



30 FOR 30 ✓ SPENDING HIATUS CHALLENGE



30 days of no spending in 10 steps.

Step 1—Review your current budget and expenses. | Step 2—Set your goal for the month. | Step 3—Take stock of what you have.
 Step 4—Meal plan. | Step 5—Note any upcoming events/expenses. | Step 6—Get your family on board. | Step 7—Make a wish list.
 Step 8—Use cash. | Step 9—Avoid stores. | Step 10—Unsubscribe from tempting emails.

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29 NO SPENDING <input type="checkbox"/> success! <input type="checkbox"/> oops \$____	30 NO SPENDING <input type="checkbox"/> success! <input type="checkbox"/> oops \$____	No-spend months are a great way to jumpstart your savings or debt payoff plans. See reverse for tips!				

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SPENDING HIATUS CHALLENGE

STEP 1 REVIEW YOUR CURRENT BUDGET AND EXPENSES.

Note any non-essential spending that has occurred over the previous few months you want to take control of during your No Spend Month.

STEP 2 SET YOUR GOAL.

The clearer your goals are, the better you'll be able to achieve them. Use the amount you save this month to come up with a savings goal or a debt payment goal.

STEP 3 TAKE STOCK OF WHAT YOU HAVE.

Look through your pantry, freezer and closets and see what you've stockpiled... canned food, meat in the freezer, birthday party gifts, cards, etc. Whatever you have extra of, make a note that you're fully stocked so you don't keep making unnecessary purchases! It's also a great idea to write out a list of what you have and use whatever you can on hand like those mini hotel shampoo bottles you have stashed when you run out of your regular shampoo.

STEP 4 MEAL PLANNING.

Plan your meals for the month, and avoid eating out. Use up what you have around the house instead of buying more. You may need to get creative (like using up all of beans in your pantry).

STEP 5 NOTE ANY UPCOMING EVENTS AND EXPENSES.

Check out your planner and see what your month looks like. Maybe you have a relative's birthday party coming up or a school fundraiser to attend. Think about what your plans will entail, and allocate for them on your list with a set budget, or better yet make them something. If you have social activities, invite friends over for a potluck instead of meeting out for drinks or dinner.

STEP 6 GET YOUR FAMILY ON BOARD.

I like to include the whole family in on this challenge—it's a great way to actively demonstrate needs vs. wants to the kids.

STEP 7 WRITE DOWN A WISH LIST.

Note your wants vs. needs this month. During the next 30 days, give up those wants and stick to your needs. If something comes up that you really want to purchase this month, make a note of it in your planner. When the month is up, if you're still wanting it you can buy it but more often than not, your interest and need have waned while waiting.

STEP 8 PUT YOUR CREDIT CARDS AWAY AND USE CASH.

I typically use credit cards (and pay them off every month—I love the travel points) but during a spending hiatus or No Spend Month I put them away (in the safe) and use cash. This helps prevent impulse purchases.

STEP 9 AVOID STORES.

Especially Target. :) If there is something that one of us needs (eg. a white shirt for a school performance I try the thrift stores first—most of the time I can find what I need at the fraction of the cost and buying second hand is so good for the planet). But avoid going into stores if at all possible during the month. Shop your own closet—you will for sure unearth items you have forgotten about.

STEP 10 UNSUBSCRIBE FROM TRIGGERING EMAILS AND SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS.

Place your subscriptions on hold to things like Netflix and Amazon. (Don't unsubscribe from us though as you won't get our emails anymore!)

So, how do you do a 30-day spending hiatus?

First, it's best to schedule it during a month when you are mostly going to be home and not traveling (I find it a bit easier to eliminate potential spending issues that way). Secondly, we are obviously still paying our bills and feeding our family during this month (although I stick to a lower per week grocery budget and try to use up what we have stockpiled in the freezer and pantry).

At the end of the month, evaluate how you did.

How much did you save? Did you put that money toward debt? What other lessons did you learn?