

A Spending Record

Why do I need a spending plan?

A successful spending plan helps you control your spending. This way, your spending doesn't control you! It guides you so you get the most for your money. By taking time to plan you will be able to:

- Buy what you need and want within your income
- Have a record of where your money goes
- Cut down on the worry over money, and
- Talk with your family about their needs for the future.

Planning upcoming expenses can avoid arguments over money later.

How to get started . . .

A Spending Record is a worksheet. It has four pages and starts on the next page. It can be prepared like a booklet—copy pages one and two back to back; then pages three and four in the same way. Staple together in the left corner so that it opens like a booklet. Store this worksheet in a file folder. Keep bills, receipts and banking information inside. This provides you with important records of your spending.

Forms for planning and tracking your spending are included in this resource. Select the forms that are useful for your situation. Follow the links below to find:

- [*Form SP10—Planning for Irregular Expenses for the Year*](#)
- [*Form SP20—Tracking Your Spending*](#)
- [*Form SP30—Recording Account Transactions*](#)
- [*Form SP40—Tracking Loan and Credit Payments*](#)

Six steps for success!

Follow these *six steps* to set up a spending plan for the month:

1. Set goals.
2. Identify family income.
3. Review last month's spending so you can estimate upcoming expenses.
4. Put numbers in your plan. Do you have enough money (income) for the expenses you expect?
5. Make your plan work! Cut expenses so you do not overspend. Income needs to balance with expenses.
6. Plan for the future. Review how things worked—what went well? What needs to change for next month?

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A Spending Record

Learning About Money

Keep a spending calendar



A calendar is a useful planning tool. It can help you get organized and can show at a glance when you are paid and bills are due.

Start by filling in the dates on the calendar below for the coming month. Circle the dates you receive income. Next, mark the dates and names of upcoming expenses e.g. 1st—rent; 15th—phone bill, etc. Use a pencil so you can change information. This will help you plan and track your money.

Complete a worksheet each month. This will give you a spending record. You will be able to see where your money goes and plan for the future.

Month of _____						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Take time to plan! For example, take an hour at the beginning of the month to set up your plan. Then, in the middle of the month set another hour aside to see where the money is going. Adjust expenses as needed. Also, review bank statements and check balances to stay on track. At the end of the month look at your **actual income and expenses** to see if they balanced. Now plan again for the next month . . .

Set up a spending plan

1

Identify your goals:

Start by thinking about the month ahead. Jot down the things that are *really important*. Things you need to do, or bills that need to be paid.

Next, decide what are *priorities*. Do you need to pay down debt? Would you like to save some money? It is a good idea to start by setting aside money each payday—*to pay yourself first!* See *Form SP10—Planning Irregular Expenses for the Year* to start saving for irregular and annual expenses. Then, set *financial goals* for additional savings for the future.

- The amount I need to set aside for irregular/annual expenses is \$ _____/month. (Put this amount into your plan on the next page. It is useful to deposit this amount into a daily interest savings account. This way, you can transfer money to your regular account when the funds are needed for a special expense.)
- The amount I need to save for future goals is \$ _____/month. (Put this amount into your plan on the next page. Pay yourself by putting this amount into a special account.) If you have debt payments focus on paying these down first, and then put the same amount towards future savings.

2

Identify your expected income for this month:

<i>Expected income:</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>\$ amount</i>
<i>Salaries/wages:</i>	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____
<i>Child tax benefit:</i>	_____	_____	_____
<i>Other income:</i>	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____
Total income (A)			_____

3

Review last month's spending:

Did you pay all your bills last month? Is there something special coming up? Review your plan from last month. How did it work out? Now, think about the expenses for this month.

4

Put numbers in your plan:

Fill in the chart on the next page.

- First, mark down your *total income* (A) in the space provided from Step 2 above.
- Next, estimate your expenses for each spending category. *Total your estimated expenses* (B) and then compare to your income (A). *Do they balance?*
- To determine how your *cash flow* will work out use the four shaded columns as a work area. These can be used in different ways. You can use them to track different weeks—week 1, week 2 etc., **OR** different bank accounts, **OR** the dates when income comes in. You decide.
- Finally, to keep track of your *actual spending*, write down the expenses you pay in the column marked *Actual \$* on the right. Use this information for planning next month's spending. It is your record of expenses.

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My income for the month is \$ _____ (A)

Learning About Money

Date	Expense item	Estimated \$					Actual \$
Savings:	<i>Savings: Form SP10</i>						
Fixed expenses:	Housing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent/mortgage • Heating • Electricity • Water • Insurance 						
	Food: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groceries 						
	Phone(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home 						
	Cable TV/Internet:						
	Medical: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insurance • Drugs 						
	Child care:						
	Personal money: e.g. allowances						
	Transportation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus fares • Car—gas/oil • Other: e.g. Auto 						
	Others: e.g. pets, life insurance, etc.						
Flexible expenses:	Recreation: e.g. memberships, movies, hobbies, etc.						
	Others: e.g. clothing, gifts, personal care, donations						
Credit:	Credit payments: Fill in <i>Form SP40</i> e.g. car loan, credit payments, etc.						
	Total B:						

Compare Income (A) to expenses (B) = \$ _____. Do they balance?

5

Will the plan work?

Does your income balance with expenses? If not, make adjustments. ***You may need to cut costs!*** Begin by cutting back on flexible expenses—the items that you can do without until you have more money. If you still can not make it balance, then think about whether you need help to resolve this problem.

For non-profit credit counselling services in Canada check www.creditcounsellingcanada.ca for agencies in your community.

6

Plan for the future:

Mark down upcoming expenses and things you want for the future. Use the box below to keep track of credit card purchases, payments or statement balances.

Notes and reminders of future expenses . . .

- *Include birthdays, holidays, other special events*
- *Mark down credit card purchases, statement balances, or other information.*

Acknowledgement:

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Internet: www.basicskillsforliving.ca

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