Monthly Expenses Checklist

Tick everything you pay for, even occasionally. Then write the monthly amount beside it.

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Most budgets fail on the lines people forget, not the ones they remember. Fixed costs are the same every month. Variable costs change, so use an average from the last three months. Yearly costs go in as the yearly total divided by 12.

Housing — fixed

- [ ] Rent or mortgage $ _____/mo
- [ ] Property tax $ _____/mo
- [ ] Condo or strata fees $ _____/mo
- [ ] Home or tenant insurance $ _____/mo
- [ ] Repairs and maintenance $ _____/mo

Utilities — variable

- [ ] Electricity $ _____/mo
- [ ] Natural gas or heating oil $ _____/mo
- [ ] Water and sewer $ _____/mo
- [ ] Garbage and recycling $ _____/mo

Communication — fixed

- [ ] Cell phones $ _____/mo
- [ ] Internet $ _____/mo
- [ ] Streaming and subscriptions $ _____/mo
- [ ] Cable or TV $ _____/mo

Food — variable

- [ ] Groceries $ _____/mo
- [ ] Restaurants, takeout and coffee $ _____/mo
- [ ] Work lunches $ _____/mo
- [ ] Pet food $ _____/mo

Transportation — mixed

- [ ] Car payment $ _____/mo
- [ ] Car insurance $ _____/mo
- [ ] Fuel $ _____/mo
- [ ] Parking $ _____/mo
- [ ] Maintenance and repairs $ _____/mo
- [ ] Transit passes and ride shares $ _____/mo

Family — fixed

- [ ] Child care $ _____/mo
- [ ] Child support $ _____/mo
- [ ] School fees and activities $ _____/mo
- [ ] Vet care $ _____/mo

Health and personal care — variable

- [ ] Prescriptions and dental $ _____/mo
- [ ] Glasses and contacts $ _____/mo
- [ ] Gym and fitness $ _____/mo
- [ ] Haircuts and toiletries $ _____/mo

Debt payments — fixed

- [ ] Credit cards $ _____/mo
- [ ] Line of credit $ _____/mo
- [ ] Student loans $ _____/mo
- [ ] Buy now pay later plans $ _____/mo
- [ ] Other loans $ _____/mo

Insurance — fixed

- [ ] Life insurance $ _____/mo
- [ ] Disability insurance $ _____/mo
- [ ] Extended health premiums $ _____/mo

Savings — pay yourself

- [ ] Emergency fund $ _____/mo
- [ ] Retirement (RRSP, TFSA, FHSA) $ _____/mo
- [ ] Education savings (RESP) $ _____/mo
- [ ] Saving for a goal $ _____/mo

Irregular costs — yearly, divided by 12

- [ ] Gifts and holidays $ _____/mo
- [ ] Clothing and shoes $ _____/mo
- [ ] Vacations and travel $ _____/mo
- [ ] Annual memberships and fees $ _____/mo
- [ ] Big purchases $ _____/mo

Monthly Expenses Worksheet

Add up each group from page 1, then see what is left at the end of the month.

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Monthly income (take home pay)	Per month
Your take home pay	
Partner take home pay	
Benefits, child benefit, support, other	
Total monthly income	

Expense group	Per month	Guideline
Housing		35% max
Utilities		5%
Communication		in the 5%
Food		10 to 20%
Transportation		15 to 20%
Family		varies
Health and personal care		3% medical
Debt payments		5 to 15%
Insurance		varies
Savings		5 to 10%
Irregular costs (yearly total divided by 12)		varies
Total monthly expenses		
Left over (income minus expenses)		

Guidelines are the Credit Counselling Society's budgeting guidelines, as a share of take home pay. Nobody fits every range; spending more in one place means spending less in another.

How to fill it in, in four steps

1. **Pull three months of statements.** Bank accounts, credit cards, any app you pay from. Highlight every outgoing dollar.
2. **List your fixed monthly bills.** Rent or mortgage, utilities, phone, insurance, loan payments, child care, subscriptions.
3. **Average your variable spending.** Groceries, fuel, eating out, personal care. Add three months, divide by three.
4. **Add the costs that do not arrive monthly.** Car insurance, repairs, gifts, clothing, vet bills. Yearly total divided by 12, saved every month.

Converting other frequencies

Weekly amount × 52 ÷ 12 · Every 2 weeks × 26 ÷ 12 · Every 3 months ÷ 3 · Twice a year ÷ 6 · Yearly ÷ 12

Example: $1,200 car insurance paid once a year is $100 a month. $180 of groceries a week is $780 a month.

How you compare: the average Canadian household

Category	Per month
Shelter (incl. utilities, taxes, insurance)	$2,042
Transportation	$1,002
Groceries	$715
Restaurants and takeout	$276
Recreation	$431
Health and personal care	$408
Clothing	$226
All goods and services	**$6,346**

Statistics Canada, Survey of Household Spending, 2023 (revised September 2026), annual averages divided by 12. A reference point, not a target.

If expenses come in higher than income, you are not alone, and it is fixable.

Start with housing, transportation and food, then the debt line. If debt payments are what keep the total above income, a money coach can help for free and in confidence: **mymoneycoach.ca/budgeting/loans-debt-credit/get-debt-help**