

Budgeting is important to ensure that you do not spend more than you earn and is a powerful tool that you can use to assist you to take control of your money. A budget will also help you to decide what you want and plan to achieve it.

People say they cannot budget or that it is too complicated. There are some excellent websites you may like to check out for further help such as fido.gov.au or understandingmoney.com.au.

Here are some useful hints to help you get started. The truth is everyone who does a budget and sticks to it will see the benefits.

Getting Started

Keep a record of what you spend for a few months, it is important that you make sure you record all of your expenses. Group things together – i.e. annual private expenses eg mortgage, holidays, loans and lifestyle expenses eg groceries, internet, rates, home repairs to make it easier to find each item.

There are no hard rules to this just remember you will have to make it work so keep it simple and workable for yourself.

Putting your budget together

After you have recorded your expenses for a few months you need to complete a budget planner with your totals so you can determine your annual expenses. If you are good with spreadsheets you may like to create your own or download one from one of the websites mentioned earlier. If you are not good with computers use the budget planner overleaf.

Is your budget realistic

It is important to make sure you are earning enough to cover your expenses. Subtract your total expenses from your income to get your net result. Did you get the result you expected, or have you discovered you spend more than you earn? You may need to relook at your budget to see where you can reduce your expenses or look at ways you increase your income, either way you will need to

take action. Please refer to our Fact Sheet on Reducing Expenses for assistance in this. Also, do you frequently reach for that credit card to cover monthly differences. Maybe this indicates you need to cut back on the extras and change your shopping habits.

For those who find it easy to overspend put the money aside for those large quarterly and annual expenses. Preparation may be all you need to get the household spending under control. Put aside in a separate account the funds needed for those expenses and be prepared for them when they occur.

If you have plans to save for a holiday or a house deposit then your budget can help with those by planning to put aside a small amount each budget period. Be careful and make your goals realistic or you will become discouraged and not achieve. Budgeting is about taking control of your finances, not restricting yourself to bare necessities.

Keep your budget up to date

Set aside a day each year and bring your budget up to date. This allows you to make adjustments for pay rises and changes to your circumstances.

Remember you can do it – it just requires a little effort and planning on your part.

Disclaimer

This Fact Sheet has been prepared for general information purposes only and not as specific advice to any particular person.



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BUDGET PLANNER

Choose a time period (e.g. fortnightly or monthly) and fill in the blanks. Remember to use the same time period for income and expenses.

Income		Transport expenses		Savings	
Type of income	Amount received each period				
Salary or wage (after tax)	\$	Car registration	\$	Superannuation	\$
Pension or Government allowance	\$	Parking	\$	Regular savings	\$
Child support or other payments	\$	Fuel	\$	Regular investments	\$
Regular income from investments (e.g. interest, dividends or rent)	\$	Repairs/maintenance	\$		\$
	\$	Public transport	\$		\$
	\$		\$		\$
	\$		\$		\$
TOTAL INCOME	\$	Sub total	\$	Sub total	\$
Household expenses		Personal expenses		Other expenses	
Rent	\$	Clothes and shoes	\$	Child care	\$
Mobile	\$	Hair and beauty	\$	Child support payments	\$
Repairs	\$		\$	Gifts	\$
Gas	\$	Sub total	\$	Donations	\$
Electricity	\$	Medical expenses		Hobbies and sports	\$
Water	\$	Doctor	\$	Subscriptions	\$
Home Phone	\$	Medicines	\$	Newspapers/magazines	\$
Mobile	\$	Dentist	\$	Movies and DVDs	\$
Rates	\$		\$	Restaurants and takeaway	\$
Body Corp.	\$	Sub total	\$	Alcohol and cigarettes	\$
Internet	\$	Insurance		Pet food	\$
Cable/TV	\$	Home and contents	\$	Other pet costs	\$
Furniture	\$	Car	\$		\$
Appliances	\$	Health	\$		\$
Groceries	\$	Income protection	\$		\$
Gardening	\$	Life	\$		\$
	\$		\$		\$
	\$	Sub total	\$	Sub total	\$
Sub total	\$	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$		
Education expenses		Debt repayments		Expenses contd.	
School fees	\$	Mortgage	\$	Net Result	
University fees	\$	Car loan	\$	TOTAL INCOME	
Tuition	\$	HECS/HELP payment	\$	- TOTAL EXPENSES	
Books and uniforms	\$	Credit cards	\$	=	
Camps/excursions	\$	Personal loans	\$	NET RESULT	
	\$	Store cards	\$		
	\$	Lay-bys	\$		
	\$		\$		
	\$		\$		
Sub total	\$	Sub total	\$		



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