

# Decreasing Vacation Costs

Taking a summer vacation doesn't have to break your budget. Consider these options for creating a healthy, relaxing summer break:

- ▶ **Sleep at home.** If hotel or rental prices are more than you can afford, consider a vacation comprised of local day trips. Sleeping in your own bed could substantially decrease your vacation costs. You'll save money if you eat breakfast and dinner at home, too.
- ▶ **Camp.** Camping is another way to save money on lodging costs. If you don't already own camping equipment, check into rental options. You could also look into renting an RV.
- ▶ **Pack a cooler.** A cooler is an essential tool for road trips. Not only can you bring your own food, but you can save leftovers for later. If you are staying in a hotel, look for one that has a refrigerator and microwave. Pack some paper plates, silverware, and a microwave-safe dish so you can easily warm your leftovers.
- ▶ **Use a gas app.** Apps like GasBuddy or Gas Guru will help you determine where gas is cheapest along your route. If you belong to a gas rewards program, choose gas stations where you will receive points or discounts (when possible).



- ▶ **Find free activities.** Odds are you will have at least a couple of expensive "must do" activities on your vacation list. Pair these with inexpensive options such as going to the beach, taking a walk through a park, or visiting a free or low-cost museum. Take advantage of senior or student discounts where available.
- ▶ **Maintain a manageable schedule.** Packing your vacation with wall-to-wall activities is expensive — and exhausting! Instead, limit your schedule to one or two activities per day. This will leave time to explore the area you're visiting, have a leisurely lunch, or take an afternoon nap. Building downtime into your schedule is especially helpful if you are traveling with children.

For more ideas on how to decrease vacation costs, contact LifeMatters. Help is available 24/7/365.

Source: Balance

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