

How To Be Cheap

Now that we're officially in a recession economists say we all have to live more cheaply. It just so happens that being cheap is something I'm very good at.

When you don't have any money you learn how to live on less. When my wife and I lived in Australia as struggling college students we lived on \$40 a week because that's all we had. We lived in a trailer, ate a lot of mutton and we cut our napkins in half so they'd last twice as long. Really, we started our married life pinching pennies and never got out of the habit, so, I'm more than qualified to tell you how to be cheap.

The first place the financial experts say to cut back is on eating out, but you don't have to make such a sacrifice. You just have to change the definition of what eating out is. I'm sure in your area there are free barbecues sponsored by livestock pharmaceutical companies and brokerage houses who want to get your business. The downside to eating these free meals is you might have to listen to boring speeches. ☐ You can also eat for free at neighbor's brandings but you might be expected to actually do some work to earn your meal. Although, I never have. You could go to McDonalds and mix ketchup with hot water to make tomato soup but at some point you're going to need protein.

☐ That's where bull sales come in. During the fall and spring there are bull sales nearly every day and all you have to do is ride the grub line and you'll be eating like a king for free! You should look at a few bulls prior to escaping before the sale starts. (Unless they also offer a free meal after the sale.) Take a big doggie bag along to tie you over during the off season when there are fewer sales.

Anyone who has seen me up close and personal will not find it hard to believe that my wife and I spend very little on clothes. Our jackets come from auction markets and I have enough free caps to last 20 lifetimes. To get free jeans just tell all your relatives that you need their old Wranglers and Levis to make pinkeye patches. When they arrive there are sure to be some jeans that fit you. If not, splurge on a pair of suspenders. As for shoes, here's a great tip: take longer steps and your shoe leather will last twice as long.

I learned early on that you can spend a lot of money shopping so we avoid that activity at all costs. In addition to cutting your napkins in half you can cut down on consumables by reusing Kleenex® and cutting back on toilet paper expenses by collecting it the day after Halloween when you can usually find it draped on houses, cars and trees.

I understand that many people have something called entertainment expenses. If you're in the dating scene take your date to see a free lunar eclipse or house fire instead of a movie and, if you do go out to eat, only pick up a check if it's made out to you. Your date will admire your frugality. If at all possible, find a spouse who was born on February 29 and then you'll only have to buy her a birthday gift every four years.

You can save on energy costs by recharging your electrical gadgets at work and taking a hot water bottle to bed at night. During the last depression people made their own booze in stills and now, thanks to ethanol, you can make your own booze and gas at the same time.

☐ If the kids want to go on a vacation to eat bad food and sleep in strange beds just go mooch off a relative for a week. Or you could just rent a library book and show them pictures of all the pretty places you didn't go visit. If the kids want to ride thrill rides at an amusement park just let them ride in the car with your 95-year-old Grandpa who can't see.

Finally, if you get sick, instead of seeing a doctor go to the drug store and read get-well cards. I'd also recommend that you live a long time to cut down on funeral expenses. They can really kill you.

It's the Pitts

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See how simple being cheap can be?