

The Cheapskates Journal October 2014

From Cath's Desk

Hello Cheapskaters,

I'd like to explain to you how this website I created 15 years ago became known as Cheapskates.

We started life as the Cheapskates Journal, simply because back then the newsletter and the website was a journal of my frugal experiences. Then, in 2007, we had a name change to The Cheapskates Club. We had become a community, a club, of like-minded people. We were all looking for ways to live within our budgets, to save money, to pay down debt and to live life debt free, cashed up and laughing (which is what I've called my blog).

How did I settle on Cheapskates? That is simple. I have a younger brother. You all know how younger brothers can be - torments, teases, annoying at times. Mine is all that (still!); he's also kind, generous, loving and supportive. But he has a wicked sense of humour and every time I'd buy something on sale or from an outlet or garage sale he'd call me "cheapskate".

I couldn't call this website anything else could I? Cheapskate has become my middle name and I'm proud of it. Around here being called a Cheapskate is a badge of honour. It tells the world that you are doing your best to give, save and live below your means with dignity and style.

For some of us that is easy. For others it will be more difficult and require more dedication to the task.

What has brought this up is an email I received taking me to task over getting excited about buying spices in bulk. Yes, I was told off for being excited enough about the savings I make buying spices in bulk and sharing them with you. Being a Cheapskate isn't about whether you save money buying spices in bulk (and you will, heaps of it) or whether you prefer to buy them from the supermarket.

It's about what we need to do to live beneath our means. This is where it gets tricky. What I need to do to live beneath my means will be very different from what you need to do to live beneath your means. And that is OK. We are all different: living different lifestyles, working different jobs, living in different places, raising families or not. What works for me may work for you as it is or you may need to tweak an idea a little to make it work for you. You may find that there are things that just won't work for you. And that's OK.

Living the Cheapskates way is about managing your money so that you can give back, build savings so you are not relying on credit and live with dignity with what you have. If you can do that and pay supermarket prices for your herbs and spices, go to it. Or better still take the plunge and buy them in bulk and use the savings for something that you really need or want.

Happy Cheapskating,

Cath

Feature Article

The Top 10 Ways to Think Like Warren Buffet

The Cheapskates Journal October 2014

There will likely never be another Warren Buffet, but that doesn't mean we can't improve our stock-picking skills. People that excel frequently have a different way of viewing things.

Perhaps Warren Buffett could teach all of us a few things.

1. Owning stock is like being a part owner in a business.
2. A great deal is a great company at a fair price.
3. Avoid excessive portfolio turnover.
4. Are you making an emotional decision? Rational thought rules the day.
5. Be patient. Wait for a great company.
6. Focus your investments on relatively few stocks.
7. Stay the course. There's rarely a bad time to invest.
8. Pretend you couldn't change your mind for the next 10 years.
9. Continue learning. Buffett makes mistakes, but never seems to make the same mistakes twice.
10. Enjoy it. Once Mr. Buffet got started, he never stopped because he loves looking for great investments.

A Thoughtful Moment

A Pound of Butter

There was a farmer who sold a pound of butter to the baker. One day the baker decided to weigh the butter to see if he was getting a pound and he found that he was not. This angered him and he took the farmer to court. The judge asked the farmer if he was using any measure. The farmer replied, "Your Honour, I am primitive. I don't have a proper measure, but I do have a scale."

The judge asked, "Then how do you weigh the butter?"

The farmer replied "Your Honour, long before the baker started buying butter from me, I have been buying a pound loaf of bread from him. Every day when the baker brings the bread, I put it on the scale and give him the same weight in butter. If anyone is to be blamed, it is the baker."

What is the moral of the story? We get back in life what we give to others. Whenever you take an action, ask yourself this question: am I giving fair value for the wages or money I hope to make? Honesty and dishonesty become a habit. Some people practice dishonesty and can lie with a straight face. Others lie so much that they don't even know what the truth is anymore. But who are they deceiving? No one but themselves.

Source: Unknown

Contributed by Cathie A.

The Cheapskates Journal October 2014

Saving Story

Don't Give Up

This month's saving story comes from someone we all know, our very own Anne of What's for Dinner and On the Menu fame. I've known Anne longer than I've known anyone outside of my immediate family and I have seen her jump in and take on Cheapskating, get frightened and back away, realise and understand the principles and come back more enthusiastic than ever.

Anne is a bit of a mystery; a little shy unless you know her, but outspoken, passionate, hardworking, determined and loyal to those she cares about and I am very humbled that this amazing woman allows me to be her friend.

Anne writes

"I was slow to join the Cheapskates Club. I wasn't going to wear second-hand clothes and make my own washing powder or do home haircuts just to save a few dollars. I'd listen to Cath as she talked about bottling peaches she'd bought by the case from the market at closing time or how she could make a whole year's supply of washing powder in about half an hour and smile and nod and think I'd never, ever do those things.

Then we saw the GFC coming (after living through the recession of the 90s with a mortgage, credit card debt and a very young family) and listened to how Cath was preparing her family for an economic crisis and knew we had to get our affairs in order. We worked flat chat on clearing all our debt including our mortgage for almost three years. While our friends were and still are struggling we are breathing easy and sleeping well. These days we are concentrating on building our Emergency Fund to be equal to one full year of expenses and get a great deal of satisfaction each month when the statements come in - we have three accounts for our Emergency Fund, we don't put all our eggs in one basket.

I was and still am a stay-at-home wife and mother. I consider looking after my home and family my job and that the way I work at my job is what allows us to live a very comfortable life on one wage.

I regard the money we don't spend because I cook from scratch, shop very carefully, grow a few veggies, do the mending and cleaning myself, shop all year round for presents for birthdays and Christmas, turn lights off, catch cold water, recycle, use grey water to water the garden, buy in bulk and all the other things I do out of habit these days as my contribution to the family finances.

If I didn't do these things we would be spending far more than we are earning and going backwards very quickly.

Has it been easy?

No.

Is it simple?

Yes.

We started by just stopping spending. We went on a three year No Spend challenge! If it wasn't absolutely necessary and couldn't be homemade, bartered or swapped we went without. Not that we went without much. Actually we never went without anything we needed. We had food on the

The Cheapskates Journal October 2014

table, a roof over our heads and clothes on our backs. Were they flash? Of course not, we didn't have the money to splurge.

We did have a plan though, and enough determination (or fear) to stick to our plan. I would scour the website for recipes, new craft ideas, gift ideas, gardening tips, cleaning tip and anything at all that would help us save even a couple of dollars because that would be a couple of dollars more we could throw at our debt.

It worked. Oh there were times I was discouraged, and times I let my membership lapse. Then I'd get a newsletter and be inspired to try something else and it would work and I'd be back on the Cheapskates bandwagon.

Now I'm a part of the furniture I think. I don't ever want my membership to lapse again. I've marked the renewal date on the kitchen calendar and in my diary and even set a reminder to pop up on my computer.

I love Cheapskates and the friends I've made over the years. I love the discussions and the different opinions. I love that we can share our ideas without fear of being considered odd.

Most of all I love that thanks to Cheapskates' support my husband and I are now debt free and are building security for our future."

Anne (in Melbourne)

5 Tips for Cleaning your Patio and Lawn Furniture

It's time to prepare your patio and lawn furniture for the summer. Can't wait, right? Well here are some tips for cleaning your patio and lawn furniture.

While there are several methods you can use to clean your outdoor furniture, undoubtedly you don't want to use any harsh chemicals or environmentally unsafe cleaners. You can use items that are safe and which you already have in your home: bicarb soda, vinegar and Miracle Spray.

* To clean the patio, it is recommended that you use a pressure washer to remove all the algae, and then follow up with a diluted vinegar wash. Use a ratio of 1 part vinegar to 9 parts water, or 1 litre of vinegar in a 10 litre bucket and top it up with cold water.

* Use Miracle Spray to wipe down all of the furniture and let it stand for one hour. Use the hose to rinse and let dry.

* Use bicarb soda if there are areas on your furniture which need more cleaning. Make a paste with water and spread it over the stubborn spots. Let it sit for 15 minutes, scrub, rinse and let it dry.

* Use white vinegar for your wooden decks and patio furniture. Vinegar is the least abrasive, cheap and easy to use. It not only removes mildew on wooden furniture, but on plastic furniture as well. For the tough to get at areas, use a small paint brush or toothbrush; then rinse and let the furniture dry. If you have lawn cushions, the best method you can use to clean them would be plain old liquid dishwashing detergent and a sponge. Use the same substance to clean the umbrella table as well.

Now you can sit back and enjoy the warmth of the sun; sip a glass of lemonade as you listen to the birds returning to the birdhouse you built for them last summer! You can have your morning cups of

The Cheapskates Journal October 2014

coffee out on the deck as the sun rises; and return to watch it go down at night with a delicious cocktail!

Ah, summer!

Intentional Leftovers

We all know a great way to save money is to stop eating out and cancel takeaway. That works really well for tea time, but what about lunches? Sometimes, especially if you are working outside your home or have a family to cater for, it can be difficult to not eat out at lunch time because you didn't plan in advance for a good lunch. You end up eating greasy fast food, then spend the rest of the day tired, sick, bloated and broke. There is an easy way to get prepared for lunches, whether at home or out: make leftovers on purpose, otherwise known as intentional leftovers.

For example, if you have tacos for dinner, when you are dishing up tea, quickly prepare tomorrow's lunch at the same time. Toss some of the salad into a plastic container with a leak proof lid and top it with the beans or meat or chicken mixture then sprinkle on some grated cheese. Put a taco shell in a ziplock bag and when it's time for lunch simply crumble into your salad so it'll still be crunchy.

Get into the habit of cooking extra food on a regular basis. If you double your recipes just a couple of times a week and eat one meal, then put the leftovers in the freezer, you'll not only always have something for a quick freezer dinner, but you'll always have something to take for lunch. Just remember casseroles, soups, noodles and rice freeze well, salads do not.

Cooking extra doesn't necessarily mean your grocery bill will go up. Think about what you are cooking. Spag bol? Stretch it with extra veggies (grated zucchini and carrot) or mashed beans or finely shredded silverbeet. Casseroles? Stretch them by making the gravy just a little thinner and adding extra potato or rice or beans.

When you are serving dinner remember portion control too. If the recipe serves six and you're a family of five, make sure you have one serve put aside to pop into the freezer for a quick lunch. Put it in the freezer immediately and you won't find it has vanished overnight.

Have plenty of fruit and veggies like apples, oranges, strawberries and carrots in the fridge or fruit bowl. They're the perfect fast food and need little preparation. Also buy salad veggies and make up large green salads that you can toss into a container. With the main course, a salad and some fruit, you'll be very well fed. Of course, that assumes you remember to take the food.

They say it takes 21 days to make a habit, therefore, you'll need to work extra hard the next 21 days to make this happen. Start with cooking extra, and freezing lunches, and then make it a routine that when you are making your breakfast to put your lunch in a thermal bag, pulling components from the freezer and fridge that you prepared during dinner the night before, and then hang it on the front door so you won't forget it when you leave in the morning.

Then, at lunch you can heat frozen items in the microwave. If the food is in an insulated bag, it will be safe all day until lunch outside of the fridge. If you do not have access to a microwave then you'll need to heat the items in the morning at home, and put in containers that stay warm all day. You'll have a healthy lunch each day without the added sodium, grease, preservatives. You'll feel better, and probably even lose weight.

Finally, you'll save a boatload of money by eating leftovers for lunch. Almost everyone in the family can eat leftovers of some kind for lunch but if only the adults do that could save more than \$20.00

The Cheapskates Journal October 2014

per day on food costs, per day. That's \$100.00 a week that can be used on something else, perhaps a family holiday.

How to Build a Compost Heap in Your Backyard

Building your own compost heap has many rewards. Not only will you be helping the planet by recycling and putting waste back into the "earth" but you can also make one of the most nutrient-rich soils for your garden plants and vegetables – a win/win situation for all.

Here's how to do it:

Step 1. Prepare the area/container

You can go out and buy a fancy compost bin (there are many to choose from at garden centres) or you can simply make a "heap" which is far more economical and will work just as well.

To make a heap you simply need 4 sides and a covering. You can use 4 similar sized pieces of wood, nailed together or you can use breeze blocks to make an enclosure for your waste. You'll need to leave a detachable area in the front so that you can easily scoop out the compost.

If using bricks simply leave a small gap. If using wood, you can do the same or leave the whole front side loose so that you can easily remove the whole plank of wood to access your compost once ready.

Tip: Wood tends to be the ideal material as it is completely eco-friendly, economical and far easier to put together than a brick-sided heap.

Step 2. Add your drainage material

Once you have your "container" ready then line the bottom with biodegradable material that will help absorb the compost faster. You can use straw, twigs or newspaper.

Step 3. Heat things up

In order for your waste to turn into compost, you need heat. You can do this by adding a thin layer of already mature soil (which you buy at the garden centre or from another area of the garden) on top of the first layers of waste. This will help trap the heat in and your waste will compost faster.

Step 4. Cover and Turn

Another way to keep the temperature high in your heap is by covering it up. You can use old potato sacks, a sheet of plastic, or a thick blanket. Your compost will take approximately 3 or so months to degrade. You can help things along by turning the heap once or twice a month. Simply uncover and using a large, thick stick or shovel simply "turn" the compost to distribute the heat.

Step 5. Things you can compost

Shredded newspaper, uncooked vegetables and peelings, grass/lawn, old plants, hedge clippings, animal waste (chicken, dog and cat), weeds, rotten fruit or fruit remains.

The 2014 Own Your Christmas Countdown

He's making a list and checking it twice and you should be too! Creating a Cheapskates' Christmas takes a little planning and a little action, so let's get started on the 2014 Cheapskates Own Your Christmas Countdown.

The Cheapskates Journal October 2014

The best way to have a stress-free, debt-free Christmas is to start early (isn't that the way with everything?). The more you prepare now the more you'll be able to relax and enjoy celebrating with your family and friends. Imagine being the one who can sit back with a long, cool drink whilst everyone else is queuing for hours in the summer heat to pay exorbitant prices for gifts they are not entirely happy with. Puts a smile on your face already doesn't it?

Take a few minutes and a pen and paper and work out how much you spent on last Christmas. Did you manage to own it or are you one of the many still paying for it?

My challenge to you today is to do everything you possibly can, with the help of the Cheapskates Club of course, to own your Christmas 2014. You won't be alone. I'll be right here alongside you, encouraging, cheering and sharing ideas, tips, recipes and more with you through the Tip of the Day, my blog, Christmas Challenge newsletters (Platinum members, newsletter subscribers and Tip of the Day recipients will receive regular email updates) and of course our home right here at Cheapskates Central.

Take up the challenge, and own your Christmas this year, I challenge you!

Our 8 week countdown is broken down into weekly tasks and goals, making it easy and fun to follow. And best of all you'll be finished and ready for Christmas by December 1st.

October is planning month. It's time to make those lists, get organized and ready for November – action month. December is celebrate month, a time to enjoy the spirit of Christmas and the holidays. And you can do it too, with our Christmas countdown.

Check back here every Wednesday for lots of extra tools, resources and guides.

Dear Cath

Q. Could I have a copy of the white sauce mix? Carmel Mcnamara

A. The recipe for the basic white sauce mix is in the Recipe File, under Mixes. It is also in the MOO Mixes eBook, available on the Printables page.

Basic White Sauce Mix

Ingredients:

2 cups powdered milk
1 cup plain flour
1 teaspoon salt
250g butter

Method:

Combine dry ingredients, add butter and blend until mix resembles dry breadcrumbs. Store in a large air tight container in the fridge. This mix keeps for up to two months. Can be frozen.

To make white sauce combine 1/2 cup mix to 1 cup cold water. Whisk together to remove lumps. Bring to a boil over a medium heat. Simmer one minute.

Variations:

Cheese sauce: Once sauce has come to a boil stir in 1/2 cup grated tasty cheese.

The Cheapskates Journal October 2014

Mushroom sauce: Add finely sliced mushrooms after the cold water. Stir to combine. Cook for 2 minutes until mushrooms are done.

Curry sauce: Add 2tsp curry powder with dry ingredients.

Mustard sauce: Add 2tsp dry mustard powder with dry ingredients.

On the Menu

Pasta Dishes Just Got Healthier

Pasta has had a bad reputation as being fattening and unhealthy but that's not true. Pasta can be very healthy, especially when it's made with wholegrains and accompanied by delicious sauces made from fresh vegetables, healthy oils and low-fat meats.

Basil Kissed Tomato Spinach Pasta

Ingredients:

3 tbsp olive oil
5 garlic cloves, minced
1 medium onion, diced
Salt and pepper to taste
1 can kidney beans, drained
5 medium size fresh ripe tomatoes, chopped
1/4 cup chopped fresh basil
500g fresh baby spinach
500g wholemeal spaghetti, cooked as directed on box, and kept hot
Freshly grated Parmesan cheese for garnish

Method:

In a very large frying pan over medium heat, pour the olive oil, add the onions and sauté just until the onion softens, then add the garlic and cook together 1 minute longer, stirring.
Add salt and pepper to taste, then stir in the kidney beans and tomatoes and lower the heat, simmering for 5 minutes.
(Make sure you have the pasta started now so it's cooked and hot when the spinach mixture is done.)
Add the basil and fresh spinach to the frying pan and toss, cooking until the spinach wilts and the mixture is hot.
When the spinach is wilted add the hot drained pasta and toss to combine.
Serve hot.
Grate Parmesan cheese on top of each serving for more flavour.

Roasted Asparagus Penne Dressed With Parmesan Garlic Butter

Ingredients:

1 bunch fresh asparagus, cleaned and cut into 3cm pieces
3 tsp olive oil
250g penne pasta
1 tbsp sesame seeds
2 tbsp butter, room temperature
1 garlic clove, minced

The Cheapskates Journal October 2014

1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
2 tbsp fresh chives, chopped
Salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

Preheat oven to 200 degrees Celsius.

Put a big pot of salted water on the stove, and bring to a boil.

While waiting for the water to come up to a boil, put asparagus on baking sheet, drizzle with the 3 teaspoons olive oil, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and use your hands to coat the asparagus pieces thoroughly.

Put the asparagus in preheated oven for 10 to 13 minutes or until just starting to get a few specks of golden brown - don't let them get too soft or turn dark brown.

During this time, cook the pasta until al dente; drain well, put back in the pot, cover, and keep warm. Check the asparagus; it should be almost ready to come out. But, just before you remove the asparagus, sprinkle the sesame seeds over and put back in the oven just for 30 seconds to 1 minute, or until you can smell the sesame seeds; remove and set aside.

Get out a big serving bowl and put the butter and garlic in and smash together with a fork until smooth and garlic is incorporated, then add the Parmesan cheese and mix again until combined.

Now pour the warm pasta into the bowl with the garlic-cheese-butter mixture and mix until pasta is coated, then pour the asparagus into the bowl, scraping in all the oil from the baking sheet, too.

Toss, sprinkle with chives, taste for seasonings, salt and pepper if necessary, and serve warm.

Serves 4 to 6.

Easy Saucy Spinach Feta Penne

Ingredients:

500g penne pasta
2 tbsp olive oil
2 cans diced tomatoes with basil, garlic, and oregano
300g frozen chopped spinach, thawed, drained and liquid squeezed out
1/2 to 1 cup crumbled feta
Salt and pepper to taste

Method:

Put a big pot of salted water on the stove on high to boil.

Put another pot on the stove on medium, add the oil, and when it gets hot, add the diced tomatoes and the spinach, stir and let simmer, stirring occasionally. The mixture should bubble slowly, not boil and not stand still.

When the water in the big pot comes to a boil, drop in the pasta and cook according to package directions, but be sure to not let it get soft, just al dente.

Drain pasta well, then add to tomato-spinach mixture in pot, stir to combine and let simmer together until heated through, 1 or 2 minutes, then add feta, stir gently and remove from heat.

Taste and season with salt and pepper if necessary.

Serve hot.

Quotes of Note

I don't regret the things I've done,
I regret the things I didn't do when I had the chance.

~~Unknown~~

The Cheapskates Journal October 2014

~~~~~

Good things come to those who wait...  
greater things come to those who get off  
their ass and do anything to make it happen.  
~~Unknown~~

~~~~~

Happiness cannot be travelled to, owned, earned, or worn.
It is the spiritual experience of living every minute with love, grace & gratitude.
~~Denis Waitley~~

~~~~~

Our greatest weakness lies in giving up.  
The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.  
~~Thomas Edison~~

~~~~~

Sometimes you succeed.... and other times you learn.
~~Robert Kiyosaki~~

~~~~~

Forget past mistakes.  
Forget failures.  
Forget everything except what you're going to do now and do it.  
~~William Durant~~

~~~~~

Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.
~~Ralph Waldo Emerson~~

Living Green in 2014

Helping the Environment with Green Investing

What constitutes a green company? Actually, your answer will probably vary from investor to investor. Green investing involves putting investment dollars into environmentally friendly companies. Some investors might only consider companies that actually address environmental issues. A company that produces solar panels would be a good example.

Other investors might consider a company that recycles and shows a general environmental awareness. If you're interested in green investments, you're not alone.

The Cheapskates Journal October 2014

Check out these options if you wish to invest in green companies:

1. Individual stocks. There are rankings available with regards to just how “green” a company is. It’s important to fully investigate a green stock just as you would any other stock.
2. Mutual funds. This option provides an easy way to diversify your portfolio. There are mutual funds that specialize in green investing. Lists of these funds are available online.
3. Bonds can also be green. Green bonds raise funds for green business ideas. These can be bonds offered by green companies or bonds issued by various government agencies to fund green projects.

Consider these ideas when selecting green investments:

1. Identify your criteria and find investments that match. Determine what you consider to be a “green” company. Are there certain industries you refuse to support? Figure out your tolerance level and find investments you feel good about supporting.

Would you invest in a logging company if they followed all the rules and regulations that pertained to sustainable logging practices? What about a company that created toxic waste, but disposed of it responsibly?

Are you willing to take on the risk of a company that’s developing new green technologies? These companies can potentially make you millions of dollars. However, these same companies are also more likely to go belly-up without ever returning a profit.

2. Be careful of “greenwashing.” Companies are well aware of the fact that many investors target green companies, so they have ramped up their marketing to appeal to these investors. That’s greenwashing.

Some companies are willing to bloat their claims of environmental friendliness to secure investment dollars.

Do your due-diligence to ensure that the company’s claims are legitimate.

3. Evaluate the investment options. After a company has passed your green criteria, it’s still important to determine if it’s a good investment. Investigate the past performance. Analyse the investment in the same way you would a non-green investment. Green investments can still be poor investments.

Remember to also compare these to the performance of non-green investments.

4. Consult a green investment professional. There are financial advisors that specialize in green investments that can provide excellent advice. Of course, you can also do research on your own. You can learn a lot on a Saturday afternoon.

Keep in mind that there are many green investing websites and publications that cater to the green investor.

Many eco-minded individuals are choosing to invest their money in line with their conscience. These investments can help to reduce global warming, clean polluted lakes and rivers, as well as develop

The Cheapskates Journal October 2014

new alternate energy sources. Hundreds of companies claim to be green, and there are a few dozen green mutual funds.

Just remember that a green investment doesn't necessarily guarantee a lucrative one. Choose the best investment options from those that meet your green criteria and if in doubt get professional green investment advice.

Cheapskates Tip Store

Better than Gumption Scouring Powder

Recently I saved just over \$100 when renewing my Green Slip. I have been shopping around for Comprehensive insurance for the last few years but when I went on those comparison sites Green Slip prices were all within a few dollars different. I was about to renew my current Greenslip when I saw that it said to give them a call to see if they could do cheaper. I thought it can't hurt and gave them a call. They asked me a few questions and then came back with a price over \$100 cheaper than the bill I had in front of me. I have been telling all our family & friends to do the same as its worth one phone call.

Contributed by Janna Cleverdon

Green Slip Savings

Approximate \$ Savings: Australia

Recently I saved just over \$100 when renewing my Green Slip. I have been shopping around for Comprehensive insurance for the last few years but when I went on those comparison sites Green Slip prices were all within a few dollars different. I was about to renew my current Greenslip when I saw that it said to give them a call to see if they could do cheaper. I thought it can't hurt and gave them a call. They asked me a few questions and then came back with a price over \$100 cheaper than the bill I had in front of me. I have been telling all our family & friends to do the same as its worth one phone call.

Contributed by Janna Cleverdon

Homestay Pays Mortgage

Approximate \$ Savings: \$1000's

I have read in my children's school newsletters about Homestay and when my marriage broke up and I was left with the mortgage I had to think how I was going to cover the mortgage by myself. So, after contacting my local high school which is within walking distance of my home, I decided to become a homestay family. Four years ago I gave up my bedroom to two Chinese students and I haven't looked back moneywise because the money goes directly onto my mortgage. As a Cheapskate for years I have always had a budget and shopped and cooked within my means. I save lots of money by cooking everything from scratch and growing some vegetables and fruit. This year I took in an additional student as my son and one daughter moved out and now I have three homestay students with me. My family love having the students and we have learnt so much from them but for me it brings a sense of satisfaction to see my mortgage reducing each week. With three students I am hoping to pay my \$202,000 loan off in four years and I am currently negotiating a new lower interest rate on my home loan. I also work full time as a teacher.

Contributed by Candy Ottley

The Cheapskates Journal October 2014

Online Vintage Women's Weeklys

As Cheapskaters you will appreciate some old fashioned recipes and tips and a great place to find them is in vintage magazines. The National Library of Australia has vintage Australia Women's Weekly magazines scanned so you can enjoy reading them online. You can also open the save the pdf to read offline. I am having such a good time looking back at the articles, fashions and advertisements too. Find them here at <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/title/112>

Contributed by Sharon Benjamin

Website: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/title/112>

Recycled Lazy Susan Saves Space

Do not throw away the lazy susan from your old microwave oven. I have collected them from various places such as op shops, kerbside collections etc. I have them in my pantry, craft room, kids' playroom and Hubby's workshop. They keep the clutter under control. I have them in the pantry for spreads, sauces, herbs and spices, in the playroom for Lego pieces nicely separated into recycled yoghurt tubs, so easy to find those elusive pieces! In the, craft room I have coloured beads in yoghurt tubs, coloured pencils, paints etc. and for Hubby they keep those corners organized with an easy swing around to find jars of screws, nails etc. They work just as well out of the microwave as they do in it! Saves \$30 each from Howard's Storage if you recycle.

Contributed by Nanette Menzies

Organizing with Wheelie Bins

Approximate \$ Savings: \$500+ per year

I have a walk in pantry and have purchased wheelie bins to store pasta, rice, flour, sugar, beans/lentils. Many local Asian supermarkets have these items plus many other great spices, herbs etc. in brown paper bags for bulk buying. Wheelie bins can store one item such as 25kg of rice (around \$25) or several items can go into one wheelie bin with an inventory stuck to the front (herbs and spices for example) still in their brown bags. The wheelie bin keeps them fresh. I decant them into small containers for everyday use. I make my own bread so buying in bulk is a fantastic saving. If your pantry will allow wheelie bins to be used, they are a wonderful way of saving money. For a family of three adults, I only need to purchase rice, flour and sugar around every 9 months. Bulk flour is only around \$30 for 30 kgs, as an example from wonderful Asian supermarkets.

Contributed by Janet Robers

Mini Toiletries Just Right for Air Travel

When staying in motels keep the complimentary soap and bottles. They are the legal size for taking on aeroplanes in hand luggage and the moisturisers are a good size for in the car and handbag. Use the shower gel or shampoo for hand washing clothes in motel rooms.

Contributed by Carol McDonald

When Strawberries are Plentiful

Rinse, hull and cut 3-4 punnets of strawberries into smaller pieces. Place in deep pan with 2 tablespoons caster sugar) 2 teaspoons vanilla, 2 crushed cardamom pods, zest and juice of small lemon, and 1 cinnamon stick. Simmer gently until berries are just tender- this will only a few minutes. The sauce freezes really well and will keep in the fridge for ages. It is far less sweet than jam, much quicker to make and is ideal in smoothies, on ice-cream, with yoghurt or served with cream on chocolate cake or pudding, and on pavlova. I've been buying cheap strawberries and have enough in the freezer to last over the summer season. I also freeze strawberries on a tray, put into snap lock bags to use through the winter. Place frozen berries onto other stewed fruit and top with crumble mixture for a delicious winter dessert.

Contributed by Margaret McLoughlin

The Cheapskates Journal October 2014

Earning the Most Interest from Kids' Bank Accounts

I opened a Bank West savings account for my son a few years ago, at 10% interest for kids it was great. The interest rate has dropped over the years to 5.95%. You can put in up to \$250 maximum per month, then it rolls over into a linked very low interest rate account. The teller told me a trick: to transfer it all to a higher paying savings account at another bank and then 'recycle' that year's savings with a monthly deposit back into the Kids Bonus Saver at Bank West. The same money goes between two higher rate savings accounts for my son. This would be something applicable to other banks with high rate children's savings accounts.

Contributed by Amanda Sturrock

A Simple MOO Shampoo from Your Kitchen

My husband and I have found a tablespoon of bicarbonate mixed with water in a plastic squeezable sauce bottle makes a great shampoo. Squeeze it into hair at the roots, massage in then rinse. Hair is soft and clean and no 'special nasty' chemicals. The same with conditioner but use a spray bottle and tablespoon of apple cider vinegar. Just make sure the bicarbonate is all rinsed out, spray on and again rinse. It doesn't bubble and foam but it works really well and costs almost nothing.

Contributed by Gail Foster

Butter Frozen Bread Better

To easily butter bread which is frozen, instead of waiting for it to defrost, and waiting for the butter to become more spreadable, just slice off a hard square of butter and drag it along the surface of the frozen bread slice = instant buttered bread totally covered in the spread once it's defrosted, with no gaps or large lumps and clumps at all. I make all my own bread, slice and freeze it in zip lock bags, since we live in the country far from local stores, plus I prefer to know what ingredients are in the bread before eating it. I often have to wait for it to defrost, and for the butter to soften (I don't like eating spreadable butters or margarines because of the bad oils used to make them) and after trying to spread hard butter on frozen bread, or even fresh bread, with a knife, I found it far easier to just grab a piece of butter and drag it over the frozen bread surface, kind of like grating in reverse!

Contributed by Larissa Taylor

Making Your Own Milk Alternatives even Cheaper!

I have recently started experimenting with making my own milk substitutes. After a couple of failed attempts straining the milk with a strainer and cheesecloth I realised I need a nut milk bag. My local health food store charges \$17.95 for one bag, but the attendant told me to go to Bunnings and pick up paint strainer bags instead. I bought three bags with elasticised tops for only \$6.95 and they work perfectly!

Contributed by Yanicka Gorski

The Cheapskates Club

Founder and editor: Cath Armstrong

PO Box 5077 Studfield Vic 3152

www.cheapskates.com.au

The Cheapskates Journal is the monthly ezine produced by The Cheapskates Club for its members. This ezine is produced 12 times a year by The Cheapskates Club.

The Cheapskates Journal October 2014

Membership enquiries should be directed to The Cheapskates Club, info@cheapskates.com.au or to PO Box 5077 Studfield Vic 3152.

Copying or reproduction by any means electronic or otherwise other than for members' personal use is strictly prohibited without written permission from the publisher.

All letters, tips and other materials and correspondence submitted to The Cheapskates Club become the property of The Cheapskates Club and all rights thereto including copyrights. Submitters grant the exclusive right to use and/or reproduce the materials in any manner and for any purpose. All information published is taken from the most reliable sources possible and given as information only. All specific financial, legal, tax or accounting situations should be referred to appropriate legal or accounting professionals.

Cath Armstrong bases her comments on sources deemed reliable but she does not guarantee their accuracy.

©2014 The Cheapskates Club