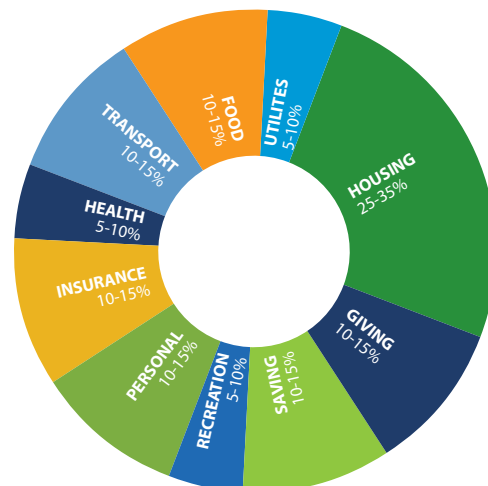


## Ten Tips to Improving Spending

### Your Budget is a Key Part of Your Plan

1. Complete a full budget, dropping in your actual numbers. You may want to track your spending for one month first to get a VERY CLEAR picture. As a general guide, to the right is an example of a budget breakout. This is just a guideline!\*
2. Consider negotiating or reducing expenses in certain categories (areas like cable, internet, auto insurance are a great start).
3. Find out if you qualify for benefits that could reduce or supplement some of your expenses (income-based; lifestyle-based).
4. Automate bill payment and reminders. Take advantage of your financial institution's online account management tools, like Online Bill Pay, Mobile Banking and text and email alerts.
5. Challenge yourself to a "spending freeze". Choose one item on your list, and for one week at a time, try to avoid spending the money (items like eating out, entertainment, habits, are good for challenges). Place the money in a savings account or on a bill if experiencing a shortfall.
6. Start a goal savings account and name it! Place your extra money into it, rather than spending it.
7. Have a sale - yard / garage / online, you choose ... if you haven't used it in a year, sell it!
8. Use value / discount rewards cards and coupons for purchases; shop on sale and off season for clothes, but in season for food!
9. Look for opportunities to borrow, rent or share, especially for nice-to-haves. Libraries, parks, city events, family and friends offer great places to enjoy low-to-no cost entertainment.
10. Consider debt management assistance to get ahead of your bills. WPCU Financial Coaches and our partner GreenPath Financial Wellness can help. Ask us for details!



Check out The Simple Dollar article, *40 Ways to Reduce Your Monthly Spending*:

<http://www.thesimpledollar.com/trimming-the-fat-forty-ways-to-reduce-your-monthly-required-spending/>

\* Source: EveryDollar.com - Dave Ramsey

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