

Are you contemplating it because of cost?

Where are most of you at in terms of tracking your food budget?

Many of you have a guesstimate of how much you spend each month, but have you ever tracked your food budget in a detailed manner or are you more of a “as long as the money is in the bank we’re good” kind of person?

One of the first priorities we recommend when asked for advice on lowering food expenses is to discipline oneself to track every single transaction for one month.

Just like any weight loss program, which requires you to track everything you eat for a certain amount of time, noting all food expenses during the course of a month is going to revolutionize the way you think about your monthly food costs, and ultimately, how you spend.

For instance, have you ever gathered your evening recipe ingredients together and found that you forgot the sesame oil for your Simple Sesame Chicken, thus running to the store for just a “few things?” Typically, those “few things” get lost when the monthly budget gets calculated. Discipline yourself to **Mark it down under groceries.**

Did you swing through the drive through tonight when you realized you forgot to start the crock pot? **Mark it down under eating out.**

Did you buy Gatorades and chips for your guys during their soccer games? **Mark it down under snacks.**

Some of you are already completely overwhelmed just trying to get dinner on the table, so tracking a month of expenses seems like a lot to ask. Just begin with baby steps. If one month is too much, challenge yourself to one week at a time. If you are serious about lowering your expenses, I encourage you to just start somewhere.

It doesn’t have to be complicated. When you are handed your receipt, just jot down the total. Don’t worry about adding it up until later.

You may be surprised how even tracking your food expenses can make you much more aware of what you’re spending. Who knows you could end up saving money, and especially could in the long run if it’s saving you extra doctor visits and prescriptions! After all the cost of health care is not going down.

Good Luck!