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SECTION 1

# Controlling Your Spending

Controlling spending is hard for many people. Some people make bad spending choices over and over. Then, they never seem to have enough money for the things they need. Other people try to be careful. But they don't understand some basic ideas about smart spending. You can take control of your spending by correcting your bad habits and learning how to avoid costly mistakes.



### It All Adds Up!

Erin was glad to get home! She'd had classes all morning and then worked an eight-hour shift at the store. Now, she was ready to relax. She'd have the apartment all to herself. Her roommate, Cassie, was working tonight.

But when Erin walked into the apartment, she immediately tensed up. The TV was blaring in the living room, and the lights were on all through the apartment. A nearly full can of soda was sitting on the kitchen counter. Next to it was an open container of takeout food from the deli.

“Cassie . . .” Erin muttered to herself, as she tossed the container into the wastebasket.





This wasn't the first time Erin had come home to a situation like this. Cassie was wasteful, in Erin's view. She didn't worry about what things cost. And she never planned how to spend what she earned. Last summer, she'd even bought a new car without giving it much thought.

Keeping up with the payments on that car was hard for Cassie. She also had some credit card bills to pay. More and more, she struggled to pay her share of the rent and utilities. Erin worried that soon, Cassie wouldn't have enough money. And then Erin would get stuck paying more than her share!

Erin didn't consider herself a financial genius. But she had common sense about spending money. She knew that it was easy to form bad habits. She also knew that little things add up. And she knew that she couldn't have everything she wanted.

She wished Cassie knew some of these things too.

