

Where Does Your Money Go? Keeping a Spending Diary Worksheet

It's often the seemingly small items that add up to large amounts over time. You probably have a pretty good idea of your major bills and expenses every month, as captured in your **spending plan**. But what about the \$40 cash you get at the ATM on Saturday that's gone by Monday?

Where does the money go, and are there any patterns to your spending? Becoming aware of your spending habits can help you **plug spending leaks** and that leads to greater savings over time.

To track where your pocket money is going, buy a small notebook and keep it with you all the time. For the next two weeks, write down every purchase you make during the day, no matter how small.

Once you've tracked your spending for two weeks, total up the items, and transfer your findings to a chart so you can see the effect of your choices over time. Then track spending for a month. Here's a sample chart to use:

SPENDING DIARY

Start Date: _____ End Date: _____

Item Purchased	Cost of Item	Number of Items Bought Per Month	Total Cost Per Month	Total Cost Per Year (monthly cost x 12)
Candy bar <i>EXAMPLE</i>	<i>55¢</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>\$8.80</i>	<i>\$105.60</i>
Fast-food meal <i>EXAMPLE</i>	<i>\$4.79</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>\$38.32</i>	<i>\$459.84</i>
Soda				
CDs				
DVDs				
Eating out				
Going to movies				
Entertainment				
Clothes				
Magazines				
Membership dues				