

Fall 2016

# Empowering Financial Success®



## 10 ways to reduce spending this week

Reducing spending doesn't have to be a painful or negative experience. Here are some simple ways you can cut your spending this week without dramatically changing your lifestyle:

**1. Track your expenses.** The first step to altering spending habits is to determine where your money is currently going. Seeing how you are currently spending may reveal some easy changes you can make right away. Corporate America Family Credit Union (CAFCU) offers the perfect tool for this: Money Manager. Visit [www.cafcu.org/MoneyManager](http://www.cafcu.org/MoneyManager) for details.

**2. Make a list before shopping.** This will cut down on impulse purchases and also prevent you from forgetting items that would call for a follow-up trip later. Also, don't forget the No. 1 rule of shopping for groceries: Never shop hungry!

**3. Check ads and look for coupons.** While it's important not to purchase items just because they are on sale, looking for items you already plan to purchase or planning meals around what is on sale can make sense financially.

**4. Organize a bring-your-lunch-to-work day.** Lunchtime may be your favorite time to catch up with co-workers, but that doesn't mean you have to spend money eating out. Decide on a day that everyone brings their own lunch and enjoy the social experience without the restaurant price.

**5. Unsubscribe from daily deal emails and sale announcements.** This may seem counterproductive but think about what actually happens. When you get one of these daily deal

emails, you often purchase an item you had not been in the market for simply because it's a "good deal." This isn't actually saving you money unless it's an item that you would have purchased anyway.

**6. Buy used, not new.** Not everything you buy has to be brand new. Certainly this doesn't mean buying junk, but there are plenty of good options for buying used items from thrift shops and yard sales, to Craigslist and eBay.

**7. Bike!** Decide on the best time to use your bicycle for getting around locally. Whether it's commuting to work or just running to the corner store, biking means less money spent on gas and has the added benefits of exercise.

**8. Evaluate your energy use.** Unplug appliances that are not in use and turn off lights when they aren't needed to save on your energy bill.

**9. Call your cable and internet providers to negotiate a lower bill.** Most offer a wide range of products with various prices. Service representatives often have some discretion over prices for these services, so a little negotiation can make a difference on your monthly bill.

**10. Take advantage of CAFCU's Mobile Banking App.** One of the easiest ways to track your spending is by using your CAFCU Visa® debit/credit card and our Mobile Banking App. You can also use our Online Bill Pay and mobile deposit features to save money on items like gas and stamps.

### EMPOWERING TIP

**Pay yourself first on pay day.** It's a simple idea ... just take a percentage from your paycheck, put it into one of our Savings Accounts and watch it grow! Visit [www.cafcu.org/savings](http://www.cafcu.org/savings) or call 1-800-359-1939.





## An inside look

# How Corporate America Family Credit Union offers low loan rates

Like many members of CAFCU, you may appreciate that we offer low interest rates on auto loans, personal loans, mortgages, credit cards and other forms of credit. But you may wonder how we're able to so consistently offer attractive rates when banks often have higher ones. It's not magic. A lot of it has to do with the unique status of credit unions as not-for-profit cooperatives.

### People helping people

As a credit union, we're owned and governed by our members. Our purpose is not to turn a profit, but to serve the financial needs of our members. While banks need to make a profit to satisfy their stockholders, as a credit union, our members are our shareholders. We return profits to you in the form of dividends on savings, low rates on loans, great service, and fewer and lower fees.

Being not-for-profit saves us money on expenses, too:

- > **Fewer taxes.** Credit unions are exempt from federal income taxes and most state taxes because we operate on a not-for-profit basis, are organized without capital stock and operate for mutual purposes (entirely by and for our members). Although credit unions don't pay incomes taxes, we do pay property, sales and payroll taxes.
- > **Volunteer board service.** Banks have a paid board of directors. The people who serve on credit union board of directors are volunteers, democratically elected from the membership by you, the members.
- > **Sharing with other credit unions.** Through the CO-OP® network, you have access to thousands of surcharge-free ATMs and shared branch locations all across the country. This allows you to conduct transactions at other credit unions similar to those you would at a CAFCU branch.

### Looking out for you

All of this helps us keep loan rates low so you can fit your purchases comfortably into your budget. Plus, we make it easy — you can even apply online for many loans. Visit [www.cafcu.org](http://www.cafcu.org) to learn more or check rates.

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Not all credit unions are created equal. I would definitely recommend CAFCU over traditional banks and other credit unions because you actually care about the needs of your [members]. You prove that by offering low interest rates on credit cards and loans. In addition, you offer a number of financial advising tools for members to better position themselves in reaching their financial goals.”

—Erika F., Chicago, IL





Ready to explore your credit card options? Get an overview of CAFCU's Visa credit cards at [www.cafcu.org/visa](http://www.cafcu.org/visa).

## Should I open a new credit card?

Have you grown attached to your old credit card? It's a common sentiment — according to CreditCards.com, 25 million U.S. consumers have been using their favorite card for at least 10 years. But if it's been five or more years since you first got your credit card, you might be missing out on perks you aren't even aware of. Let's look at a few of the advantages and disadvantages of opening a new credit card.

### Perks of a new card can include ...

- > **Better rewards points and cash-back offers.** Older credit cards may not offer much in the way of rewards. With the wide range of rewards cards now available, it's a great opportunity to start earning more points or cash than ever for your purchases. For example, Corporate America Family Credit Union (CAFCU) offers Visa® card rewards programs. Visit [www.cafcu.org/rewards](http://www.cafcu.org/rewards) for more information.
- > **Lower interest rates.** If you don't pay off your credit card in full each month, then you may want to switch to a card

with a lower interest rate. Even if the rates you're offered are similar to your current card's, you may be able to lower your costs temporarily thanks to introductory interest rate offers.

- > **No annual fee.** You may qualify for a rewards card that doesn't charge you an annual fee. Instead of this fee, these cards tend to charge larger foreign transaction fees and give reduced rewards. This tradeoff may be appealing if the annual fee on other cards is larger than what you'll earn from rewards.
- > **Demonstrating your ability to balance multiple cards.** If you keep your old card open (and active) in addition to getting a new one, then you can improve your credit score. Just keep paying off your credit cards on time to show your reliability.

### Beware of ...

- > **Spending more than you do now.** You may be tempted to spend more money to earn more rewards. Don't change

your spending habits if it means you'll be unable to pay off your credit card debt on time each month.

- > **Closing old cards.** Closing your old card can have a negative impact on your credit score. It could shorten the length of your credit history. Plus, if closing old cards leaves you with just one credit card, you'll be spending a greater proportion of your available credit.
- > **Missing payments.** If you're using more than one credit card for the first time, be careful about letting payments slip under the radar. Consider opting in to automatic monthly payments to prevent any late fees.
- > **Applying for many cards at once.** Sending out many credit card applications within a short time period sends a red flag to creditors. You'll be seen as a greater risk, lowering your credit score and possibly causing rejections or higher interest rates.



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## Holiday Closings

### Veterans Day

Friday, November 11

### Thanksgiving

Thursday, November 24

Friday, November 25

### Christmas

Friday, December 23

Monday, December 26

### New Year's Day

Monday, January 2

## Get the CAFCU app!

Manage your CAFCU account anytime on-the-go with our Mobile Banking App. Check account balances, transfer funds, pay bills and find ATMs nearby. The list goes on! Visit **www.cafcu.org/app** to learn more.



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**What level are you?** The more involved you are with CAFCU, the higher your Member Loyalty Level and the greater the discounts on loans you can receive. Call our Member Center at **1-800-359-1939** to find out more.



# Healthy foods for a healthy wallet

Sure, we all want to eat a healthy diet. But who can afford to do that? Healthy food is expensive ... isn't it? The truth is, you can eat healthy without overspending. Here are a few low-cost examples to get you started:



**Brown rice.** Brown rice has nutrient-rich layers that are removed from white rice. These layers provide fiber, B vitamins, protein and a variety of minerals. Switch to brown rice for one of the most cost-effective whole-grain options available, with a cost of about 18 cents per serving.



**Nonfat Greek yogurt.** Yogurt has become a popular choice thanks in part to its calcium, vitamin D and probiotics, aka "good" bacteria. Greek yogurt offers similar benefits, plus it packs more protein. It's also low in lactose and easy to digest. Look for larger packages available for around 89 cents per serving.



**Eggs.** Eggs provide a wealth of nutrients, including protein, selenium, zinc, iron, copper and vitamins D, B2, B6 and B12; all for only 22 cents per egg. And while eggs may be high in cholesterol, egg cholesterol has a minimal effect on blood cholesterol compared to saturated and trans fats. To keep your cholesterol levels in check, those who don't have diabetes should eat no more than seven eggs per week, while those who do should stick to four eggs or less.



**Spinach.** Spinach is a great source of iron, magnesium, folic acid and vitamins A, C and K. It might not make you as strong as Popeye, but it may increase your energy and boost your immune system. The leafy green also contains carotenoids that are known to protect against age-related vision diseases. Find spinach for around 85 cents per serving.



**Bananas.** They're America's most popular fruit for a reason — bananas are tasty, cheap, versatile, and have a wealth of nutrients. At an average of 20 cents each, you can blend the flavorful fruit into some yogurt and enjoy the benefits of potassium, fiber, magnesium and vitamins B6 and C.

Don't drain your accounts trying to fill your stomach. Track your spending and all of your finances with Money Manager! Visit **www.cafcu.org/MoneyManager** for more information.