



4 Creative Ways to Save Money this Spring

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Spring is right around the corner. Here are some tips to help you save money while taking advantage of spring's change of pace.

1) Take it outside

Unless you participate in winter sports, the cold weather makes it a challenge to get exercise anywhere other than inside. Use the clear sidewalks and extra hour of daylight to take your fitness routine outdoors. You might even be able to cancel your gym membership for a few months and save a significant amount of money.

2) Be a savvy shopper

Winter apparel will be on clearance. Consider replacing that old jacket or boots for new ones at a fraction of the cost. Stop by thrift stores to see what's in stock. This time of year, they're often overrun with inventory from closet cleaning. Not only will consignment shops have a great selection, they'll likely lower prices to make room for more items. Lastly, the weeks between holiday travel and summer vacations, also known as the "shoulder" season, is a good time to benefit from lower prices on travel gear and luggage.

3) Spruce up your cleaning routine

It can be expensive to stock up on all those cleaning solutions and paper products. With only a handful of basic ingredients, you can make a lot of effective cleaners yourself. Typical staples for do-it-yourself cleaners include vinegar, baking soda, lemon juice and hydrogen peroxide. To save money on store-bought cleaning products, conduct a quick search of your favorite brand on a coupon website before you head to the store.

To save paper and cut down on the cost of disposable products, use old t-shirts and cloths instead. If you need new containers to get organized, check out the dollar store for baskets, food storage and desk supplies.

4) Power down

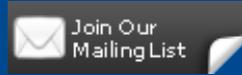
Give the furnace and air conditioner (and your wallet) a break when possible, and open the windows. This will also help air-out your home after a long winter. Spring weather usually means more time spent outdoors, so cut down further on utility bills by powering down and unplugging electronics when you're not home.

Source: www.money.usnews.com

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