

START SMART: BUDGETING BASICS



A budget helps you take control of your money, save for your goals, and plan for what matters most.

WITH A BUDGET, YOU CAN:



Stay within your income each month



Focus on what matters most to you



Understand where your money is being spent



Save money for future goals and emergencies



Spot areas where you might be spending too much



Think carefully before making big purchases

HOW TO BUILD A BUDGET

- ✓ Write down your monthly income.
- ✓ List regular expenses like housing, utilities, insurance, loans, and subscriptions.
- ✓ Track everyday spending such as groceries, gas, dining, and small purchases.
- ✓ Set aside money for non-monthly costs like repairs, holidays, or memberships.
- ✓ Choose a savings goal and add it to your plan.
- ✓ Review your budget and adjust as needed.



Keep It Real: Create a plan that fits your lifestyle and is realistic enough to maintain.



SET GOALS THAT MATTER TO YOU

- ✓ Building an emergency fund
- ✓ Paying down credit card balances
- ✓ Saving for a vacation
- ✓ Buying a vehicle
- ✓ Making a down payment on a home
- ✓ Planning for college or trade school expenses
- ✓ Preparing for a major life event or purchase

FIND THE RIGHT BUDGETING METHOD



A notebook



A spreadsheet



A budgeting app



Online banking tools



SIMPLE WAYS TO SAVE MORE

- ✓ Plan meals and limit takeout or restaurant spending
- ✓ Compare prices before making purchases
- ✓ Use coupons, discounts, and rewards when available
- ✓ Review subscriptions and cancel ones you no longer use
- ✓ Set a weekly spending limit for extras
- ✓ Bring coffee, snacks, or lunch from home when possible
- ✓ Automate a portion of each paycheck into savings

TAKE CONTROL OF DEBT

- ✓ Pay at least the minimum payment on every account each month
- ✓ Put extra money toward the balance with the highest interest rate
- ✓ Avoid adding new balances when possible
- ✓ Consider consolidating debt if it makes sense for your situation
- ✓ Celebrate progress along the way, even when it feels small



WE'RE HERE TO HELP

Budgeting gets easier with practice. If you have questions about saving, managing debt, building credit, or choosing financial tools, call or visit your local PFFCU branch. We're here to help you feel more confident about your financial future!