

In Real Life

In Real Life - Saving Money in a Digital World

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When it comes to saving money for a big purchase or a vacation, traditional ways to save often come to mind. Perhaps you still use a piggy bank or withdraw cash to safeguard in an envelope. What if instead you used a piece of equipment that you carry with you every day? Smartphones can remind us of meetings, birthdays and other life events, but what if those notifications also helped curb spending or gave us advice on how to save more efficiently? Well, there's an app for that. Actually, there are many apps that can put help you on the road to financial success.

- First, you will need to create a budget. How much will the purchase cost or how much are you willing to spend? Researching prices or travel costs can save you time and money in the long run. A budget will also help you set realistic goals. Apps, such as **Pocketguard** and **Spendee**, help you create budgets based on your spending habits. Tracking your expenses can become tedious when you have more than one bank account or credit card. A good savings app will allow you to link all your accounts in one place. Spendee will allow you to create a shared account with family members so everyone can help save.
- Whether it is grocery shopping or eating out, food is a necessity. Making a list before you go shopping is a good way to avoid impulse buying. **Coupon Sherpa** and **Checkout 51** are apps which can help save some cash at the grocery store. **AnyList** app organizes your grocery list by department and helps you plan meals. Limiting the number of times you eat out is a great way to save, but when you do, apps like **Bite Hunter** and **Scoutmob** can help you find exclusive restaurant deals. A few nights a month, challenge yourself to stay home and only eat what you have in your pantry.
- Another way to make some extra cash is to sell items you are no longer using. Gone are the days of setting up yard sales, organizing and pricing items. **Decluttr** and **Letgo** are apps you can use to get rid of used electronics, clothes or furniture. Decluttr will even link to your PayPal account to make it easier for you to receive payments.
- On weekends, you don't have to stay home to save money. Instead of spending on entertainment, use apps such as **Eventbrite** and **Like a Local** to find free events in your area. Parks and farmers' markets are free and fun things to do when weather permits.

If you still aren't comfortable with using your smartphone for everything, just stick to what you know. One or two changes may not make a difference, but the combination of incorporating several money saving tips will add up. Soon you will be on vacation or making that big purchase. Just remember ... save now, enjoy later.