

Budget Busters

Little splurges, budget bombs, “leaks,” or “latte factors” . . . no matter what you call them, these “little” things can grow to become huge *budget busters*! Our best laid plans are often overshadowed by these expenses that slowly drain our monthly income and we are left wondering, “where did all the money go?”

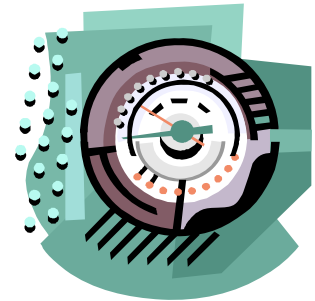
Reducing these budget busters is a smart move - and it's *exciting*! If the “little things” are busting your budget, a few small steps can help you get back on track. Review the following tips to help you identify potential budget busters. Then, use the tool on the back to track daily expenses and *reclaim your cash flow*.

Budget Buster #1: Entertainment

- ✓ Seek out free or low-cost, family-friendly activities in your community - you may be surprised at how much there is to do.
- ✓ Rent movies and books at the local library instead of purchasing them.

Budget Buster #2: Sloppy shopping

- ✓ Save everywhere you can - clip coupons, seek out 2-for-1 deals, turn down the thermostat or downgrade “premium” services like cable and internet at home.
- ✓ Be an informed consumer - shop around, ask for discounts, inquire about price-matching at retailers... remain in control of purchases big or small.



Budget Buster #3: Good intentions

- ✓ Eliminate “maintenance” services you are not using - lawn services, gym memberships, credit “protection” fees, etc.
- ✓ Don't pay interest - earn it. If you are consistently carrying balances on credit cards, call CCCS to make a plan to get these accounts paid in full once and for all.

Budget Buster #4: Lack of savings

- ✓ Your future is important. Pay yourself first - the key to having savings is to start!
- ✓ Save small change at home; then deposit into an interest-bearing account.
- ✓ Involve the entire family - learn, save and earn together!

Tip: Seek out local professionals who can help you make a plan for family insurance needs and retirement as well. Having a long-term plan in place will help keep you on track.

**For more information, contact Consumer Credit Counseling Service.
Call us at (605) 330-2700 or (888) 258-2227(CCCS), or check out our
Web site at www.lsssd.org.**

The grid below is a useful tool that can be used to identify potential “budget busters.” To get started, track daily expenses for at least two weeks. Then, add up the totals in the column provided. If certain expenses seem excessive, make the necessary changes to your plan and continue tracking for the rest of the month.

For example, buying a 20 oz. bottle of soda at work costs \$1.50 per day:

$\$1.50 \times 5 \text{ days a week} = \7.50 a week
 $\$7.50 \text{ a week} \times 4 \text{ weeks a month} = \30.00 a month
 $\$30.00 \text{ a month} \times 12 \text{ months a year} = \mathbf{\$360.00} \text{ a year -}$
 just on soda at work!

Note: This tracker can also be used as a savings tool to help see how saving small amounts on a daily basis can add up to big earnings over time!



	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Totals
<i>Example</i>	\$1.50 soda	\$1.50 soda	\$1.50 soda	\$1.50 soda	\$1.50 soda	\$1.50 soda	\$1.50 soda	1Week: \$7.50
Week 1								
Week 2								
Week 3								
Week 4								

Reliable education and counseling services are available at local Consumer Credit Counseling Service agencies. Call (888) 258-2227 or (605) 370-2700.