

Penny Pinching for College Students

Contributed by Simon Garland

Every college student knows what it's like to be broke, let's face it, it's just part of college. Between books, supplies, dating, etc., money gets really tight. The first step into increasing the amount of money in your pocket is to cut down what you spend. I know this sounds pretty undesirable, but there are several things that you can do to reduce your daily spending.

- Shop at less expensive stores.

Any store that contains the word "Dollar" in its name (Dollar Store, Dollar Tree, etc) can save you a significant amount on the same products you buy at places like Wal-mart. Snacks, drinks, detergents, school supplies, etc. can be bought here for a great deal less. Less spent means more in your pocket.

- Cutting Back.

Try cutting back on junk food, which is not only unhealthy, but expensive. Smoking is also an expensive habit, quitting can save you up to dollars a week!

- Shop used.

Not everything you buy has to be new. Really. Dorm life can be rough on a lot of your possessions, so buying used things can give you peace of mind in several ways, namely that you saved money. Second hand stores often have high grade merchandise; even goodwill can carry some really nice clothes! Pawn shops or used media stores can offer a wide selection of used games, DVD's and CD's that you can buy for a lot less than if they were new. This includes books for your classes. Go for used books if you can, and you can even find books online for even cheaper! Ebay.com and Amazon.com can save you a lot of money. A lot.

- Coupons.

Grab a local news paper or look online for coupons that you can use on the things you buy. Coupons can save you a significant amount, especially since most coupons range from 50 cents to a dollar! You can even find coupons online!

- Car pool.

I know that having a car can make college life easier, but the combined costs of maintenance and gas can be devastating to your wallet. If you can, car pool to stores, class, and parties. Giving a few bucks to another driver is a lot less expensive.

- Entertainment.

If there are things you don't really enjoy doing then don't pay to do them. Make sure you really want to go see that movie, and if you do go then try to stay away from the expensive concession stand foods. Sneaking in a pack of M&M's or Skittles is easy and defiantly cheaper. Also look for things to do on campus. Most colleges have various events to help keep students entertained, at least for a little while.

- Free Stuff.

Seriously. Free. You'd be amazed. Sometimes banks offer free money for starting a student account. Some colleges give away supplies and food, not to mention the various charity groups (usually recruiting churches, just feign interest and grab a free burger).

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