



Budgeting Booklet

Your Name

Support Worker Name

Support Worker Contact Number

Support Worker Email Address

Welcome to your budgeting booklet

We thought we'd share some advice and suggestions that we've gathered to hopefully help you budget during the Coronavirus and beyond this!

There are contact numbers and links to websites within the following pages that might be useful and you have your support worker contact details on the front page, please do call if you have any issues or if you just want to chat. If you would like to email and perhaps request some additional budgeting information or worksheets for your support worker to send over by email then please do.

Consider others around you that may be able to support you and if you are able to support others, it really helps to look after each other during difficult and unsettled times.

We hope you find this booklet useful and that it makes a real difference to the way you feel about and manage your money.



Budgeting Basics

Get organised!

The first step to managing your money is getting organised, this means gathering information from your bank statements or online accounts, so that you are clear about exactly how much money you have coming in each week/fortnight/month and how much is going out. You need to keep this information somewhere safe so that you can refer back to it when needed. It's a good idea to get yourself a folder to keep your paper documents in. Separate the folder into easy to find sections and take copies of those documents that you may need to send off. If Maths is not your thing, buy yourself a small calculator to keep with your folder (or use the calculator on your phone). Keep your receipts in your folder too, this is a helpful way to check your spending against your bank statements. Getting organised creates a sense of readiness and being in control – vital attributes when deciding to face up to your money situation.

Create a budget and plan ahead

Writing down how much money you have coming in and going out each month gives you peace of mind that you can manage with what you have or shows you what you need to change (this is when asking for help can be really useful). Have a go at completing the budget sheet in this booklet to get you started. Remember that your budget will change from one month to the next due to variations in bills or may be extra birthdays or events such as Christmas. Plan ahead for these in your budget and review your spending as you go so that you don't get caught out and start to get into debt.

Be honest!

Honesty is the best policy – you need to be honest with yourself about where your money is going and if you're unsure, use our spending diary for the next few weeks to track your spending habits. You'll be amazed at how quickly small bits of spending each day, add up to big spending over a week or even a month. If take-out food is your guilty pleasure, your spending diary will not only help you to see how much you are spending on this, but also help you to see how you can start to make some quick and easy changes to get your spending back on track.

Visualise your goals

Having money goals can really help to motivate you to make changes around your daily spending habits. Your goal might be to have your own place or go on holiday, create a vision board and keep this somewhere you can see every day to keep you motivated and on track. This is a cheap, easy and creative way to keep your dreams alive.

Do what's right – not what's easy!

We know it's not easy saying no to ourselves and others, especially when we are going through tough times, however if you want to get control of your money, you need to start setting limits on your spending behaviour. This might mean you need to access additional support to help you manage the bits of your life that you are struggling with. That's okay. The most successful people in life ask for help, so go ahead, ask for help and make your future self proud!



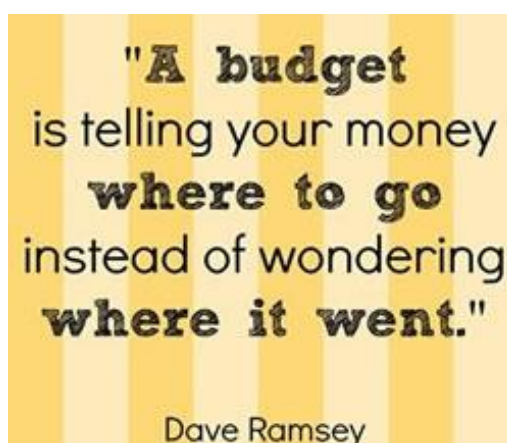
Why Budget?

Money worries are one of the biggest causes of stress in our lives. We don't need to go into all the negative consequences of having money worries - we all know them, because we've all felt them at some point, but it is worth remembering you're not the only one going through this.

Keeping a weekly/fortnightly/monthly budget isn't easy, it requires motivation and determination to monitor and keep on top of it all, but the pay-off is worth it! Having a budget and sticking to it, helps you to:

- Plan your spending
- Reduce your stress
- Reduce your anxiety
- Create stability in your life
- Be a good role model to others
- Improve the quality of your sleep
- Increase your confidence and self esteem
- Increase your motivation to make other changes in your life
- Improve relationships with others
- Pay off debt
- Improve your credit rating
- Create savings
- Plan for the future
- Feel hopeful and happy

Taking time now to write up a budget plan and stick to it could change your life forever. It only takes a short amount of time to do and with help from others can be even quicker. Thinking about change is good, but it's even better when you take action and do something. So, work through this booklet and take back control of your life.



Essential vs Non-Essential Spending

Most of us would say we know the difference between essential and non-essential spending, so let's test your knowledge! In the table below, identify if the item is essential or non-essential, explain your answer and then list the order in which **you** prioritise these items. This is a good task to complete with your support worker to help you reflect on the decisions you are making around your money.

	Essential or non-essential	Why do you think this?	List in order of priority
Pair of trainers/footwear			
Food shopping			
TV license			
Take away food/drinks			
Rent/top up service charge			
Phone bill			
Bus/train costs			
Cigarettes			
Council tax			
Substances			
Toiletries			
Clothes			

Here is a definition of essential and non-essential spending just as a reminder.

Essential spending is expenses that are essential to meet our **needs** e.g. food, shelter, warmth. It also includes payments you have a legal obligation to meet such as court fines.

Non-essential spending is expenses that are not essential to meet needs. They are the things we **want** and things that would be nice to have, but are not essential.

Questions for reflection: Are you spending your money wisely? Are you paying for/buying essential expenses before any non-essential purchases? Have you got your priorities right?

Budget Sheet

Use this budget sheet to plan your money so you can prioritise your spending. Decide whether to work your money out weekly, fortnightly or monthly. Ask for help from your support worker if you need it.

<p>To convert weekly numbers to monthly numbers £..... per week x 52 weeks (multiply) <u>/ 12 months (divide)</u></p> <p style="text-align: right;">= figure per calendar month</p>	<p>To convert monthly numbers to weekly numbers £..... per month x 12 months (multiply) <u>/ 52 weeks (divide)</u></p> <p style="text-align: right;">= figure per week</p>
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Money coming in (every week/fortnight/month):

Income	Money coming in weekly/fortnightly/ monthly	Work out the total per week/month/fortnight
Universal Credit ESA/JSA		
Wages		
Housing Benefit/costs		
PIP/other benefit		
Other		
Total income for the week/fortnight/month:		

Money going out in (every week/fortnight/month):

Spending	How much needs to be paid/saved and how often?	Work out the total per week/month/fortnight
Rent		
Rent top up/service charge		
Council Tax		
Gas		
Electricity		
TV license		
Water		
Food		
Travel		
Telephone/internet		
Cigarettes/leisure activities		
Insurance		
Debts/other payment plans		
Total spending for the week/fortnight/month:		

Recording Spending

Why keep a spending diary?

Have you ever thought, where did all my money go? Do you sometimes panic and think that you've lost a tenner? We can easily lose track of what we have spent and on what, so keeping a diary gives you an accurate picture of what you spend your money on.

How?

Over a period of at least a week - or even better a month – note down everything you spend. You could use a smartphone if you have one – there are plenty of free apps to help, but a low-tech pen and paper works just as well. Hold onto all your receipts, and check bank and credit card statements for non-cash payments.



	What I bought/paid for today e.g. sandwich, phone credit (list everything separately)	Time of day? AM/PM	How did you pay for it e.g. cash/card/vouchers?	Essential or non-essential?	How much did it cost?
Day/Date:					

Total spending today = £

How I feel about my spending today.....

	What I bought/paid for today e.g. sandwich, phone credit (list everything separately)	Time of day? AM/PM	How did you pay for it e.g. cash/card/vouchers?	Essential or non-essential?	How much did it cost?
Day/Date:					

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Day/Date:					

Total spending today = £

How I feel about my spending today.....

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Day/Date:					

Total spending today = £

How I feel about my spending today.....

Don't forget to review your spending!

How much was your total spending this week?

£.....

How much did you spend on non-essential purchases this week?

£.....

Are you happy with this? Why?

What changes would you like to make around your spending habits?

What 3 things can you start to do from today that will make this happen?

Who do you need support from to make sure you stay on track?



Money Saving Tips

There's loads of ways to save money, we could go on forever but here's some top tips. You can add some of your own that work for you.

1. Food/cleaning products/toiletries



- Shop at cheaper supermarkets
- Shop near closing time to pick up all the reduced items, these can be frozen if there's a short date on them
- Do some meal planning and stick to your shopping list (see the next section)
- Try online shopping if you have access to the internet. This prevents throwing stuff in the trolley that you don't need!
- Batch cook – make a big batch of your favourite dish and freeze portions so you can heat and eat whenever
- Choose own brand items as they're often no different to the more expensive
- Add up as you are shopping – use your phone's calculator, take a calculator or practice some maths!
- Don't be fooled by offers – sometimes, things work out more expensive even if they are on offer. If you only need one item, get the cheapest rather than going for the offers, make sure you compare and look at the price per 100g etc.
- Cut back on the takeaways! They should be an occasional treat.

2. Utilities



- Be careful to switch off anything you aren't using to save on electricity
- It's important to stay warm but you could perhaps put on a jumper or use a blanket instead of the heating sometimes.
- Don't let heat escape through the windows or doors if you do have heating on.
- Shop around for the cheapest gas and electricity. You can usually switch without any cost unless you are tied into a tariff for a set amount of time, check with your current provider. You can use a price comparison website or speak with your coach/key worker for some help with this.
- Check out whether your water would work out cheaper with a meter. If you already have a meter then be careful about wasting water, we shouldn't waste water anyway.
- Only boil water that is needed, it wastes electricity if you boil too much.
- Speak to your utility provider if you are struggling to pay your bills, they have support and options available.

3. Clothing



- Shop in charity shops, they are often cheaper plus you're helping out good causes.
- Do you need designer? Could you get a similar item at a much cheaper price? I'm sure you could!
- Ask yourself if it is essential, if you're going to wear it and if it's worth the money. If you answer mainly no, don't buy it.
- Could you do a clothes swap with family or friends? This is something you could arrange for when it's possible to meet in groups. People bring clothes along that they don't want and choose clothes that others don't want. It's a great way to refresh your wardrobe and socialise without spending anything.

- Order online – you can shop around and find the cheapest.
- Try making your own. Fabric and wool can often be the cheapest option and you might enjoy the whole process and learning.



4. Socialising

- At present, we can't socialise so we should all save money here! We should also begin to appreciate the simple and free things in life such as walking, messaging or calling our family and friends, playing games, watching and listening to the birds, tidying, cleaning, sorting and tackling our budgeting!

When we can socialise again:

- Look out for discounts and offers on eating out, cinema, bowling etc. There's apps and websites that you can search for discounts on.
- Look for the cheapest option, in some areas, there's a few cinemas for example and one could be cheaper than the others.



5. Phone and broadband

- As with utilities, shop around and use price comparison websites to find the cheapest options.
- Consider if it works out cheaper to save up and buy a mobile phone and pay for a SIM only deal, many contracts work out that you are paying way too much for the phone over time.
- Always talk to your provider if you feel you are paying too much and/or can't manage payments, they may be able to offer a solution.

A lot of these tips not only save money but they reduce waste which helps save our planet and the wonderful animals that live on it, we all need to do our bit.

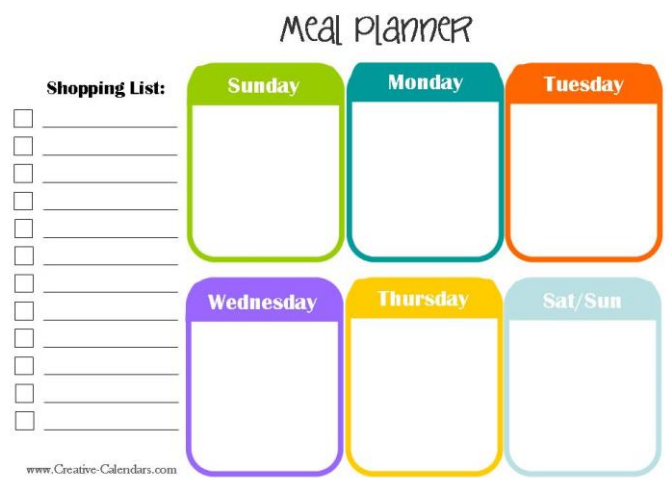


Write some of your own tips that will work well for you in the space below.

Meal Planning

Meal planning is great for saving money and taking any stress out of shopping and deciding what to eat each day. If we plan what we are going to eat for breakfast, lunch and dinner each day, we can stick to our budget and make shopping really easy.

The next pages include an example of a meal plan and shopping list with rough costs and a blank meal plan and shopping list so that you can create your own to fit with your food budget and your preferences. You can keep the same or similar plan each week or do a completely new one each week. You don't need to use the template given, you can create your own on a phone or device or use some paper and get creative!



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Breakfast	Toast	Cereal	Eggs	Toast	Cereal	eggs	Toast
Lunch	Salad	Sandwich	Jacket potato	Salad	Jacket potato	Sandwich	Salad
Dinner	Chicken Curry	Spaghetti bolognese	Chicken + Salad	Jacket potato, beans	Chicken Curry	Spaghetti bolognese	Jacket potato, beans
Snacks/Drinks	Nuts Water	Fruit Water	Nuts Water	Fruit Water	Nuts Water	Fruit Water	Nuts Water
Total budget - £25 each week Shopping List: Eggs - £1, butter £1, bread 0.50p, beans 0.30p, potatoes £1, Cereal - 0.50p, Salad £1.50, tea - £1.50, cheese - £2, chicken - £7.50, Rice 0.50, Curry sauce 0.80p, Mince £2, Spaghetti 0.50, Pasta sauce - 0.80p, fruit - £1.50, Nuts £1.							

Example Meal Planner and Shopping List

Day	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks and drinks
Monday	Cereal	Tuna sandwich	Chicken curry	Fruit and squash
Tuesday	Toast	Cheese Salad	Spaghetti bolognese	Fruit and squash
Wednesday	Eggs	Jacket potato and cheese	Sweet and sour chicken	Fruit and squash
Thursday	Cereal	Beans on toast	Jacket potato with cheese and salad	Fruit and squash
Friday	Toast	Tuna sandwich	Chicken curry	Fruit and squash
Saturday	Cereal	Salad	Sweet and sour chicken	Fruit and squash
Sunday	Eggs	Jacket potato and cheese	Spaghetti bolognese	Fruit and squash

Shopping list

Item	Rough Cost	Item	Rough Cost	Item	Rough Cost
4 tins tuna	2.69	Rice	0.45	Apples	1.00
Bread	0.49	Spaghetti	0.50	Grapes	1.00
Cheese (large block)	3.99	Curry sauce	0.59	Satsumas	1.00
Potatoes	0.99	Bolognese sauce	0.59	Bananas	0.89
Beans x2	0.58	Sweet and sour sauce	0.59	Orange squash	1.00
Salad – cucumber, lettuce, tomatoes, celery	3.25	Butter	0.69	Cereal	0.50
Chicken thighs (1 kg pack)	1.79	Mince	2.00	Eggs	1.00
				Total Cost:	£25.58

Notes:

Batch cook chicken curry, sweet and sour chicken and spaghetti Bolognese and freeze for following week. Average cost of shopping each week should be no more than £20 per week as some items and some cooked food lasts more than 1 week.

Meal Planner and Shopping List

Day	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks and drinks
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

Shopping list

Item	Rough Cost	Item	Rough Cost	Item	Rough Cost
Total Cost:					

Notes:

Useful Links and Support

If you would like to find out more about budgeting and use some online tools and tips or get some professional help with debt, there are some links and contact numbers below. Please be aware that not all services are running as usual so there may be delays, please be patient.

You can click on the links if your viewing this electronically or type it into your internet address bar. You can speak with your support worker if you are unsure about anything in this booklet or who to contact and how.



Citizens Advice

Web page about debt and budgeting:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/budgeting/>

Citizens Advice National Adviceline – this is still running during Coronavirus restrictions but is likely to be very busy - 03444 111 444

Money Advice Service

Website with tools and information:

<https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/categories/budgeting-and-managing-money>

Contact details: WhatsApp - Add +44 7701 342744 to your WhatsApp and send a message.

Telephone: 0880 138 7777

Step Change

Website with advice, tools and online chat:

<https://www.stepchange.org/debt-info/your-financial-situation/making-a-budget.aspx>

Telephone: 0800 138 1111

Money Saving Expert

Website with tools, information and advice:

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/banking/Budget-planning/>

National Debt Line

Website with information and advice:

<https://www.nationaldebtline.org/>

Telephone: 0808 808 4000

Turn2Us

Website with information, tools and online contact:

<https://www.turn2us.org.uk/>

Christians Against Poverty (CAP)

Website with debt information and you can search for support and contact details in your area:

<https://capuk.org/i-want-help/our-services/cap-debt-help/introduction>

Thank you from your future self!

Thank you for completing this booklet - we hope you have found it useful and it has helped you to feel more in control of your money situation.

The rest of this page has been left blank for you to use as needed, or to just doodle on (we like doodling too).

