

Being in control of your money





Being in control of your money

Being in control of your money means you can:

- ✓ understand where your money comes from and where it goes
- ✓ pay your bills on time
- ✓ save money if you want to.

This booklet will help you be more in control of your money. It will also tell you what to do if you get into problems with money.

Sometimes it is good to get help to learn about money. You can ask someone you trust to look at this booklet with you.

This could be:

- friends
- family or carers
- support workers
- advocacy services
- social workers
- Citizens Advice Bureau.

There is also a booklet for carers and supporters. It is called **Supporting someone to manage money - a guide for carers.**

Where does my money come from?

Most people get their money from paid work or from benefits.

When you have a job you will be paid each week or each month for the work you do.

Benefits are payments from the government to help people who do not work or who are on a low pay.

Benefits you can get are:

- housing benefit
- disability living allowance (DLA)
- jobseekers allowance
- incapacity benefit
- income support.



There are other benefits you might be able to get. To make sure you are getting all the benefits you have a right to, go to a Citizens Advice Bureau and ask to speak to a Benefits Adviser.



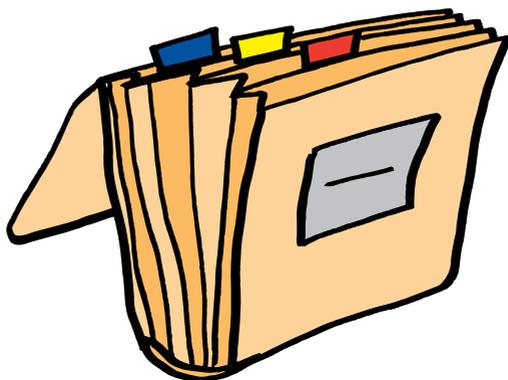
How much money do I have?

To work out how much money you have you can make a budget.

A budget can help you:

- ✓ understand where your money goes
- ✓ save money
- ✓ make sure you do not run out of money.

Making a budget means adding up all the money you get in each week and all the money you pay out each week. From this you can work out how much extra money you have. You can then decide what to do with your extra money. You can spend it or you can save it.



There is information on making a budget at the end of this booklet.
You can also ask someone to help you make a budget.



I don't have enough money!

If you find that you do not have enough money to live on, you need to look at 2 things:

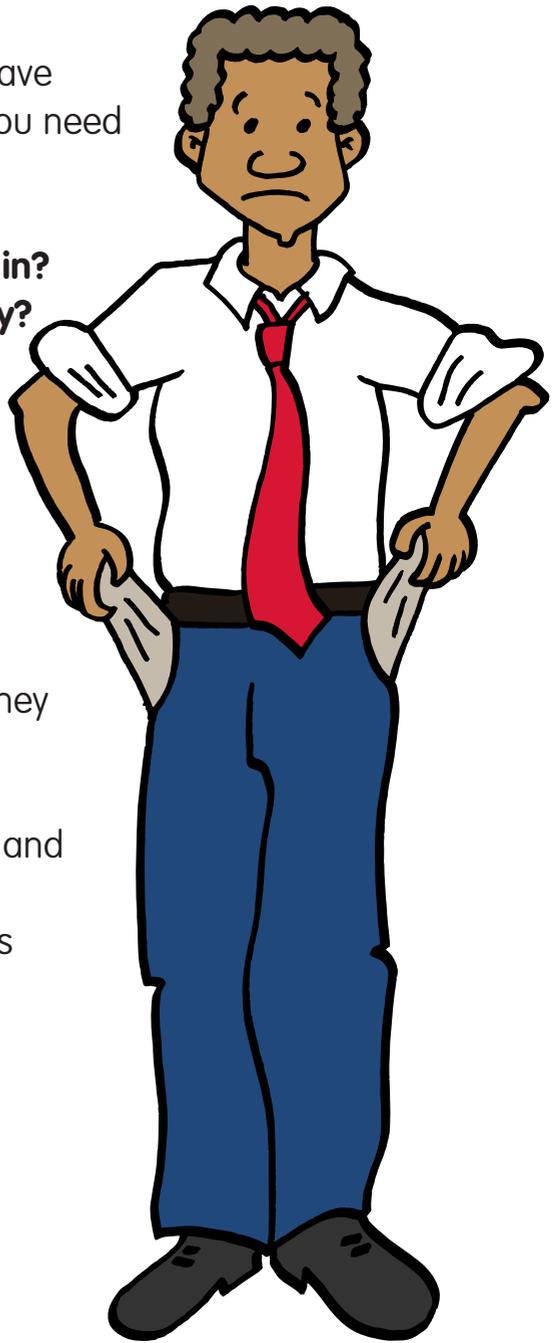
- **Can I get more money in?**
- **Can I spend less money?**

Getting more money in

Having a paid job is one way of getting money in.

If you want to get more money from your job you could:

- ask to work more hours and get more money for this
- look for a job which pays more money.



Another way you might get more money is to check that you are getting all your benefits. To make sure you are getting all the benefits you have a right to, go to a Citizens Advice Bureau and ask to speak to a Benefits Adviser.

A support worker, friend or family member might also be able to help you think of ways to get more money in.

Spending less money

There are some things you need to spend money on - things like bills, clothes and food. These are things you need to live.

There are also things you do not need to spend money on - things like going to the cinema, magazines or take-away food. These are not things you need to live, but it is nice to spend money on them.

When you do not have enough money coming in, you need to spend less money on the things you do not need.

Making a budget

To help you spend less money you can make a budget. This means that you decide how much money you can spend each week and stick to this.

You can still enjoy things if you are on a budget. It just means that you need to think carefully about how you spend your money.

Can direct debits help?

Direct debits can be used to pay bills or other regular payments direct from some bank or building society accounts.

Direct debits are a good way to pay things like phone, gas and electricity bills. Some companies will charge you less money if you pay your bills by direct debit.

To find out more about direct debits and if they can work for you, speak to your bank or building society.

You can also ask a support worker, friend or family member to help you set up a direct debit.

Budgeting tips and ideas

- ✓ Cut down on take-aways and ready meals - learn to cook instead!
- ✓ Try walking instead of using public transport.
- ✓ Use your local library for books, magazines and newspapers.
- ✓ Decide how much money you can spend each week on 'treats' and do not spend more than this.
- ✓ Find out about free events in your area.
- ✓ Use a 'pay as you go' phone.
- ✓ Look out for special offers at the supermarket - but only buy things if you need them.

There is information on making a budget at the end of this booklet. You can also ask someone to help you make a budget.



Saving money

Most people have to save money to pay for things like holidays or things for the house.

Some people also save money for emergencies. This means that if you have to pay for something you did not plan for, you will have some money to do this.



Tips on saving money

- ✓ Collect all your spare coins each week and pay this into your bank or post office at the end of the month.
- ✓ Keep a note of everything you spend. This helps you see where your money is going and think of ways of spending less.
- ✓ Open a special savings account at a bank or post office.
- ✓ Save up all your £1 coins in a safe place and use them to pay big bills.
- ✓ Shop around for bargains and special deals - but only buy things when you need them.
- ✓ Set a goal for how much money you want to save - and plan how you will spend the money.

Loans



A loan is when you borrow money from a loan company or bank.

Loan companies and banks always charge you interest when you borrow money from them. This means that you always pay back more money than you borrow. Because of this, you should always think very seriously before you take out a loan.

You should never take out a loan unless you are sure that you can pay the money back. If you cannot pay the money back, the loan company can take legal action and you can get into serious trouble.

When you have problems paying back a loan, you must get help right away.

Contact the Citizens Advice Bureau or speak to a support worker, friend or family member. They will be able to help you. If you ignore money problems they will usually get worse.



Tips on loans

- ✗ Beware of people who knock on your door or phone you up offering to give you a loan.
- ✗ Never agree to take out a loan for someone else - even a member of your family. No-one can make you take out a loan if you do not want to.
- ✗ Never sign anything that you do not understand. If you are not sure, say no.
- ✗ Remember that you will always have to pay back more money than you borrow.



STOP!
Stop!



Money problems

Money problems can be:

- **when you have run out of money**
- **when you cannot pay your bills**
- **when you owe money.**

Money problems can make you feel very worried and unhappy. However, there are people who can help you.

When you are worried about money you should speak to someone you trust right away.

This could be:

- friends and family
- support workers
- advocacy services
- bank or post office staff
- social workers
- Citizens Advice Bureau.

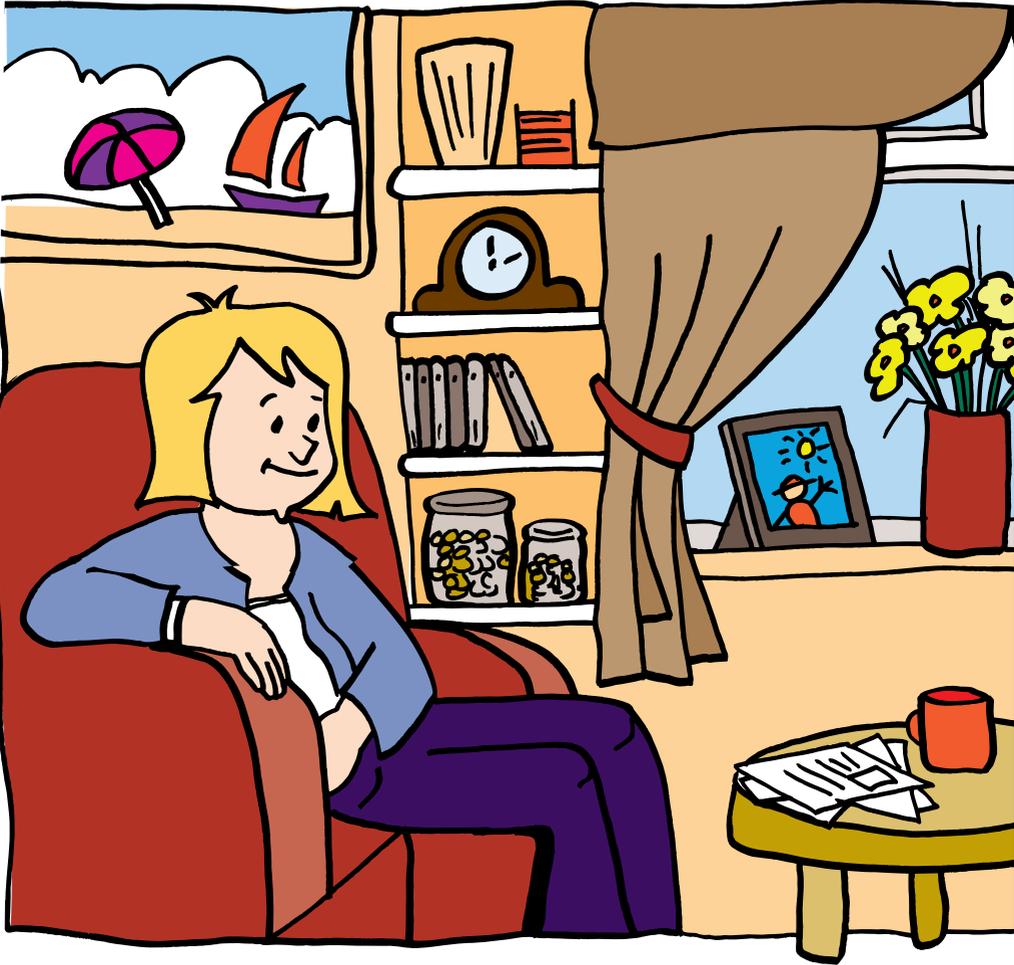
If you ignore money problems they will usually get worse.



When you cannot pay a loan or bills:

- ✗ Do not borrow any more money!
- ✗ Tell someone right away!







Enjoy your money!

You have the right to be in control of your money. It feels good to be in control of your money and make good decisions. It means that you are being responsible and making your own choices about your money and the way you want to live.



Making a budget

To work out a budget fill in the boxes below. You can ask someone to help you do this.

First add up the money you get in each week:

Pay or wages	£
Benefits	£
Other money	£
Total money in	£

Now add up the money you pay out each week:

Rent or mortgage	£
Council tax	£
Phone, gas, electricity	£
Food	£
Travel	£
Clothes	£
Going out	£
Loans	£
Other things	£
Total money out	£

If the '**Total money in**' is less than the '**Total money out**', you need to look at how you are spending your money.

Useful contacts

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

Free confidential help for people who have money or legal problems. You can make an appointment to speak to someone face to face or phone them.

 www.citizensadvice.org.uk

 To find the phone number of your local Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), look in the phone book.

If you have a learning disability and want to know more about being in control of your money, you can contact ENABLE Scotland or Mencap.

ENABLE Scotland

 www.enable.org.uk

 0141 226 4541

Mencap Helpline (England)

Mencap Helpline (Wales)

Mencap (Northern Ireland)

 www.mencap.org.uk

 0808 808 1111

 0808 800 0300

 08457 636 227

Notes

This booklet was written by ENABLE Scotland
in partnership with Mencap.

It was made possible by the generous support of
Post Office Ltd. Thanks to Linney Print, Mansfield,
for their help in printing this booklet.



MENCAP
Understanding learning disability

Date: April 2006

ENABLE Scotland (a charitable company limited by guarantee)

Registered Office: 6th Floor, 7 Buchanan Street, Glasgow G1 3HL. Reg. No. 278976 Scotland. Charity No. SCO09024

Mencap is a registered charity number 222377