SmartDollar Money Tips

# SmartDollar Money Tip:

# Want to save more money? Cut the cable.

Cable isn’t the only way to watch TV anymore. Not by half.

If you’re trying to pay down debts or save up some cash, it may finally be time to cut the cord. Make the switch even easier with these cost-effective alternatives to cable. Chances are you won’t even miss it.

There are a ton of great solutions that give you lots of options for a fraction of the cost. Online network channels, Hulu, Netflix, Amazon Prime, Sling TV and HBO Now are all great free or low-cost alternatives. And if you really want to cut back, all it takes is an HDTV antenna.

**For more great money-saving tips, sign up for SmartDollar today!**

# SmartDollar Money Tip:

# Retirement savings comes before college funding.

One of the most difficult issues you might face with your money is how to prioritize college savings and retirement.

You need to make retirement a priority over college savings for one very good reason. You’ll depend on your retirement savings to live, eat, and pay for shelter—the basics. If you’re not working, that money is your only source of income.

Saving for college is extremely important, but it’s a luxury. Your child will have other ways to pay—scholarships, grants, part-time jobs. Pay for your child’s college if you can, but remember that **it’s not as important as retirement**.

Get to a place financially where you can start putting 15% of your income toward retirement first, then begin working on an ESA or 529 for your kids’ college. Remember: College is a luxury. Food and shelter during retirement are necessities.

**Want to learn more about saving for retirement? Sign up for SmartDollar today!**

# SmartDollar Money Tip:

# 4 Signs Your Budget Needs a Fresh Start

It’s time to get your budget working for you again. Here are seven signs you need to restart your financial engine.

### 1. Withdrawing cash before you budget

Without a plan, your cash will pull a disappearing act. So beforethe month begins, write out your budget on paper, on purpose. If you wait, it won’t get done.

### 2. Forgetting about annual expenses

Dentist visits, pet shots, car insurance, birthdays—these annual expenses can leave you dipping into your emergency fund if you’re not careful.

### 3. Spending too much in one category

Straighten out your spending by giving each category a specific percentage. And make sure your entire budget equals 100%. No matter what!

### 4. Using the same budget every month

### Because there’s no such thing as “the perfect month,” **a one-size-fits-all budget won’t cut it**. You have to make a new budget every single month.

Reevaluate your budget and fix the areas that aren’t working. It’s never too late for a fresh start.