

# FINANCIAL FRESHNESS

*A Financial Spring  
Cleaning Checklist From:*




## **DAY 1: MAKE A FINANCIAL GOALS CHECKLIST**

- List out all of your financial goals in order of importance, such as paying off high-interest debt, saving for a dream vacation, etc.
- Determine goal amounts for each goal, as well as timelines such as short-, medium-, and long-term goals

## **DAY 2: ORGANIZE FINANCIAL EMAILS AND DOCUMENTS INTO DIGITAL OR PHYSICAL FOLDERS**

- Go through your email(s) and create folders for things such as invoices, bills, payment notices, etc.
- If you have any financial paperwork such as W2's, bills, invoices, etc., create physical folders for them

## **DAY 3: RE-EVALUATE SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES**

- Make a list of your subscriptions. This can include monthly
- subscriptions like Hulu, Netflix, or Disney+. It can also include periodic subscriptions like phone apps, magazines, Amazon, or grocery store memberships
  - For each subscription, determine whether to cut it, keep it, or see if you are able to decrease it
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## DAY 4: EVALUATE YOUR BUDGET CATEGORY LIMITS

- Review the past few months of your spending and determine if there are any budget categories that need to be increased or decreased. Look for trends - have you overspent on food every month for the past three months?
- Increase or decrease your budget category limits to reflect your realistic spending

## DAY 5: ORGANIZE YOUR BUDGET STATION

- Declutter and organize your budget station or cart

## DAY 6: UNSUBSCRIBE FROM TEMPTING RETAIL MARKETING EMAILS

- Go through your email and unsubscribe from retail marketing emails

## DAY 7: REVIEW YOUR CREDIT REPORT

- Access your credit report at [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com)
- Ensure your personal information, debt information, and credit inquiries are all correct
- If you do find an error, ensure you reach out to the credit reporting company (Experian, Equifax, Transunion) to dispute the errors

## DAY 8: EVALUATE YOUR PLAN TO PAY OFF DEBT

- If you have a plan to pay off debt, ensure you are still prioritizing the correct debt you are currently paying off
- If you have yet to establish a debt payoff plan, choose one! The most popular are:

**Avalanche:** Paying off debts in order from highest interest rate to lowest

**Snowball:** Paying off debts in order from the lowest balance to highest



## DAY 9: SIGN UP FOR PAPERLESS BILLING AND STATEMENTS

- If you receive your bills in the mail, switch to paperless billing to ensure you receive all of your bills on time. Don't forget to organize your bill emails into your new digital folders you created on Day 2!

## DAY 10: SET-UP AUTOMATIC BILL PAY FOR FIXED EXPENSES

- Go to every bill account you pay online, and set-up automatic bill pay to ensure you never miss a payment

## DAY 11: CAN YOU CONSOLIDATE YOUR ACCOUNTS?

- Assess whether consolidating your accounts could benefit your overall financial health

Do you have high-interest credit card debt? If so, consider balance transfers

Do you have too many bank accounts that are too confusing and overwhelming?

## DAY 12: SEE IF YOU CAN SWITCH TO A CELL PHONE PLAN THAT'S MORE AFFORDABLE

- Evaluate your current cell phone plan - how much are you paying? What exactly are you paying for?

- Call your carrier company and see if they have any discounts they can offer you. Additionally, check with your employer to see if they have any discounts with cell phone carrier companies. Some carriers offer discounts for teachers and military members

## DAY 13: CHECK IN WITH YOURSELF ABOUT YOUR RETIREMENT SAVINGS

- Write out your retirement plan - what do you envision when it comes to retirement?

- If you are currently saving for retirement, do you need to change your contribution amount?

YES

NO



## DAY 14: CREATE YOUR BUDGET CALENDAR FOR THE NEW MONTH

- Evaluate what is happening the upcoming month
- Create a budget calendar and ensure to notate your bills on their due date, your pay days, as well as any other appointments, travel, or reminders to ensure you are aware of the spending you will be doing that may be outside of your normal monthly spending

## DAY 15: CREATE OR COMMIT/RECOMMIT TO A FINANCIAL ROUTINE

- Establish a financial routine, such as taking 15 minutes every morning to track your expenses, updating your goal trackers, etc.

## DAY 16: REVIEW INSURANCE POLICIES

- Ensure you are not overpaying for insurance. Call your insurance companies to see if you are able to lower any of your insurance bills

## DAY 17: DO YOU NEED TO UPDATE YOUR TAX WITHHOLDING?

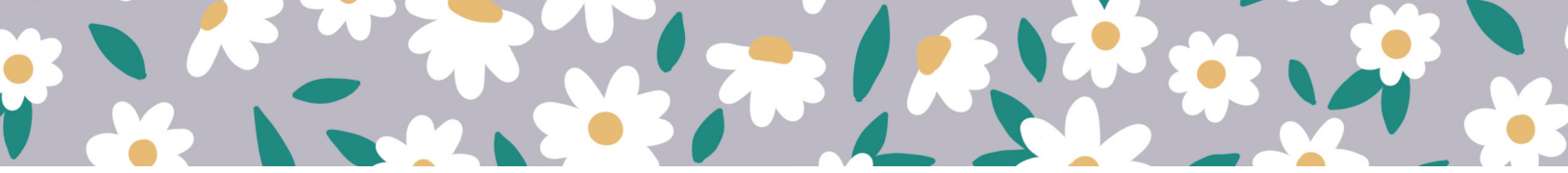
- Review your current tax withholding on your paystub
- Use the IRS Tax Withholding Estimator to determine the appropriate withholding (Google Search)
- If necessary, submit a new W-4 (US) to your employer with updated allowances

## DAY 18: DECLUTTER AND SELL UNWANTED/UNUSED ITEMS

- Go through your belongings and identify items you no longer need or use
- Consider selling them on platforms like Mercari or Facebook Marketplace, or even have a garage sale (you can also choose to donate)

## DAY 19: CLEAN UP YOUR PAPERWORK

- Gather your essential documents and sort them into organized folders, such as taxes, insurance, personal records, etc.



## DAY 20: MAP OUT NEXT MONTH'S BUDGET(S)

- Create your budget based on the worst case scenario, or the least amount you expect to receive
- Map out which bills you are going to be paying with which paycheck (Reference your Budget Calendar you created on Day 14)

## DAY 21: CHECK YOUR FINANCIAL GOAL TRACKERS AND UPDATE PROGRESS

- Color in your financial goal trackers. If you don't use a visual tracker, ensure you are keeping track of your goals and goal progress

## DAY 22: AUTOMATE YOUR SAVINGS

- Through your bank, set up automatic transfers to a savings account of your choice

**Note:** Before setting up the automatic transfer, ensure you are evaluating your budget to ensure you have the room in your budget to do so

## DAY 23: CLEAR OUT PAYMENT APP BALANCES

- Log-in to your Venmo, PayPal, CashApp, or any other app/program where you may have money
- Transfer your balance to your checking account to put towards your financial goals

**Note:** If you use these apps for other purposes, you can disregard these steps. Essentially, just ensure that you're not leaving money just sitting there with no purpose

## DAY 24: BECOME AWARE OF SPENDING HABITS

- Awareness comes from evaluating your true spending





## DAY 25: CREATE NEW CASH ENVELOPES FOR YOUR BUDGET/SINKING FUND

- If you use new cash envelopes every month, start prepping your next month's cash envelopes
- Evaluate your budget to see if there are any future planned events coming up where you have to spend money. If necessary, start a sinking fund to save a little bit every month

## DAY 26: TIDY UP YOUR BUDGET CATEGORIES

- List out your budget categories
- Go through each budget category and determine if you need to combine categories, or create new categories based on your spending

## DAY 27: CREATE A MEAL PLAN SYSTEM

- Research different ways to meal plan that might help you cut back on your food spending
- Incorporate that meal planning system into your life

**Note:** My meal planning system is grocery shopping weekly, and ensuring I base my meals around what I already have at home to cut back on what I have to buy

## DAY 28: CALCULATE YOUR NET WORTH

- List out all of your assets, or things you OWN. Include things like the value of your home (if you own), car (if you own), and even retirement balances, savings accounts balances, etc.
- List out all of your liabilities, or things you OWE. This includes debt balances, as well as how much you owe on your car and home if you own them

Net Worth = Assets - Liabilities



## DAY 29: BEGIN A SAVINGS CHALLENGE

- Implement a savings challenge into your financial routine

**Note:** This can look like saving your change, saving every \$1 bill you come across, or any other challenge you'd like to do. Join our TBM Newsletter to get one savings challenge every single month!

## DAY 30: LIST OUT IMPORTANT DATES

- List out any birthdays, holidays, appointments, vacations, or anything else you may have coming up where you will be spending money
- For each occasion, ask yourself if you need to set up a sinking fund to save for that occasion. That way, you can start saving now and be prepared with cash when the time comes

