

FINANCIAL PLANNING, JOB SEEKER, LAYOFFS, MANAGING FINANCIAL STRESS  
**9 WAYS TO MAKE ENDS MEET WHEN YOU'RE BETWEEN JOBS**



So you're between jobs. Limbo, crisis, transition. No matter what you call it, it's an unsettling time—and for good reason. When you don't know when you'll have a regular income again, expenses that once seemed unremarkable—say, those monthly school loan payments or even coffee with a friend—can suddenly feel daunting.

The good news is that you *can* get control over your finances. After all, while you may feel like you're in this alone, plenty of people have been there before you—and stayed afloat.

The first step, they'll tell you, is: "[update your budget](https://safetynet.com/blog/free-budgeting-excel-template/) [<https://safetynet.com/blog/free-budgeting-excel-template/>]."

## FACE YOUR FINANCES: Budgeting [<https://safetynet.com/blog/free-budgeting-excel-template/>] and Debt

### 1. Write it down.

[Don't have a budget?](http://www.wsj.com/public/page/booktools.html#budget) [<http://www.wsj.com/public/page/booktools.html#budget>], Now's the time.

It doesn't have to be elaborate. By writing it down, you'll know how much money you're really spending every month. Being able to predict your major monthly expenses (housing, food, health care, debt) will give you a goal to work toward.

### 2. Call your creditors.

Lenders are invested in facilitating your loan payments. Many will negotiate with you during unemployment. So bring them in on the problem:

- Start by requesting lower rates;
- Ask about the minimum monthly payment they will accept;
- See if some will suspend your payments for a period of time.



### Free Financial Tools and Resources

SafetyNet is proud to offer free financial tools and resources to help you manage financial stress, get ahead and start saving money.

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Once you know what you need to come up with each month, look for costs you can cut.

### 3. Eliminate unnecessary expenses.

Cancel gym memberships, movie memberships, wine-of-the-month clubs, cable and satellite TV.

Forgo housekeepers, landscaping and other home services. After all, you'll have extra time on your hands until you find a job.

### 4. Put your money where your mouth is.

Plan and prepare every meal.

[Dried beans, rib-sticking starch](http://www.thesimpledollar.com/20-favorite-dirt-cheap-meals/) [<http://www.thesimpledollar.com/20-favorite-dirt-cheap-meals/>] and [double coupon days](https://www.thebalance.com/grocery-stores-that-double-coupons-940217) [<https://www.thebalance.com/grocery-stores-that-double-coupons-940217>] are your friend.

If you're not already buying generic food items, now is the time (Pro tip: often the store brand is the [exact same product](#)

[<http://www.forbes.com/sites/lauraheller/2011/06/29/10-secrets-about-store-brands/#5030744a461d>].)

Cooking in bulk and [freezing produce](https://safetynet.com/blog/tips-freezing-fresh-summer-produce/) [<https://safetynet.com/blog/tips-freezing-fresh-summer-produce/>], or meals for later can save time and money on groceries.

Sure it's time consuming, but the benefits aren't just to your wallet. When you're not depending on preservative-filled quick fixes, you'll likely find yourself healthier, too.

### 5. Waste not.

Wash your laundry in cold water and hang it out to dry when possible.

Adjust the thermostat 5 to 10 degrees.

Shut off those ambient lights!

Lower your water heater temperature by 10 degrees.

Start doing errands on foot. Pull out the bike or walking shoes instead of driving three blocks to the store. (Who needs a gym membership when you're carrying your groceries home, anyway?)

### 6. Deny yourself debt.

Leave your credit cards at home. Yes, this may mean putting off non-essential procedures and even some important needs that you can delay. But nothing will sink your sense of financial control faster than rising debt. Don't do it.

## GET CREATIVE ABOUT CASH: How to Make More Money

Make it your job to find new ways to bring in some cash. As a benefit, you'll keep busy, learn new skills and create new contacts and opportunities.

### 7. Find a short-term job, or two.

If it's the holiday season, retailers may hire you on the spot.

Think of odd jobs you can do that truly help others. Join your neighborhood Facebook group or Nextdoor.com to make the connection. Plenty of folks need help moving, dog walking, house sitting and landscaping. You'll feel good about doing it. And with the proliferation of [digital apps and the gig economy](https://safetynet.com/blog/make-money-between-jobs-gig-economy/) [<https://safetynet.com/blog/make-money-between-jobs-gig-economy/>], it's easy to find work.

Contact temp agencies. Temping is a good option if you want to save yourself the headache of interviewing for short-term work. After interviewing with them, the agency will take care of landing you jobs and paying you regularly. You just show up for work.

### 8. Turn clutter into cash.

[Learn how to sell your stuff online](https://safetynet.com/blog/sell-your-stuff-online-tips/) [<https://safetynet.com/blog/sell-your-stuff-online-tips/>]. Now's the time to clean out the old equipment from the garage, the almost-new coat from the back of the closet and the old electronics gathering dust on the desk.

Don't go for big money—remember, the people buying your "pre-loved" items are looking for a bargain.

Research [Craigslist](http://craigslist.org) [<http://craigslist.org>] and [eBay](http://www.ebay.com/) [<http://www.ebay.com/>] to see what similar items are going for.

Get the family involved, make it a contest. Then bask in your decluttered home.



[<https://safetynet.com/blog/good-with-money-quiz/>]

## SAFEGUARD YOUR FUTURE: Emergency Savings and Income Insurance

### 9. Make a plan.

Instead of languishing, take this sense of urgency to set yourself up with a system. Once you're back on your feet, keep that budget updated and redirect your new savings skills toward building an emergency fund. Even a few dollars a week will add up!

Once employed full time, also look into income insurance such as [SafetyNet](https://safetynet.com/product-basics/) [<https://safetynet.com/product-basics/>],™, which can provide you with cash if you lose your job due to a layoff or disability. For the cost of that cup of coffee you share with a friend each month, you can keep from having to read this article again anytime soon.

Finding yourself between jobs is scary, but there are ways to get through it without going into debt. Take the time to get your finances under control and make smart financial decisions. What are some money saving tips that you have used to control your cash flow between jobs?

DECEMBER 16, 2016 BY MARK GREENE

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