



## Saving Money During Inflation

Inflation is defined as the rate at which the cost of goods and services increases. It occurs when the supply of money grows too large in relation to the size of an economy. As more money becomes available, the purchasing power of a single dollar drops. This means it takes more dollars to purchase an item, seemingly increasing its price. And, if you've been shopping lately, you've noticed the cost of everything has risen.

There are many ways you can save money during times of inflation. Necessities like food and grocery items seem to have been hit especially hard with increased prices. A dozen eggs were over \$5 just about a month ago! Consider searching for coupons and looking at your grocery store's weekly ad to reduce your food costs. Or, instead of going out to a restaurant and dropping \$75 or more on a meal, cook at home. Many copycat recipes for your favorite restaurants are easily found online. Finally, take a look at your monthly subscription services like Netflix and Apple Music to see which ones you're not using frequently, and cancel them. This will help cut down on your overall monthly bills, and you may be surprised how much you can save over time.

Here are four additional budget-savvy tips to consider during times of inflation:

**Plan your grocery purchases.** Assess the items you already have in your fridge and pantry before making your grocery run to eliminate accidentally purchasing duplicate items. Create a schedule for your weekly meals and prepare a shopping list for the ingredients you need. This will avoid wasting both time on multiple trips to the store and gas for your vehicle. Finally, plan your meals around items that are on sale and check for coupons to maximize your budget.

**Get an energy audit.** With the weather beginning to change, consider an energy audit for your home. This will help identify possible energy drains like air escaping through doors and windows. Fixing these items can make your home more energy-efficient, which will reduce your overall monthly utility bills.

**Choose your indulgence.** While it is nice to treat yourself every once in a while, limiting these treats to just once or twice a month will help cut costs in the long run. There are also many creative ways to enjoy a treat without breaking the bank. For example, instead of getting two large meals for you and your guest, split one meal and save.

**Switch your auto insurance plan.** Do some research to see if another insurance provider would have better rates for your budget. But before you switch, talk to your current provider because they may offer a special incentive to keep you on board. Sometimes they will even match a policy provided by another company just to keep your business.

During times when goods and services are cheaper, it's wise to put extra money aside to pay off debt or add to your savings account. But when inflation is high, you may consider setting only a minimum amount aside, so you are able to afford your daily lifestyle. Once costs go back down, you can make extra payments or deposits to make up any difference.