

Spending Diary



A spending diary is a great way to keep on track of where your money goes. It can help you to see where you are overspending and where you may be able to make cutbacks. Your expenses will generally come under one of three categories, detailed below. What is essential for one person may not be for another, but have a think about whether everything you spend is truly a need rather than a want.

Essential fixed bills: regular bills you have to pay which are usually the same amount each week or month such as:

Rent or mortgage	Council tax	Water
Gas & electricity	Travel costs	Health costs
Phone & internet		

Essential flexible bills: regular expenses on things you need such as:

Food	Clothing	Hairdressing
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Non-essential spending: all other expenses you may have such as:

Cigarettes	Cinema	Snacks
Nights out	Hobbies	Magazines

Instructions for use

Fill in the spending diary every day for a whole month.

You can either fill this in as you go along, or take some time at the end of each day to update what you've spent that day.

Make sure you write down everything you have spent that day, even if it's just a few pence on a newspaper or sweets for the kids.

Don't forget to look at your bank account and write down any Direct Debit or standing order payments that have come out each day.

Once you've filled in the spending diary for a month

Have a look through what you've spent and add up your total spending for each category. Is there anything that surprises you?

Check your expenditure against the money you have coming in. You can use our budget template for that - visit our website to download it.

If you're spending more than you get, it's time to look at where you can cut costs.

The first category to look at reducing is your **non-essential spending**. Can you do without any of these things? Or do them less often?

Next, look at your **essential flexible bills**. Could you save money by shopping in bulk, shopping around or meal planning?

Finally, look at your **essential fixed bills**. Are you out of contract for mobiles or internet? Could you save money by switching provider?

Could you save money by switching your gas and electricity provider?

Are there any discounted schemes you could apply to for your water bills?

Our website gives you lots more suggestions - visit perennial.org.uk and search for "managing money"

