

101 MONEY SAVINGS TIPS



If you could just find \$100 to invest each month for 20 years, you'd have more than \$76,000* in savings!

Read on to begin finding your \$100.

*Compound interest calculated at 10% annual rate of return.

VICKI MERRITT FINANCIAL COACH, LLC.

Resell & Recycle

1. Recycle glass jars for holding small things such as nails, screws, paperclips, or other small objects.
2. Use cloth napkins instead of paper towels.
3. Buy used whenever you can. It's amazing what you can find at thrift stores and online, if you just take a little time to look. Shop second-hand stores for clothing but look for new items at huge discounts that still have their original tags. Many times, these are leftovers from big-name retailers. Sometimes, people get clothes as gifts and rather than returning, simply forget about them and end up donating to the stores as well.
4. Have garage sales to get rid of things you don't need. Either pay extra on loans or save it for Christmas or a vacation or put it towards your next financial goal.
5. Clean out unwanted clothes and shoes from your closet and sell them to a resale store and donate the rest.
6. Instead of buying the latest and greatest tech gadget, buy one generation older. If you buy the latest, buy refurbished as they have been returned and made new once again and carry the same original warranty.
7. Spray paint old, still useful items to make them look new again. Items such as metal home décor or outdoor furniture and flower pots can benefit from a face lift.



Holidays & Special Occasions



- 8.** Plan gift giving well in advance to avoid last minute budget-busting spending.
- 9.** Pick out cards for birthday and anniversary for your spouse when you are both at the store. Show them the one you would have picked, then put it back and save the expense.
- 10.** If purchasing cards, buy them from the discount store at a huge savings, and decorate them yourself with glitter pens, ribbon or calligraphy.
- 11.** Make your own gifts instead of buying them from the store. A simple internet search will result in easy instructions for how to make items such as homemade caramel sauce, vanilla extract or cookies, candy or liquor bouquets, homemade body butter or sugar scrubs, and photo glass magnets or tile coasters, just to name a few.
- 12.** Have a potluck dinner where everyone brings a dish. You save on your grocery bill and aren't responsible for feeding the entire family.
- 13.** Buy holiday decorations the day after the holiday and save for next year. Typically, you Get deep discounts then. Some retailers even have big sales just before the holidays as well.
- 14.** Draw names at the holidays for family members to eliminate the expense of buying for everyone.
- 15.** Have a White Elephant or Chinese Christmas gift exchange at work. That way you don't have to buy individual gifts for coworkers.
- 16.** Ask for online shopping gift cards such as iTunes, Amazon, Paypal for Christmas and birthdays. That limits the need to spend out of your pocket when it's time to shop.

Holidays & Special Occasions



- 17.** Join online birthday clubs or email newsletters to receive free products from many restaurants.
- 18.** Choose cupcakes for kids' birthday parties to save on the cost of paper plates and forks.
- 19.** Bake a cake instead of buying one for birthdays.
- 20.** Instead of giving items as a gift, give the gift of your time, service and help. You can provide a free night of babysitting, a home cooked meal or a free mowing of a lawn.
- 21.** Make your own bows from ribbon to use on holiday décor. Purchase wide, wired ribbon on clearance after each holiday, and have it on hand to create bows. Find online instructions on how to make the bows and add them to wreaths, plants, packages and even a Christmas tree.

Entertainment & Miscellaneous



22. Compare cell phone plans on a regular basis. Don't be afraid to call your current carrier and ask if rates have been lowered since you signed your contract. Many times, you can make an plan adjustment just for asking.
23. Attend a matinee instead of a late movie in order to save on ticket prices.
24. Check for unclaimed property at www.missingmoney.com to see if you have any unclaimed funds from forgotten bank accounts, security deposits or refunds.
25. Check out books and DVDs from the local library, instead of purchasing or renting them.
26. Buy scratch and dent appliances at big savings. They are going to get scratched and dented in no time from normal everyday use anyway.
27. Shop the dollar stores for car cleaning items. Wax, sponges, squeegees and other car cleaning products are much less expensive there than at retailers.
28. Eliminate cable or satellite TV and subscribe to online streaming services instead.
29. Never sign a contract for home security that includes "free" equipment. Instead purchase the equipment outright and have it installed. You can then find monthly monitoring for as little at \$8.95 per month.
30. Kill ants with cornmeal rather than buying expensive chemicals. Ants will eat cornmeal but can't digest it.
31. Buy floor samples at the furniture store. Most stores change out inventory and sell their display items at discounted prices. You may have to wait until they change their displays.

Entertainment & Miscellaneous



32. Check different websites such as jet.com or hiptosave.com. These can help you save on many items like clothing, food, baby items, toys, tools and more.
33. If you are having a hard time doing house maintenance and cannot afford to hire a professional, hire a handy man from online or simply ask at church or the office if friends know of one. There are many talented individuals looking for extra income. This is a great money saver to get the jobs done that require more time or knowhow than you have. However, choose wisely. Get a written bid before any work begins, and don't pay in full until the job is completed to your satisfaction.
34. Many stores have their own websites and membership discount programs. If you are a signed-up-member you will get various promotions. through email. Even though you might get lots of emails from them you could save hundreds in the items you use daily. Example: Target
35. Red Card Members save 5% every time you shop. Plus if you are a member of cartwheel at target you will get additional discounts on your daily item such as food, house items, clothing, baby items and more.
36. If you are over the age of 55 many business will have a senior discount. Don't be ashamed to ask. This could save you 10%.
37. If you are a military family don't be ashamed to ask for a military discount. Many retailers will give a discount.
38. Search the web for promotional codes for whatever website you are about to make a purchase on. Many times, companies have a current coupon code that can save you money with a simple search.
39. For really trendy shoes, consider knock-offs at a discount store. By the time they wear out, the trend is over anyway.
40. Wait for the DVD. A movie-theater experience is pricey. Rent instead!

Health & Hygiene



40. Take care of your body by exercising and eating healthier. It could save you a ton of money on medical bills in the long run.
41. Before picking up your prescription, call and ask your doctor's office if they have a voucher or coupon for your specific medication. Obviously, this savings program won't exist for every type of medication, but you lose nothing by calling and asking. Your doctor's office may not volunteer this information when your medication is prescribed so be sure and ask if there are other options, such as generic equivalent.
42. Consider a subscription to an online shave club. Every month or two you can get razors mailed to you. It's much cheaper than the razors at the store, and the quality is usually better as well.
43. Stop smoking and drink less alcohol. It'll certainly save you money.
44. Ask your doctor if your medication can be prescribed for a three month supply. It is often cheaper than purchasing it month to month.
45. Ask for free medicine samples at your doctor's office and free toothbrushes and toothpaste at your dentist's office.
46. Don't be afraid to ask for a discount on medical and dental procedures especially if you are paying cash the day of the procedure.

Savings & Retirement

47. Take a percentage of each paycheck and have it automatically go into a separate account via payroll deduction. Make it an account that you don't have debit cards linked to or checks for it. Therefore, you are not tempted to spend any of the savings. Since the money is automatically drafted, you never see the money. It adds up quickly!
48. On January 1st number a paper from 1-52, for the weeks in a year. On week #1 put \$1 in an envelope. For week #2 put in \$2... Week #24 put in \$24.. And so forth. At end of the year you will have around \$1,400 saved! You can use this process for any 52 week period.
49. If you will take your annual raise every year and increase your 401K contribution (or salary savings if you have that in place) by the % you got for a raise (or a portion of it), you will be surprised to see how that adds up over time.
50. If you are paying monthly bank fees, ask for them to be waived or switch banks. Some banks even offer you cash to open a new account along with no-fee accounts.
51. Pay with cash and put the loose change in a jar at the end of the day.
52. Each time you get a \$5 bill as change put that in your Vacation Envelope. This will keep you at or below your budget for most items and by default adds extra money for vacation!!



Meal Planning & Grocery Shopping



53. Make a grocery list and stick to it.
54. Take your lunch to work.
55. For those of us who like to eat out but NEED to save money a great tip is NO TIP. Limit yourselves during the week to only places where you don't need to tip. This in itself will save you money, but these types of restaurants usually cost less too. That is a double win! Then on the weekend you can enjoy a night out at a "tipping" restaurant.
56. It takes a little bit of money up front but in the long run it will save hundreds! Buy easy to make or already meals. On nights when you work late, or you're exhausted or simple need a quick meal, pop something in the microwave instead of buying something from a restaurant or fast food place. It's healthier than going out to eat and cheaper too!
57. Use coupons.
58. If you need to save extra for something in a short amount of time, skip a grocery trip and "shop" out of your pantry and freezer. You will most likely have enough items to make it a week or two if you get creative with your recipes and can quickly save \$150- \$250.
59. Price match at stores using the weekly ads from grocery and chain stores. A maximum of 30 minutes per week can save at least \$25 a week.

Meal Planning & Grocery Shopping



60. Subscribe to an online subscription and save program. You can have toilet paper, paper towels, trash bags, and other items sent to you on a subscription basis. Items are usually cheaper than other stores. If you have more than 5 items, you save an additional 15%. You can skip any monthly deliveries.
61. Make your own laundry soap. Homemade laundry detergent is super easy, super inexpensive, and works so well.
62. Homemade foods are often times less expensive than their store bought counterpart. Try making your own salad dressing. Buy frozen fruit when its on sale and make your own jam. Homemade spaghetti sauce, taco seasoning and peanut butter and just to name a few are all very easy to make and can save you money.
63. If eating out, go during lunch as lunch menus tend to be much cheaper than evening menus.
64. Eat before going grocery shopping; because you tend to spend more when shopping on an empty stomach!
65. Brew coffee at home instead of stopping at a convenience store. Even a pod at \$0.35 to \$0.50 per cup is less than a convenience store refill of around \$1.00
66. Participate in surveys at restaurants that offer them. Many have a survey link on the bottom of the receipt and offer free products for just participating in their surveys.
67. Order water at a restaurant. It saves money on the drink and reduces the amount of tip.
68. Purchase a water filter and attach to your faucet (if you don't have a refrigerator that dispenses water) and get filtered water that way, instead of constantly purchasing bottled water.
69. Don't be afraid to buy generic. These are often the same products produced by the same manufacturer, but simply labeled differently than the name brand.

Insurance

70. Shop around and get quotes from different companies for car insurance every year or so. People have saved up to \$2,000.00 a year by switching to a different company!
71. Bundle your insurance policies. If you buy for home, auto and life from the same company you'll get a bundle discount.
72. Increase your deductible and you will likely have a lower monthly premium.
73. If you do not have life insurance outside of your job, you may want to look into purchasing a separate, individual policy. The younger you are, the cheaper the rate. If you leave your job you will still need life insurance, and your premium will be higher as you age.
74. Use cloth diapers. They're an investment in the beginning, but they can also be used for baby #2!
75. Buy long-sleeved, waterproof bibs with pockets that catch food. They prevent stains, lessen the amount of laundry and slows the wear and tear on kids' clothes.
76. If you sign up on for the Mom Club online, you can get 20% off diapers. You can skip any monthly deliveries.
77. Shop at your local children's resale shop. The clothes are usually in really good condition since children outgrow them quickly. Also, you might stumble upon some that still have the original store tags on them.
78. Purchase used, bigger-ticket baby items such as a highchair, bouncer or car seats, from garage sales or online resale sites.
79. Make your own baby food. You can puree and then freeze fresh fruits and vegetables for a cheaper alternative than store bought baby foods.
80. Rotate baby toys instead of constantly buying new ones. Put some away in a box, and every other week or so switch them out. The child won't get bored or overwhelmed by seeing all the toys all the time and will be more interested since they will be continually be "new."
81. Look for furniture that converts as the baby grows.
82. Swap babysitting duties with a friend or relative who also has kids, and you won't have to pay a babysitter for a night out.
83. Breastfeed if possible. A breast pump and breastmilk bags may have to be purchased but it's still cheaper than a year of formula.



Mentality, Outlook & Behavior



- 84.** Ask yourself if you will benefit greatly from the item that you are wanting. If the answer is no, then do not purchase it. Usually you'll realize that you don't need it in the first place and end up forgetting about it. You can save a lot of money by purchasing what you **NEED** the majority of the time instead of what you **WANT**. Sounds simple, but don't put stuff in your shopping cart (real life or online) on impulse. Instead, take your time, and think about it!
- 85.** Don't think in the negative. When it comes to limiting your spending think more along the lines of multiplying your savings!
- 86.** Review your bills (cell phone, cable, internet) and see if there are any changes that can be made to lower your bill such as getting a lower data plan if all of it is not being used up each month or cutting the cable down to a more basic package.
- 87.** Pay all bills on time to avoid paying late fees.
- 88.** Pay as many bills as you can online. It saves time and stamps.
- 89.** Get another job and use the extra money towards paying debt, Christmas vacation.
- 90.** Know your credit score: protect it if it's good and improve it if it's low as it will save or cost you a lot of money over the years.
- 91.** To avoid impulse purchases put credit cards in a plastic container filled with water and freeze. It will have to thaw before you can use it and microwaving it will damage the magnetic strip on the card.
- 92.** Avoid credit card spending even if you pay it all off at the end of the month. When you use plastic instead of cash, research shows that you will spend 12% to 18% more than when you use cash.

Travel & Vacations



93. Buy your airfare tickets and make hotel accommodations in advance.
94. If possible, try to avoid flying on the weekend. Middle of the week flights tend to be cheaper.
95. Travel light. Weigh your luggage before leaving home. If your bag is heavier than the exceeded weight limit, you will be charged a fee. Check your airline for the number of bags allowed before incurring charges for extra checked bags.
96. If allowed, take a bag lunch, or cooler with food and drinks to your destination (amusement park, museum, ballgame, etc.) instead of paying high prices for the concession stand food and drinks. If not allowed, eat before going to your event.
97. Carry snacks on airplane trips instead of buying expensive airport food.
98. When booking a hotel, search for options that include a kitchen or cooking facilities. This way you can cook yourself a meal or two daily, which will free up money to do other things. You can also eat at much nicer place once a day instead of cheap restaurants multiple times a day.
99. Use public transportation instead of cabs when getting around at your vacation destination.
100. Be aware of roaming charges on your cell plan when you're far away from home. If you are roaming, communicate via email instead of making phone calls or sending texts that incur roaming charges.
101. Research free or inexpensive entertainment in the community to which you will be traveling. Check local newspaper and news channel websites for a listing of activities which will take place during your dates of travel.