some convenient alternatives you can use to save you a lot of money in the long run.

**BEDROOM**
The average U.S. family spends $1,881 on clothing annually.

- Consider shopping at Goodwill; you can often find high-end items normally priced around $75 for as little as $2 to $5.
- When shopping, purpose cheaper stores first before visiting the higher-end stores. Like the brand obsession — looking good even with the name on it. Buy clothes out of season. Shop for bathing suits at the end of the summer, t-shirts at the end of winter. Many out-of-season products are marked down between 30%-70%.

**ATTIC**

A ceiling fan uses 50 watts will save $150 a year by selectively dragging winds, and simultaneously reduce their capture carbon emissions by 1,877 pounds.

Isolating your home will save between 4%-6% of homeowners utility bills on cooling and heating.

**BATHROOM**

- A low-flow showerhead will save about $15 a year.

- Cleaning supplies are name-brand. Generic rivals are 25% cheaper and cost of $5.97. Compare 2 Florist Bunch flowers cost $8.49 and 75% of the cost of a florist's stock.

- A 2-liter or 3-liter bottle filled with water and placed in the toilet acts like a water filter, it is also 40% effective.

**KITCHEN**

- Make your own coffee.
- A cup of joe at a corner café can run $3. Coffee addicts can spend up to $500/year, $120/month or $4,360/year.
- Home-brewed coffee costs about $0.30 per cup (2-4 cups).

**DINING ROOM**

- The average person spends $2,686 a year eating out in restaurants.

- Limit yourself to eating and drinking one meal a week and save $427 a year in alcohol consumption.

- Hold back pranks and drinks with friends. Now you’re not paying tipping for someone else’s service.

**LIVING ROOM**

- The average American family spends $6,366 a year on entertainment.

- Appliances sap electricity even when turned off.
- Laptop charger wastes $1.30 a month.
- 13 devices using 3 watts each wastes $2 a month.

**BASEMENT**

- Insulating your hot water heater with a 4 in. thick blanket can save up to $10 a month.
- Remember to leave holds for the temperature drops as to not cost your inheritance.

- Keeping your thermostat below 67°F can save you $110 a year.

**HOME OFFICE**

- Scutulate your monthly bills. What don’t you use?

- Cell phone
  - Calling an uninsured unlimited service (internet access, text messages) saves $20 per month each.

- Car insurance
  - Save $300 a year—ever more if you factor in long-distance charges.

- Gym membership
  - You couldn’t pay $500 a year for a gym membership, exercise at home for free.

- Time to quit smoking
  - Save $1,800 a year.

- Garage

- Gasoline and motor oil costs an average of $2,384 a year.

- If your commute is 25 miles, stop smogging for half that time over 10 miles will save $378 a year.

- A typical garage changes 25 per year changes $400.

- If you dive it yourself, you’ll save $1,000 a year.