

5 Ways to Save Money as a Family

- **Make your own gifts** : Make homemade gifts like food mixes, candles, soap, sugar scrubs, decorated frames, etc., with the kids for birthdays and holidays. Or give the gift of service – offer to babysit for free, mow a lawn for the summer, shovel a driveway, etc.
- **The thirty day rule**: Anytime someone wants to make an unnecessary purchase, have them write the desired item down, and read it again in 30 days. You might find you don't want the impulse item after all, have found ways to live without it, or saved enough money to finally buy the item.
- **Replace entertainment costs with free options**: Instead of taking the family to the movies, check out a DVD for free at your local library. Instead of eating out to celebrate an occasion, have a special meal where each family member gets to choose a food to cook at home. Take advantage of free days at local zoos and museums.
- **Pack food and snacks** : No matter what your errands, having food on hand provides an instant fix for hunger pains, and will keep you from stopping for fast food on the way home or wherever you and your family are headed next.
- **Make your own household items**: Look for do-it-yourself recipes for items you tend to use a lot (glass cleaner, laundry detergent), and ask the kids to help you mix up your own versions. Then have the kids color labels for your homemade items!