



Taylor

## MEET YOUR FINANCIAL COACH

Taylor is a Accredited Financial Counselor®<sup>®</sup>, a Certified Financial Planner (CFP®), and Certified Student Loan Professional (CSLP®).

She specializes in helping families and business owners create sustainable budgets to help them save more and pay off debt.

Connect with me @evolvingmoney on IG and Youtube!

# WELCOME

## INTRODUCTION

Budgeting isn't just about numbers—it's about building habits that support your financial goals. Whether you're new to budgeting or looking to refine your system, this guide will introduce you to simple routines that make budgeting manageable and effective. These daily, weekly, and monthly habits are designed to fit into your life, not overwhelm it. By the end of this guide, you'll have actionable steps to take control of your finances and maintain a sustainable budgeting practice.

## RECOMMENDED BUDGETING APP

Monarch Money is the ultimate tool for budgeters who want clarity and control over their finances. It offers seamless bank syncing, robust reporting features, and easy-to-use categorization tools. With Monarch, you can create custom budgets, track spending, and tag transactions for deeper insights.

Our daily, weekly, and monthly routines are built with Monarch in mind, but will work great with YNAB, EveryDollar, and others! If you aren't happy with your budgeting app, consider signing up for Monarch Money to simplify your financial journey.

Check out my free Getting Started With Monarch Money series on Youtube.

# HELPFUL RESOURCES



## Video Companion To Your Habit Guide

Check out this step-by-step video tutorial to help you implement the daily, weekly, and monthly habits for your Monarch Money budget.

[Watch Now!](#)

## Getting Started With Monarch Money?

A four part series on Youtube that will take you through the fundamentals steps in creating a budget in Monarch Money.

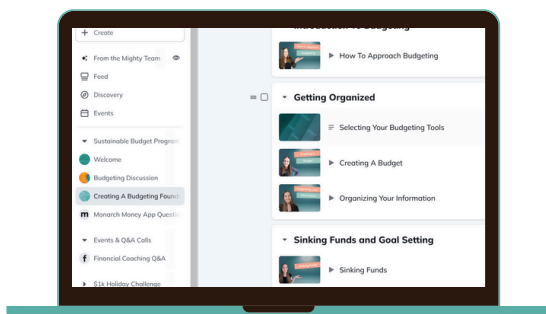
[Watch Now!](#)



## Have Questions? Join The Financial Coaching Calls

Join the membership to access a full course library on creating a budget and access to the group Q&A financial coaching calls.

[Join now!](#)



# BUDGETING

## DAILY HABITS

You might've cringed when you saw "daily actions" on this list, but hear me out—these habits take less than two minutes a day and can save you HOURS and DOLLARS later. Plus, with a little consistency, you'll look like a budgeting wizard, and your friends will wonder how you make it all look so effortless!

### Step one

#### Check Your Budget Before Spending

Review the "remaining" column of your budget for the category you are considering spending in. If a purchase exceeds your budget, reconsider the purchase or delay it.

*Remember!*

*Check your budget, not your bank account.*

Category	Budgeted	Remaining
Food & Dining	\$939	\$460
Groceries	\$759	\$526
Restaurants & Bars	\$150	-\$76
Coffee Shops	\$30	\$10

### Step two

#### Categorize Transactions

Make sure that all transactions are accurately categorized. Misclassified expenses, especially those marked as "transfers," can misrepresent your budget and lead to overspending. Double-check that transfers are truly money moving between accounts, not expenses (check [this video](#) for info on "transfers").

*Tip!*

*Doing this daily will be FASTER since you will be more likely to remember the transactions in question.*

Date	Total
NOVEMBER 14, 2024	\$137.11
Whole Foods	\$110.00
Spotify	\$14.99
Jamba Juice	\$12.12
NOVEMBER 13, 2024	\$45.00

### Step three

#### Add Tags and Notes

Use tags to track spending trends, like vacation costs or project expenses, for better reporting. Utilizing the notes section can help you be more mindful and track your highly valued expenses. Add details about the purchase, the purpose or occasion, or how you felt about the purchase!

Date	November 12, 2024
Notes	Dinner with Taylor!
Tags	Weekend Vacation

# BUDGETING

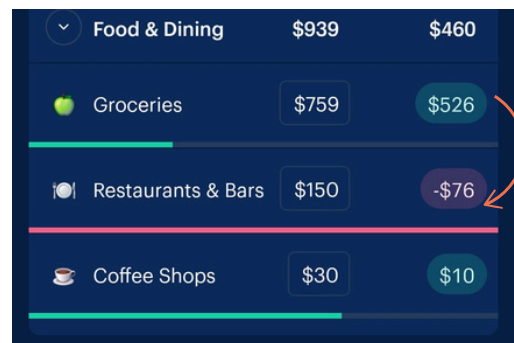
## WEEKLY HABITS

These weekly habits are what separate the budgeters from the wannabes. Skipping these steps can leave you stuck in the Groundhog Day of budgeting: trying to stick to it, not sticking to it, feeling guilty, and repeating the cycle until you're ready to give up entirely. Let's break that loop!

### Step one

#### Plan For Upcoming Expenses

Look at your budget categories and calendar to ensure you're prepared for planned expenses (e.g., outings, events, etc). For example, if I knew I was going out with friends this weekend, I'd want to move money from my grocery budget to my restaurant budget and plan my grocery shopping accordingly!



### Step two

#### Check Amazon & Miscellaneous Purchases:

Pull up your Amazon order history and get your Amazon purchases categorized. You may want to review "catch-all" categories like shopping or miscellaneous to see if you can add more depth to your transaction data. You can't change what you can't see, so let's get everything categorized!

*Remember!*

*You can split transactions to be in multiple categories!*

Shopping

Goal: No goal

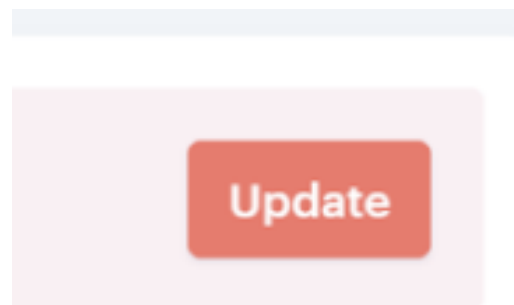
Notes: Broomstick for Halloween Costume

Tags: Halloween Party Expenses

### Step three

#### Sync Your Accounts

Ensure your bank accounts are syncing properly with your budgeting app. On rare occasions, you may need to reconnect an account to keep your data up to date—but don't worry, it's quick and easy for most accounts!



# BUDGETING

## MONTHLY HABITS

Your monthly routine is like a budget refresh—it's all about reflecting, adjusting, and making a plan to crush your goals. Think of it as the grand finale of the month (and the perfect kickoff for the next one). Let's make it count!

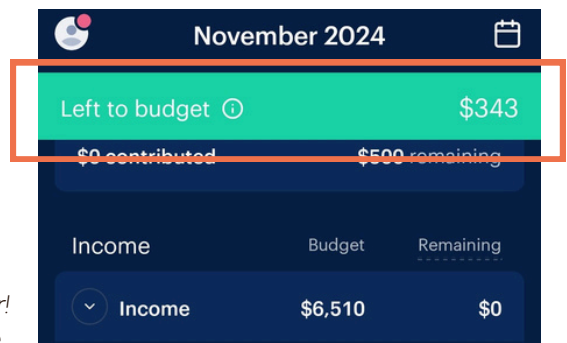
### Step one

#### Adjust Your Budget For Actual Income

Get an extra paycheck, bonus, or just more money this month? Be sure to add it to your budget! Then allocate any "Left To Budget" funds to any of the categories that went over this month or to any savings category for future expenses like travel or special occasions!

*Remember!*

*Never leave the "Left To Budget" number as a negative..*



### Step two

#### Review Your Entire Budget

Review each category line by line to confirm actual expenses. Ensure all bills were paid correctly, transactions are properly categorized, and investigate any unusual charges. If you're budgeting with a partner, discuss how things went this month and plan any adjustments for next month.

*Tip!*

*Check out the section on holding a good money date with your partner.*

Shopping

Goal: No goal

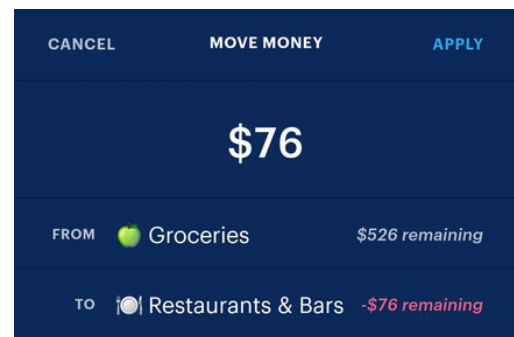
Notes: Broomstick for Halloween Costume

Tags: Halloween Party Expenses

### Step three

#### Handle Overspending

Cover overspent categories (red bubbles) by reallocating funds from surplus categories (green bubbles). If that's not enough, plan specifically how to replenish the overspent category next month—don't just rely on the concept of "spending less" without a clear strategy.




## YOUR QUARTERLY BUDGET

# CHECKLIST

Here are a few key action items to take every 3-6 months for your budget to remain relevant and accurate.

- Review subscriptions for any to cancel or adjust
- Check sinking funds and progress toward upcoming expenses
- Use budgeting reports to spot trends and adjust categories
- Use any surplus funds to start or accelerate progress on your goals
- Refresh your meal planning and grocery routine
- Monitor your credit score and credit report for progress and fraud
- Review financial goals to reflect on progress and celebrate any wins
- Plan how to use upcoming cash influxes like bonuses or refunds
- Review bills for discounts or needed changes



# BUDGET DATES FOR COUPLES

A "budgeting date" is a planned time for you and your partner to come together to review your budget, set goals, and assess your financial picture. It's about working as a team to ensure your spending aligns with your goals and values.

Schedule a weekly mini date to sit down and review your budget. Put this time on your calendars, discuss how to prioritize it on that day, and decide how to protect it from distractions. This weekly check-in can be a quick 10–15 minute review where you open your budget and tackle the daily and weekly habits together.

Also, schedule a monthly money date, ideally on the last day or first day of the month. Take time to review how the previous month went with your budget and discuss strategies for improving the upcoming month. This meeting shouldn't take more than an hour. Keep it concise and avoid letting it drag on. If there are outstanding action items, delegate them between the two of you and move on.

# YOUR GUIDE FOR A SUCCESSFUL

# MONEY DATE

1

## SET THE STAGE

Create a relaxing environment with drinks, snacks, and music, and have your budgeting app and account details ready for a smooth session.

2

## START THE CONVERSATION

Check out the next page for some conversation starters and talking points and tips for communication tactics during your money date.

3

## REVIEW YOUR FINANCIAL GOALS

Always have a goal in mind when budgeting. Simply reducing expenses without a clear purpose can be un motivating.

4

## CELEBRATE WINS!

Whether big or small, find a win to celebrate, like returning an item you didn't like or finding a deal on a regular expense.

5

## REVIEW RESPONSIBILITIES

It's helpful to divide financial tasks and regularly update each other on their progress, such as one partner sharing updates on investments while the other covers bills.

6

## DISCUSS UPCOMING EVENTS AND EXPENSES

Talk about any events that could impact your budget, such as vacations, birthdays, holidays, or other occasions.

7

## REVIEW SCHEDULES

Make sure your money dates are planned for the following month and any action items on the calendar.



# COMMUNICATION TIPS

## FOR YOUR MONEY DATE

### **Avoid the blame game.**

When reviewing the budget, remember that you're on the same team.

Instead of saying, "You spent too much money on Amazon," try reframing the conversation: "It seems we have overspent our shopping budget from Amazon purchases. Let's figure out how we can reduce that going forward."

It's generally best to avoid using the word "you" when talking about the budget.

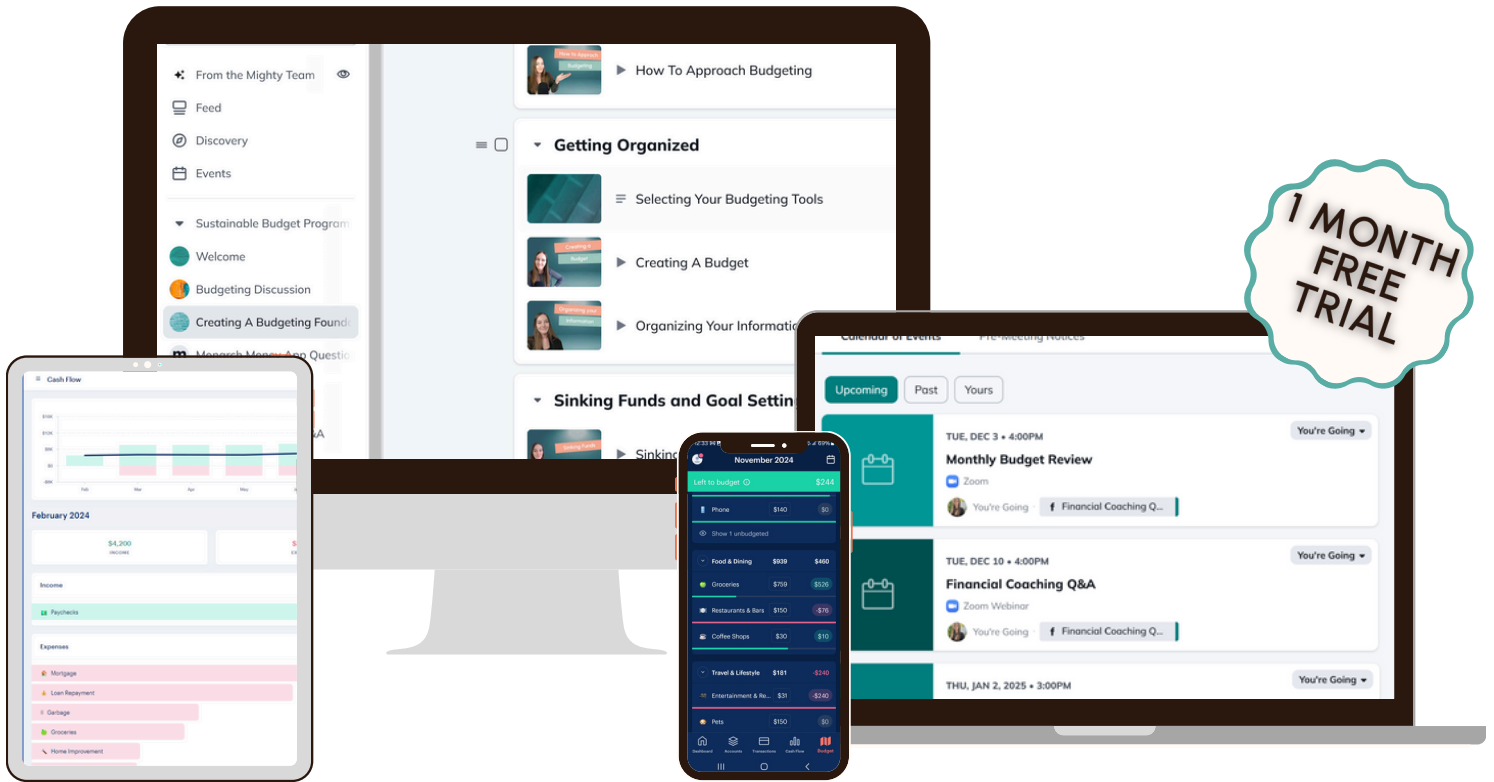
Instead, use "I." For example:

"I know I went a little overboard on Amazon this month. I have a plan to stick to our goals next month."

Be clear in your communication and take ownership for your role in the household finances.

Here are some conversation starters to help you start your money date on a good note. Remember to listen well, and give your partner the space to express their feelings or stress.

- How do you feel about our spending over the last month?
- Were there any purchases you regret or wish we'd handled differently? If so, how can we avoid that in the future?
- What's been going well for us financially?
- Did anything unexpected happen that impacted our budget this month?
- Is there anything that you expect to impact our budget this coming month?
- Do you feel like our budgeting system is equitable still? If not, how would you suggest adjusting our system?



CLICK HERE TO JOIN!



**GET THE FULL COURSE!**

**NEED MORE HELP SETTING UP AND MAINTAINING YOUR BUDGET?**

- Full video library for step-by-step instructions on creating your budget and maintaining the habits you need to stay on track
- Live Q&A zoom calls to talk about your questions and get insights on how other maintain their budgets
- Exclusive support in implementing your budget in Monarch Money, YNAB, and more!
- Access to 1-1 coaching at a discounted rate when you need personal support