

Are You an Overspender?

Are you an overspender? Answer yes or no to the following questions to find out.

1. Are you still paying for purchases made a year ago? (Exclude payments on your home and car.)
2. Do you race to get your paycheck to the bank before the checks you have written get there?
3. Are your credit cards usually at their maximum credit limit?
4. Do you use credit instead of cash, even when the purchase is small and you have the money?
5. Are you often broke by payday?
6. Do friends or family tease you about having "champagne" taste on a "beer" budget?
7. Do you shop for recreation?
8. Is your checking account frequently overdrawn?
9. Do you notice mood swings when shopping—down before you go, up while shopping, down again after adding your bill?
10. When you receive statements from creditors at tax time, are you surprised at how much you've paid in interest?

If you answered yes more often than no, you may be a chronic overspender. The first step in getting your finances under control is recognizing the problem. The second step is deciding if now is the time you want to make a change. The third step is to take a realistic look at your financial picture, decide where the trouble spots are, and begin doing something, NOW. Maybe you need to get rid of your credit cards, or limit shopping trips with the person who always encourages you to buy things. Maybe you need a cooling off period before purchasing new tools, or clothes, or computer items. By trying to understand the situations that entice you to overspend and making a plan to handle those situations differently, you can make an important difference in your financial future.

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Sources Used: Successful Money Management (EC 428.1-4) by Dr. Barbara Rowe with Kay W. Hansen and Marsha M. Peterson, Utah State University Cooperative Extension Service, November 1990.