



BUDGETING GUIDE

Where Does All My Money Go?



Having trouble making ends meet?

Like to know how much money you have to live on and where it all goes?

The following information briefly covers:

- An understanding of the principles of budgeting
- Constructing a budget plan
- Saving money on your weekly commitment
- Shopping smarter
- Cooking and eating wisely
- Maintaining a clean house the cheap and environmentally friendly way
- Exploring avenues to increase your weekly income



The Principles of Budgeting

It is absolutely essential that you work out a budget for yourself. Begin by making a list of everything you currently spend your money on (down to the last dollar!). You could use the budget plan provided at the back of this pamphlet.

This should give you an idea of where your dollars go and it may also give you some ideas on where you can easily save on expenses.

It is then advisable for you to record your actual expenses every day for 4-6 weeks to see whether your actual expenditure does in fact match your budgeted expenses.

Then examine any difference between your actual expenditure and your budget and make adjustment/s to your budget as appropriate.

When you first review your list of actual income and expenditure, it may be difficult to know where you can reduce your expenditure. The following pages contain suggestions which may assist you.

Save Money on Your Weekly Commitments

Lunches: To reduce the amount you spend each week on food, bring your own lunches to Uni! It's amazing how the lunch bill can mount up. You would be hard pushed not to spend at least \$10 a day on bought snacks, which is \$50 a week, or \$2,600 a year!

Cooking: Making your own meals is a very effective way to reduce expenses. Buying unprocessed foods such as fruit, vegetables and cheaper meats such as chops and mince are by far less expensive than frozen, processed and ready made meals.

Rent: Explore the possibility of moving to cheaper accommodation or sharing with more friends/students. Dividing household expenses between others usually always work out cheaper.

Incidentals: Remember that bills are ongoing – rent, gas, electricity, water, telephone, food, clothes, doctor, dentist, entertainment etc. all need to be included regularly in your budget..

Cigarettes and alcohol: Just one packet of cigarettes a day costs around \$13, which equates to \$4,745 per year! A glass of wine at a restaurant costs around \$5, a carton of beer approximately \$40. Go figure!

Transport: If you own a car, compare the cost of using public transport to the total cost of running the vehicle. This means adding up the registration, insurance, petrol, routine car services, parking costs and all those expensive unexpected repair bills. You may be shocked at how much your car is costing you! Or you could consider cycling if this is a reasonable option for you.

Entertainment: Perth is well served by fantastic beaches, parks, the river and green space, all of which are FREE! Sharing costs with others e.g. car pooling, group concessions for entrance fees and concerts may assist in keeping expenses down.

Movies: Always check out the local cinemas for half price nights or other discount specials and ALWAYS check for student discounts before paying for any entertainment! Carry your student card with you.

Shop Smarter: Approach shopping like a game – the more value you get for your money the more points you win! Follow these suggestions and you will be well on your way to winning.

Be Strategic About Where and When You Shop

- Delicatessens tend to be more expensive than supermarkets. Prices also vary between different supermarkets, even between the same stores in different suburbs. Compare the prices in shops near you and shop accordingly.
- Some local supermarkets have special discount deals at specific times. Some shops offer meat, bread (check the bakeries) and other perishables at a discount rate near the end of the day, particularly on Saturdays. Large supermarkets often have foodstuffs on their shelves that have been discounted because they are near to their 'use-by' date. Places like the Subiaco, Midland and Fremantle Markets offer discounted fruit, vegetables and pastries late on Sunday afternoons.
- Within the metropolitan area there are several food shops that sell food below normal retail prices. Eligibility is usually in the form of proof of a Health Care Card. If you don't have a car, make a few trips to the shops during the week so that you can buy as much as you can carry. Some supermarkets can arrange free home delivery of your shopping so check this out in your local stores.
- Some grocery stores are also online so you can shop for items without leaving your home (or computer lab)! Most sites will allow you to search for particular products or just cruise the "virtual" aisles. You decide if you would prefer to pick up the goods from the store or have them delivered. Remember that there is usually an extra charge for this service (and there may be minimum order limits) and you are relying on someone else to select the juiciest apples!
- For furniture and household equipment look in op shops, second-hand stores and swap meets and investigate the "For Sale" columns in the weekend newspapers. The Quokka also usually contains a lot of household items and even has a "free items" section. The old rule of buyer beware applies, particularly in the case of electrical goods. However, good bargains are there for the asking.
- Make sure you compile a shopping list before you hit the shops and stick to it. Browsing aisles tends to result in a shopping trolley full of things that may not be necessary and that blow your budget.
- Buy in bulk where practical. This often works out cheaper over time than buying several smaller items. If freshness is a problem then you can split up packages into smaller, sealed containers. However, do not be fooled into assuming that larger packages are always better value. Do a quick calculation of the relative prices per unit or unit weight. There is often a surprising variation, even within the same brand.
- Look for specials and bargains. You don't have to scour the newspaper ads every week. Look for the specials in store and be willing to try a new brand that's on special.
- Don't be afraid of the plain-wrap, home-brand, blue-white, black-gold of the supermarket world! For items such as bleach and cleaning equipment you are often able to find a good plain-wrap deal. (Refer also to the cleaning tips at the end of this section).
- At certain times of the year particular fruits and vegetables can be expensive, so at those times consider alternatives such as frozen or tinned vegies or low-sugar tinned fruit.
- Shopping whilst hungry can be a disaster. Hungry people are more likely to spend more money on things (not just food) that they don't really want or need. So eat before you shop! Make the most of the food 'freebies' given away in supermarkets to sustain energy.

Be Strategic In What You Do With Your Purchases

- Store dairy foods and vegetables in the refrigerator and fruit in a cool, well ventilated dry place. Once the packets have been opened, store all dry foods such as pasta, rice, nuts and flour in sealed containers such as bottles and jars. Meat can be frozen as long as the freezer is reliable; thaw in the fridge as needed.
- Freezing bread and milk is a good way of ensuring that food is not wasted and that you have the basics when you run out. NB: You can also freeze leftovers, especially soups and stews.

Cook and Eat Wisely

- **Eat breakfast every day.** This can save you lots of money because you are less likely to develop major hunger pangs mid-morning and rush out to fill up on snack foods. It will also kick start your metabolism for the day- so much so that some people find that they lose weight when they start eating breakfast regularly. If you live with others you can make a large pot of porridge or muesli for very little money. If you can't stomach breakfast first thing in the morning, bring some fruit and bread with you to Uni. Dried fruit and nuts are also good to ward off hunger pangs and give an instant energy boost.
- **Make your own lunch.** Buying lunch every day will cost you about \$40.00 per week. You will be more likely to be motivated to make your own lunch if you have a variety of interesting sandwich fillings and other items on hand at home. Think ahead when you shop. Rolls can be bought on the weekend and frozen – thaw overnight as needed.
- **Maintain a balanced diet.** A varied, balanced diet will help to keep you well and ensure that you have the energy and power to think and study effectively. Avoid junk food, because it is usually high in fat, salt or sugar and low in nutritional value. Try to achieve a workable, healthy balance.
- **Learn to do some basic cooking.** It is expensive and often unhealthy to depend on pre-prepared, frozen and take-away foods. Home cooked soups, stews, curries, stir-fried vegies and rice in all its forms go a long way and are quick and easy to prepare. Packets of rice, pasta and noodles usually include cooking instructions.

Maintain a Clean House the Cheap and Environmentally Friendly Way

Cleaning agents are among the most expensive items we buy in supermarkets. If you do not want to use the tips below, at least rationalise the cleaning agents you buy. Usually, one or two cleaning products will do for the whole house. The tips below use inexpensive, readily available materials and will help you to save money. Most are distinctly more environmentally friendly than the “conventional” cleaners.

Bathroom

Bath and basin: Wipe over or scrub with bicarbonate of soda on a damp cloth, then rinse and wipe over with white vinegar on a damp cloth.

Ceramic tiles: Wipe with white vinegar or with cloudy ammonia on a damp cloth, then rinse. If bleach is needed to clean mould from tile grout, use diluted plain bleach rather than expensive mould treatments. However, bleach is very toxic so be careful, and NEVER mix chlorine bleach with products containing ammonia as it emits dangerous fumes.

Mirrors : Clean with a damp ball of newspaper dipped into white vinegar.

Toilet: pour one cup of white vinegar into the bowl, leave overnight then scrub with a brush the next day. Wipe the outside of the bowl, seat and lid with white vinegar.

Kitchen

Refrigerator, sink, bench tops: Wipe with bicarbonate of soda on a damp cloth and then with white vinegar.

Oven: To clean oven, mix half a cup of cloudy ammonia and one cup of water in an ovenproof bowl. Place the bowl in a warm oven for 10-15 minutes (the dirtier the oven is, the longer you leave it). Scrub off burnt-on grime with bicarbonate of soda and wipe with a clean damp cloth.

Burnt saucepans: Make a strong solution of bicarbonate of soda and water. Bring to the boil and let simmer.

Burnt food and grease on stovetops: Make a paste of bicarbonate of soda and a little water. Paint on to the dirty marks and leave at least overnight. Using the stove in the meantime is fine – in fact the warmth helps the process. Wipe with a clean damp cloth.

Floors: Instead of using expensive detergents when you mop floors, use dishwashing liquid. Rinse and then mop with vinegar for shine.

Wine spills on carpets: immediately sprinkle with salt or bicarbonate of soda to absorb the stain, and then vacuum.

Explore Avenues to Increase Your Weekly Income

As well as cost saving measures, it is also possible to supplement your income whilst studying. Income can be from a variety of sources:

Part time Work: Consider whether you may be able to fit in a few hours a week of paid work into your schedule. Even just 3 hours a week of babysitting or gardening can give you an extra \$30 a week (or \$1500 a year) which can go a long way to easing your tight budget. The Casual Jobs Board in the Careers Centre (in Student Services 2nd floor Guild Village) has a wide variety of jobs advertised all year. For a small investment of \$5 per year you can access many job opportunities. Be realistic about what you can undertake given your study load and other commitment.

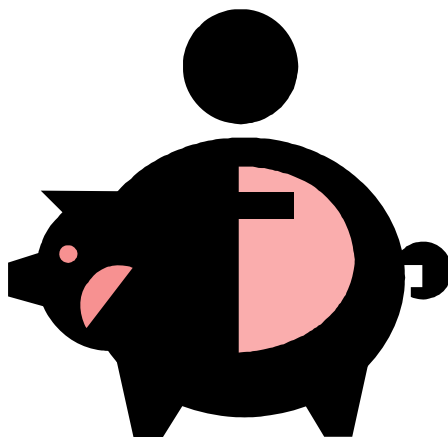
Centrelink Payments: Periodically review current Centrelink policy to make sure you are receiving all the payments for which you are eligible. You can do this quite simply by telephoning the Centrelink hotline (13 24 90), visiting their website (www.centrelink.gov.au) or calling into a Centrelink office.

Vacation Work: This is a great avenue by which to try and save some funds towards your semester expenses. Undertaking work during the University vacation periods means you do not have to juggle work with study commitments. Also by being available for full time work you can often source a wider variety of jobs. Working full time during the December – February period should allow you to save considerable funds to assist you meet your living expenses during the following academic year. Visit the Careers Centre to review current vacation work opportunities.

WEEKLY BUDGET PLAN

EXPENDITURE (a)	WEEKLY \$	EXPENDITURE (b)	WEEKLY \$	INCOME	WEEKLY \$
HOUSEHOLD		PERSONAL			
Rent		Laundromat			
Board		Toiletries		Centrelink Benefits	
Gas/electricity/water		Haircuts			
Phone		Clothes & Shoes		Part time work income (take home pay)	
Contents Insurance		Medications			
Household Kitty		Health Insurance		Other Centrelink payments (i.e. rent assistance)	
FOOD/GROCERIES		TRANSPORT		Parental allowance	
Supermarket		Bus/Train fares			
Fruit/Vegetables		Parking		Scholarship funds	
Bought Lunches		Petrol			
Takeaways		Car Insurance		Other income sources	
Coffees/Snacks		Car Registration			
EDUCATIONAL EXPENSES		REPAYMENTS			
Fees		Credit Card			
Subscriptions		TV/VCR Rental			
Books		Car Loan			
Equipment		Other			
Photocopying					
Stationery					
SUNDRIES		TOTAL EXPENDITURE (a) + (b)		TOTAL INCOME	
Entertainment					
Magazines				LESS TOTAL EXPENDITURE	
Gifts					
Hire of Videos				SURPLUS/ (DEFICIT)	
Other					

If you have any difficulties with any aspects of your finances or budget or just want more information, you are welcome to contact the Financial Aid / Housing Officer.



Where to find us:

UWA Student Services
2nd Floor, South Wing, Guild Village

Please do not hesitate to come and see us to find out more about any of our services

To make an appointment
please call **08 6488 2423**
email: student.finance@uwa.edu.au

Visit our website
<http://www.studentservices.uwa.edu.au/>

Got a Question? Find the Answer....@ www.ipoint.uwa.edu.au

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