

## SHOPPING LISTS

One of the easiest ways to cut down your spending without missing out what's important to you is to make a shopping list before every visit to a supermarket.

Households throw away up to a third of their groceries unused. One reason is that supermarkets are designed to tempt us to buy more than we intended.

If you write a shopping list, it will keep you focused. Include everything you need and everything you want that's important to you.

- ◆ Don't go shopping when you're tired or hungry because your judgement isn't so good and you're more vulnerable to buying extra or unimportant things.
- ◆ Look for cheaper options. The more expensive brands are usually on the shelves at eye-level and the cheaper alternatives lower down.
- ◆ Check the special offers really do save you money. Use the calculator on your mobile phone to check if buying a large version or three for the price of two really is cheaper: shops fool lots of people very easily by advertising things like, '50p each or 2 for £1'!
- ◆ Beware BOGOFs! Do you really want two of something just because they're cheap? Is it worth paying a bit extra to get 'three for the price of two' if you're going to use only one and end up throwing away the other two?

## REGRETS YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TO LIVE WITH

- ◆ You gave up on an ambition because you didn't have the money.
- ◆ You wasted spare cash on 'junk'.
- ◆ That you're less significant as a person for not owning certain things, enjoying certain entertainments or going to certain places.
- ◆ That your life is pathetic because you don't have the stuff you see on tv.
- ◆ You broke the law and paid the fine!
- ◆ You sat back and waited for things to get better.

## TRUTHS ABOUT MONEY

- ◆ It's not more important than people.
- ◆ It cannot buy you love.
- ◆ It's not more important than your reputation.
- ◆ It's not more valuable than wisdom.
- ◆ It does not grow on trees.
- ◆ You can't take it with you when you die.

Managing money and dealing with debt can be complicated. You cannot hold Clubhouse, the author, or anyone else involved in the production of this leaflet responsible for any action you take, or fail to take, based on what is written here. You should get expert help if you are worried about your financial situation or if you think you could benefit from help with money problems and debt.



CLUBHOUSE MONEY ED PROJECT

All Souls Clubhouse Community Centre & Church

## MONEY FOR LIFE



## USING YOUR MONEY FOR WHAT YOU WANT

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## GET REAL

One of the hardest things about living in a consumer society is to be satisfied with enough. We are constantly pressurised into spending by marketing and sales talk designed to make us feel inadequate and insecure, so that we will buy what we think we deserve or will make us feel better. Things like new clothes, cosmetics, fashion accessories, gadgets and entertainment. We can end up spending money on what we don't need and didn't previously want.

As money is central to the way we live, handling it well improves our chances of living how we choose. Handling it badly not only limits our options and opportunities but damages our relationships and impairs our ability to work and study well.

## GET ORGANISED

The only way to control money is to budget: there really is no other option. A budget is a plan of where your money comes from and where it has to go.

You can spend money only **once**. If you use what you have to buy what isn't important, you can't use it to buy what you really need and like! So the first step is getting clear about who you are and what you want to do.

How do you want to dress? What accessories are important to you? How do you like to chill out? All these choices have price tags, so decide what's important to you.

What do you want to do with your life? Do you want to study, follow a particular career, buy a car or live in a certain place? You can organise your money so that you can do at least some of these things.

## GET STARTED

Work out where your money comes from and how much you get: wages, Job Seekers Allowance and other Benefits.

Should you budget for a week or month at a time? The period is set by the frequency of your main income. If you're paid once a month, budget for each month; if you're paid once a week, budget for a week. If your Benefits paid once every fortnight, budget for a fortnight.

### WHERE TO GET FREE ADVICE

Free local advice centres can usually be found listed in the front of local telephone directories and displayed in libraries and council offices.

You can look on the Citizens Advice website to find the address of a local Citizens Advice Bureau and to get some basic help: [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

You can get immediate advice about debt by calling National Debtline on **0808 808 4000**: the call is free from landlines and most mobile network. Or you can get free help on-line: [www.nationaldebtline.co.uk](http://www.nationaldebtline.co.uk).

Organise your spending into three groups.

- ◆ **Survival costs.** These are the things you can't avoid paying for, like rent, council tax, electricity, food and clothes.
- ◆ **Lifestyle choices.** These include the sorts of clothes and fashion accessories that express who you are, entertainment and leisure activities.
- ◆ **Impulse spending.** These are what you buy on the spur of the moment, without really thinking about them, like chocolate bars, coffee and magazines.

## GET SORTED

- ◆ **Minimise survival costs.** You can't avoid them but you can reduce what you spend on most of them. See over the page for tips on how to reduce your supermarket spend; find out ways to cut electricity and gas costs.
- ◆ **Prioritise lifestyle choices.** You can't afford to have and do everything, so make sure you choose what's important to you.
- ◆ **Cap impulse spending.** If something isn't important enough for you to budget for, don't buy it!

Keep working on your budget until you spend less than you get. If you can't achieve that, get expert help.