

Frugal Living: The Ultimate Guide to Saving Money in 2022

By Ramona Denton



What do you think of when you hear the words “frugal living”?

Do you see a hard-working man with calloused hands, without enough pennies to buy food for his family?

Do you envision depression-era children in torn overalls, with bare feet and dirty faces, who may go to bed without supper if the bread line ran out of food?

That's not frugal; that's poor!

And frugal living is not about being poor.

It's about having a rich life, even if you're not rich in money.

It's about managing your spending in a way that keeps more of your hard-earned cash in your wallet and less of it on Walmart's profit sheet.

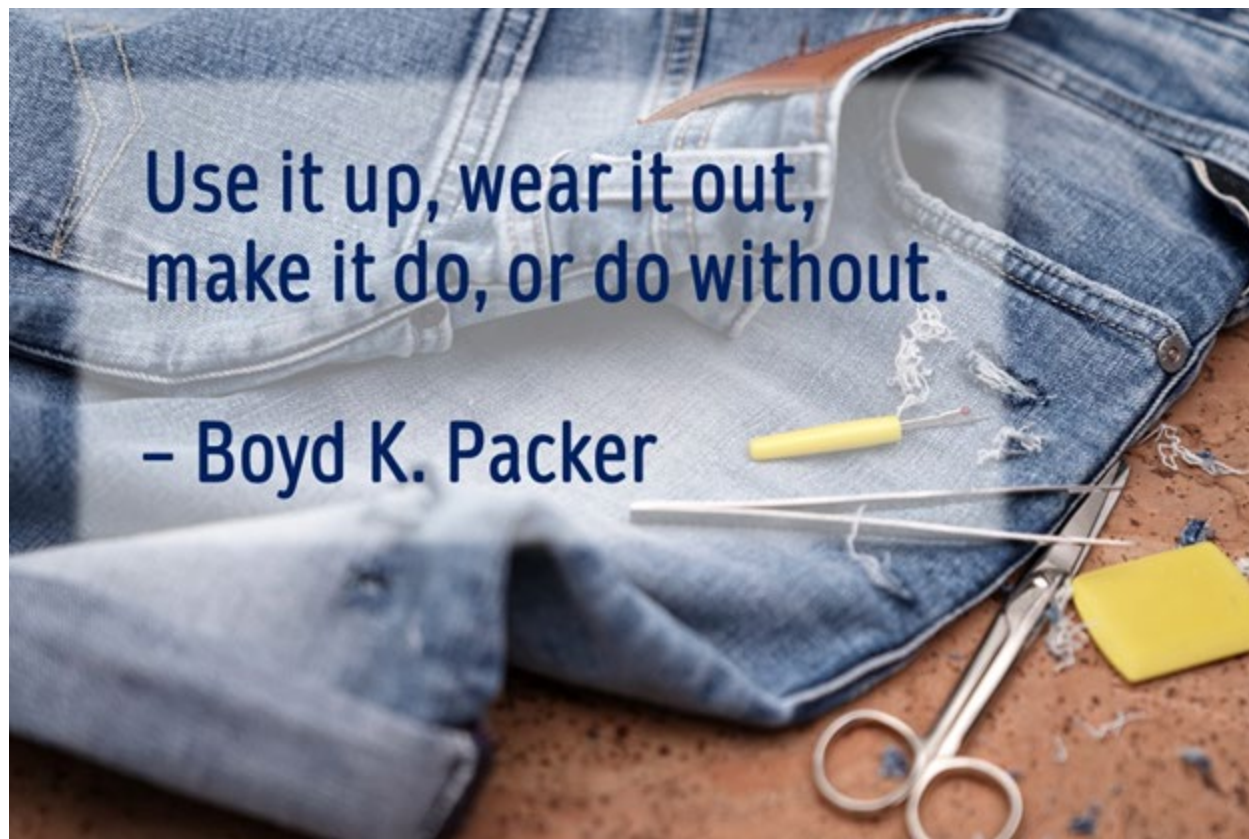
More than half of Americans survive paycheck-to-paycheck. Most are only a few paychecks away from financial ruin.

That's bad news.

The good news is: you could be only a few paychecks away from victory over that treadmill of paycheck-to-paycheck misery.

And you can do it through **frugal living**.

What is frugal living?



A frugal living definition

Frugal living is primarily about careful budgeting, smart spending and being creative, to get the most value for your money, time and possessions.

Frugal living helps you save money to “put back” in your pocket, but it is more than just saving money on what you buy.

It is also choosing not to buy something you don't really need.

Making something instead of buying it. Mending something instead of replacing it.

What does a frugal person do?

- Live within your means.
- Spend, save and invest money wisely.
- Be smart with your possessions. Buy, barter, trade. Make it yourself, fix it, sell it.
- Be generous, give things you no longer use to charity or someone in need.
- Avoid high-interest debt.

Living a frugal lifestyle does not mean being a Scrooge who gets by on the cheapest, poorly-made junk.

But it does mean getting the *best value* for every dollar you spend.

Which is the better value?

Buying one pair of high-quality shoes for \$200, and repairing them occasionally to make them last for years, or buying several pairs of cheaply made \$50 shoes?

Is it a better value to mend your clothes, or just throw them out at the first signs of wear?

Living a frugal lifestyle might mean you will buy fewer things, or fewer *new things*. But it doesn't have to mean making huge sacrifices and acting like a cheapskate.

You will have the things you need, but your ideas about what things you need, and how to get them, will begin to change.

When you see something new or popular on Amazon, or in the shopping mall, you will not feel compelled to buy it unless you need it.

If it won't enhance your life, you won't even want it.

Transform your attitude about the things you buy, by embracing this frugal living tip from the great depression:

“Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without.”

– Boyd K. Packer

Is it worth being frugal?



The numerous advantages of frugal living

You will have cash in the bank when you need it most.

- An emergency fund for unforeseen events (like losing your job).
- Savings for planned future spending (like college for your kids).
- Paying off your debt faster (like your mortgage).
- Investments that put your money to work for you (like a growing retirement account).
- Money to spend on travel, charity, helping friends in need, and other things you were not able to afford living paycheck to paycheck.

You will have peace of mind because you are managing your finances instead of letting your finances manage you.

- Focus on the most important things in life like family, friends and relationships.
- Sleep better when you decrease (and then eliminate) financial worries.

- Enter into new levels of financial freedom as you watch your savings and investments grow. Early retirement, anyone?

How do you get started with frugal living?

Food is one of your biggest expenses, but also one of the most flexible.

So it's a great place to start saving!

Can you live a simple frugal life and still enjoy your favorite foods?



Yes, you can still have your favorite foods.

In fact, you may be able to eat more of your favorite foods, once you stop buying every gadget that pops up on “you might also like.”

Fast Action Tips you can start using TODAY to save \$100's on your food budget

Many of these tips can be “balanced” between saving a little or a lot, by making bigger and smaller changes. When you need to save a little more, pick a few items to cut way back or eliminate, until you have a little more wiggle room in your budget.

1. Make your own coffee, tea and energy drinks.

Buying a daily latte costs about four bucks a day, or an average of \$88 per month. You can make your own coffee for under \$1, and save \$66 a month.

2. Drink water

If you can't drink your tap water, get a filtering system or a pitcher. If you buy drinking water, buy it in bulk to lower the cost and reduce plastic waste. Carry water with you in reusable containers.

3. Buy soft drinks at the supermarket or club store (or not at all).

Avoid buying drinks on-the-run at gas stations, convenience stores and vending machines, where you'll pay hyper-inflated prices. Buy soft drinks in bulk at a supermarket or warehouse store, and pack them to take on-the-go.

4. Cook at home.



Cooking at home is more nutritious and economical than eating in restaurants. Experiment with making your own sauces and spice mixes.

Bonus: If you cook for anybody with allergies or food sensitivities, you can control the ingredients in their meals and prevent negative reactions.

5. Pack lunches for school or work.

Lunches from school cafeterias and work catering services cost as much as \$15. For that price, you could pack a juicy ribeye steak!

Encourage family members to eat their home-packed meals! Get them on board with the family savings plan so you can save that money for something everyone will enjoy.

6. Pack your own snacks and “convenience” foods in reusable containers.

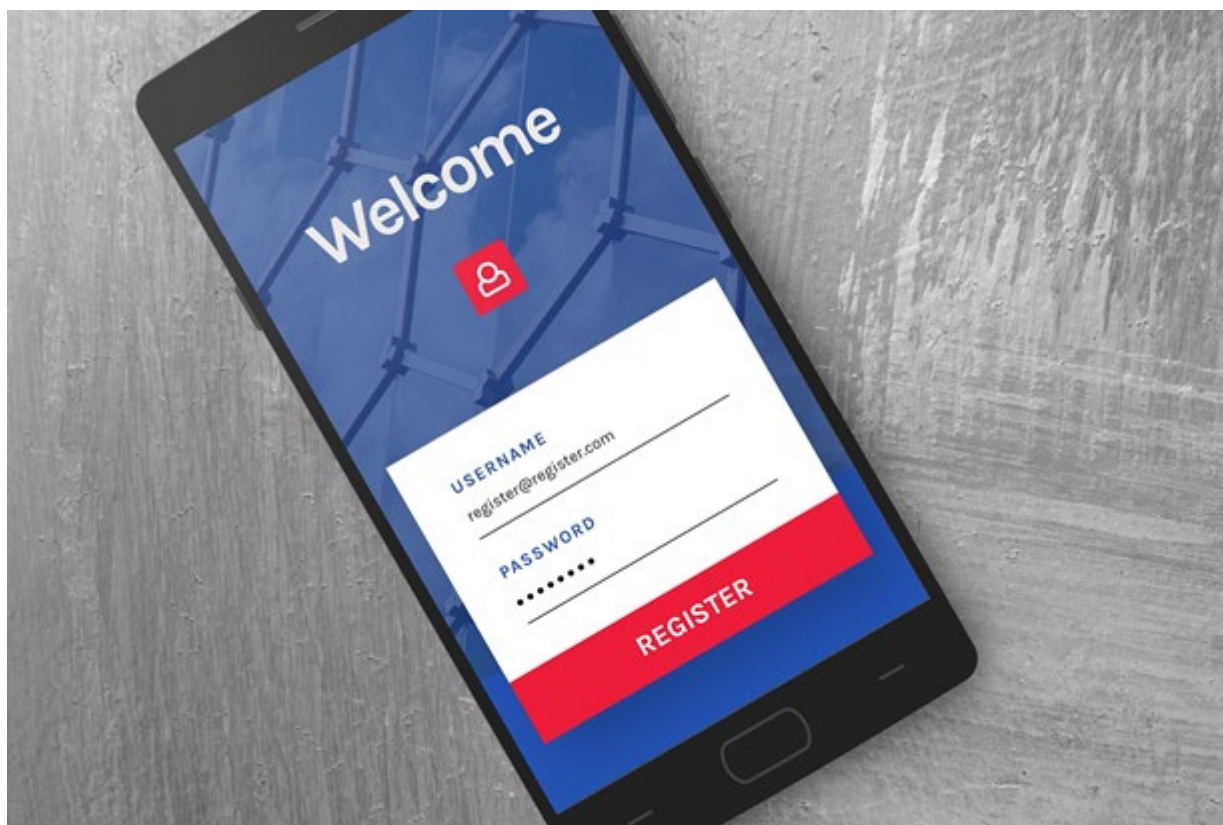
Instead of buying a pre-packed celery/carrot sticks or apple slices with dip, get some reusable containers, and pack your snacks at home.

Choose foods that are shelf stable, or will keep in the fridge for a few days, so you can make them ahead of time, and grab them quickly when you pack lunches.

7. Use discount coupons.

Clipping coupons is a time-tested way to save money at the supermarket. Beware of buying foods you would not normally buy just because you have a coupon. Shop at stores that double your coupons.

8. Try a [smart phone app](#).



Some smart phone apps can save you money on groceries: [Ibotta](#), [Fetch Rewards](#), [Checkout51](#), and [Coupons.com](#).

Caution: If you don't want to share personal information, be careful about signing up for apps that monitor your buying habits.

9. Buy generic store brands instead of pricier national brands.

If you can get the same quality pork and beans for \$0.79, why pay \$1.50? Buy the big bag of store brand Oat-O's cereal and get double or triple the value.

If you have certain brand loyalties, or if your favorite brand of boxed mac and cheese is important to you, go ahead and buy your brand. For other products, get generic versions.

10. Plan your meals and shop by your meal plans.

Choose one or two cuisines or themes each week, to help leverage ingredients, and rotate flavors throughout the week. Who knows? You might find a new favorite!

11. Plan some of your meals around inexpensive main ingredients.

Make a plate of leftovers, deviled eggs, cheese and crackers, or crusty bread to go with a main course like split pea soup, baked beans, spaghetti, chili, spicy beans and rice, or a delicious potato (or cauliflower) au gratin casserole.

12. Buy items in bulk and on sale, and freeze them in handy portions.

Buying several pounds of meat in one package is usually \$1–2 less per pound. If you can combine bulk savings with sales prices, you can double that or more!

13. Invest in a good freezer.

Store bulk purchases, home-packed meals and leftovers in the deep freeze.

14. Cook in bulk.

Pack extra portions into “dinner kits” for later in the week, or into single portions for meals on the go. Learn some new recipes and experiment with flavors you haven’t used before to stretch those bulk purchases into a variety of delicious meals.

15. Cut back on alcohol.

Frugal living does not mean you have to give up luxuries like beer and wine, or an ice cold margarita now and then. If you love a glass of wine with dinner, have it. Enjoy it. Enjoy your beer.

The point of frugal living is not to deny yourself everything that brings you pleasure and joy, but to choose what pleasures you are willing to pay for, and which you would rather cut back on, or do without, when other needs take a higher priority.

16. Go to a local farmer or farmer’s market for local, in-season produce and fresh eggs and dairy.

Some farmer’s markets have great bargains on fresh, local foods, and some seem to be trading posts for over-priced gourmet fare.

If you haven’t been to your local farmer’s market, go check it out, and see if you can get some fresh, local foods for the same price or better than supermarket prices. You might even be able to haggle the prices down a little as you become a regular customer.

17. Try a grocery delivery service.

Having your groceries delivered could help you stick to your planned grocery list. You can’t make those emotional purchases at the check stand if you’re not in the store.

Simple frugal living tips to cut costs at home, and be more eco-friendly too!



Fast Action Tips you can start using TODAY to reduce your household expenses and personal products

1. Saving energy is saving money: Turn things off when you're not using them.

Unplug small appliances and electronic devices while not in use or charging.

2. Change out your light bulbs.

LED light bulbs are cheaper to run, and last years. There is an investment up front, but you will save money over the long term.

3. Reduce your use of the big energy consumers: heating and air conditioning.

Set your thermostat up a few degrees in the summer, and down a few in winter. Get a programmable thermostat, so you can automate daily and weekly time zones to

maximize savings. Use a fan to keep a little cooler without using the air conditioner as much.

4. Install ceiling fans.



5. Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed.

When removing foods to prepare, try to get out everything you need in one or two moves. When putting away hot leftovers, allow food to cool down a little before putting it in the refrigerator.

6. Wash your dishes by hand.

If you use a dishwasher, only run it with a full load.

7. Do your laundry in cold water.

Unless your laundry is especially soiled, save the cost of heating the water to wash your clothes. If you are able to use a clothesline, save some power by hanging your clothes up to dry in the fresh air.

8. Fix things instead of replacing them.

Repairs are often a better value than new purchases. Do it yourself if you can, but even if you can't fix everything yourself, call a handyman or technician to take care of home repairs.

9. Buy used or on sale.

Some things are perfectly good to buy used, or can be easily checked for quality.

It is often worth waiting for an item to go on sale before you buy it. If you have the option, make the most of it. Call around and find out when the item you need will be going on sale.

10. Shop at thrift shops or discount stores.

Many types of products can be found at dollar stores that are more than adequate for your needs. Try a few products, and make a note of how they work for you.

You can always go back to the more expensive product if you want, but you can save significant money by using products that only cost a dollar.

11. Get rid of disposable paper and plastic products.

Use cloth napkins, kitchen towels, and reusable food containers. Take a more radical approach and get a bidet to cut way back on (or even eliminate) toilet paper.

12. Catch up on household maintenance, repairs and improvements that save water or energy.

Fix that leaky faucet. Get eco-friendly fixtures. Upgrade your insulation and weather stripping. Find out how much you could save with a tankless water heater.

13. Reduce your TV entertainment packages.

See if you can save money by reducing your bundled services, or switching to a cheaper service. Reduce the number of streaming subscriptions you pay for each month to one or two, and rotate them so you get to see a little of everything.

14. Get free entertainment.

Your local public library has books, DVDs, audio CDs, and e-books that can be borrowed for free.

15. Find places to go and things to do that are free.

Go to local museums on free admission days. Have a picnic in a park or public recreation area. Plan your picnic when there's a free concert.

Borrow things you only need once in a while. Don't have a tent? Borrow some camping gear, and go on a family campout.

16. Spend less on makeup and barber/beauty/salon treatments.

Cut back on makeup and personal beauty products, or switch to a less expensive brand. Make your own facial mask, cleanser and deodorant.

Reduce the frequency of your salon visits. Learn how to do it yourself. Maybe you can do your own nails, and still go to the salon for haircuts. Or go to a less expensive salon.

17. Make your own home cleaning products

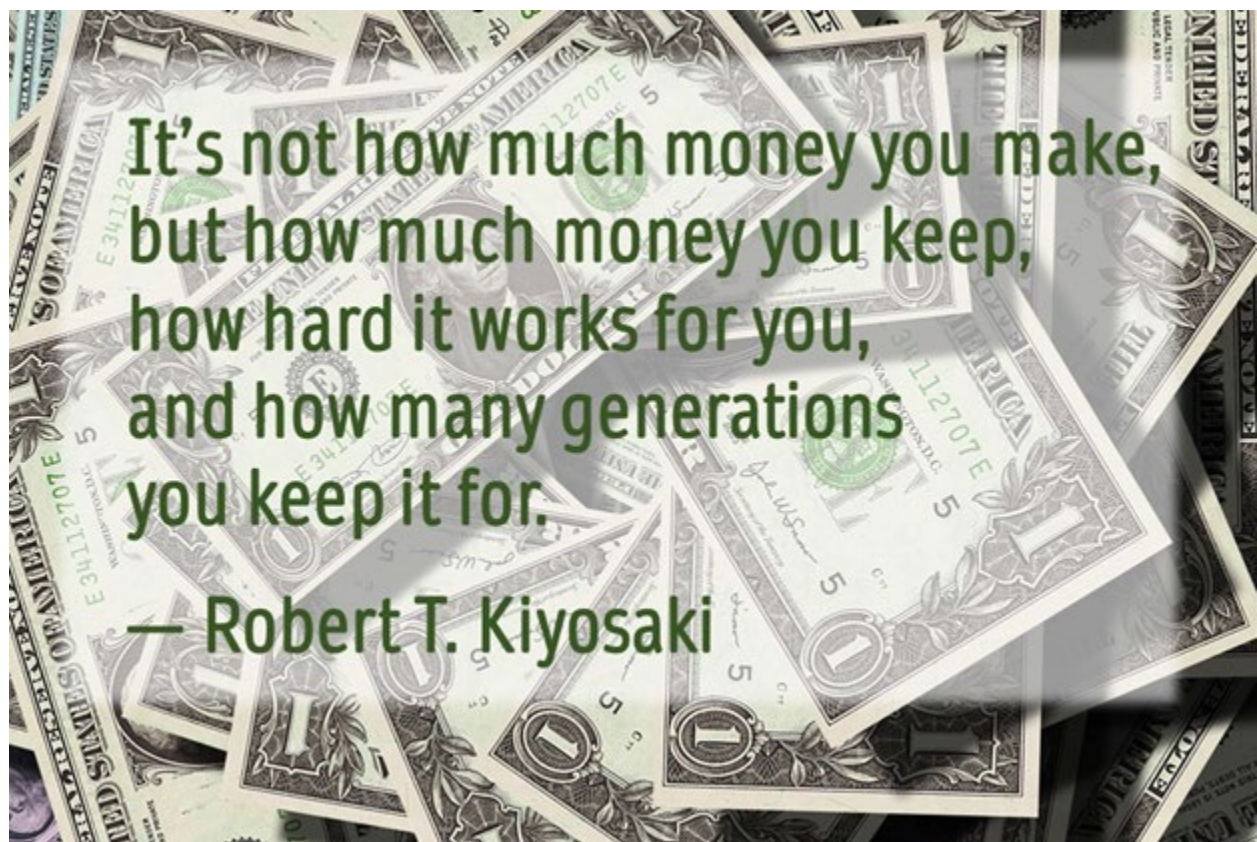
Use simple ingredients like bleach, baking soda or vinegar mixed with water, or try a fancy formula with lemon rind, orange essential oil or rosemary sprigs.

It wasn't that long ago that everybody made their own household cleaners. And it's still an option today, if you want to save money and eliminate toxic chemicals from your home.

18. Be resourceful (and generous) with things you don't need or no longer use.

Have a yard sale. Sell things on Amazon marketplace, Craig's List, or at the swap meet. Trade with someone who has something you can use. Give your unwanted possessions to charity or someone in need.

Can young adults benefit from frugal living?



Young adults can literally turn their savings and investments into a mega jackpot.

Your earliest investments will have 40, 45 or even 50 years to grow before you need to live off your earnings!

You can master great frugal lifestyle habits before you've spent 30 years living paycheck-to-paycheck, tossing and turning all night, worrying about how you'll pay the next unexpected bill.

Top 10 frugal living tips for young adults: Get a huge financial advantage over your peers!

- Focus on the most important things in life: family, friends, relationships. Love. The things money can't buy.
- Live within your means.
- Save at least 10% of your income. Then increase it to 20%.
- Don't buy things you don't need.
- Learn not to want everything you see.
- When you make significant purchases go for long-term value over price tag.
- Plan for future expenses, save up, pay cash and avoid the debt trap.
- Start a side gig to earn extra cash.
- Earn the highest possible return on your investments
- Attend a college, university or vocational school that is appropriate for your degree program and budget.

Can being frugal make you rich?



If you earn a lot of money, and save most of it, you could do pretty well.

But if you take some of those dollars you aren't spending, and start investing them at a young age, you can put them to work for you, and find yourself winning that mega jackpot: financial freedom!

According to [The Money Guy Show](#), if you start investing at age 20, you can invest as little as \$100 per month to become a millionaire by the time you're 65.

If you wait until you are 30 to start investing, you would have to invest \$340 per month for the same result.

Start investing NOW!

Frugal living tips for seniors: Make your retirement account last longer!



Seniors can save money on almost everything through special memberships, discounts, coupons and services created just for them.

- Join AARP, AAA or other groups that offer discounts to seniors on various products and services.
- Consider relocating to a senior-friendly condo or apartment. You may be able to find a situation with more value and smaller monthly payments.
- Sign up for Medicare, Medicaid and other government-sponsored assistance as soon as you are eligible.
- Take advantage of rewards programs: grocery, retail shopping, entertainment and travel.
- Order from the senior menu in restaurants. These will usually be smaller portions that cost less.
- If you have your groceries delivered, check with your delivery service for the best available discounts.
- Ask about special senior shopping hours and days at your supermarket, and take advantage of any discounts offered.

More frugal living ideas



- Try a no (or low) spend month.
- Lower your housing expenses.
This takes time and effort, and is not feasible for everyone. But downsizing your home can result in enormous savings.
- Cancel some subscriptions.
- Run errands in one region at a time. Plan your route to reduce mileage and avoid toll roads.
- Carpool to share expenses.
- Do routine car maintenance.
If you can't do it yourself, shop for the best services. But get your oil changes and tune ups. You will get better gas mileage and avoid costly repairs.



- Shop for better auto-insurance prices.
- Get rid of your car payment. Pay off your car, or trade down to a less expensive model.
- Wash your own car.
- Get rid of your car.

If you live where you can ride a bike, walk, or use public transportation, getting rid of your car could equal extreme savings on maintenance, insurance and gasoline. If you are a multiple car family, consider getting rid of one of your cars.

- Bake your own bread, cakes and cookies, etc.
- Can or freeze fruit and vegetables.
- Grow your own food, or pick your food at a farm or co-op.
- Travel in the off season and take advantage of discounts and rewards.
- Get a second job, or start a side gig.
- Stop smoking.

What kind of future do you see for yourself living a frugal lifestyle?



You are not living paycheck-to-paycheck any more!

You are well dressed (when you want to be).

You have money in the bank for unexpected needs.

You have a growing retirement account. Or, maybe you're already retired!

You have no high-interest debt. No car payment.

You own your home, because you were able to save up for a down payment and qualify for a low-interest mortgage.

You have everything you need. And everything you want, because you stopped wanting things you don't need.

You have traveled to some amazing places.

Had some incredible experiences, like riding on a dog sled in Alaska, or attending Carmen at the Sydney Opera House.

Your children will grow up learning good frugal living habits at a young age. And they will have everything they need to live a rich and wonderful life.

You will still experience tough times. We all do. Right?

But you will also have the positive outlook and the financial resources to get you over the rough spots.

And, probably, you'll still have a little money in your wallet at the end of the day.

Give frugal living a try.

You'll be glad you did.

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