

Which word best describes your current financial situation?

Manageable

Challenging

Stressful

Desperate

Red2black is committed to helping you **stay in control of your money, avoid money worries and find financial freedom.**

Lets explore 12 ways to help you stay in control of your money...

(If you've described your situation as desperate you might want to skip to Step 11 on the back cover straight away)

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10: Do some research

You're not in this on your own! Have a look at some of the many helpful & free resources available to help you get moneywise.

www.uSwitch.com for comparison of utility & other bills
www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk for financial calculators
www.confused.com for insurance comparisons
www.moneysupermarket.com for financial products
www.moneysavingexpert.com for money saving ideas
www.moneybasics.co.uk for basic money advice
www.unbiased.co.uk for independent financial advisers

11: Get help if you are in debt

If you (or someone you know) are in debt crisis and are unable to make payments to your creditors, **free and independent help is available:**

Call 0800 027 4995 to speak to the Consumer Credit Counselling Service (CCCS), or use CCCS "debt remedy" tool at www.cccs.co.uk

You can also visit your local Citizens advice bureau to speak to a trained debt adviser.

12: Expect the unexpected

Circumstances can and do change, e.g. redundancy, mortgage rate increase; pregnancy; bereavement; divorce/separation; unforeseen expenses like car repairs

Aim to try and save so you have cash in the bank as a cushion against the unexpected. Then try and save so that you can fulfil your plans (step2).

Did you know? 1 in 4 UK adults no savings, and of those that do, 52% could survive on savings for just 17 days should they lose their income.

How to move out of the red & stay in the black



12 Steps to help you stay in control of your money

www.red2black.org.uk

1: Allocate time

Set aside some time to give yourself a financial health check. If you have a partner, plan to do this together.

2: Develop a plan

Set financial goals:

Short term	0-12 months e.g. Christmas, holidays
Medium term	1-5 years e.g. paying off debts, saving for a car
Long Term	5+ years e.g. buy your first house, retire

Start with the big goals first.

3: Talk to your partner + older children

Do you discuss your finances with them?

How are your finances organised?

Do you have joint or single accounts?

Is money a taboo subject in your house?

Have you agreed your financial priorities together?

Did you know? 74% of British couples find money the hardest subject to talk about with their partners according to the Financial FSA. They also found that 27% of couples regularly argue when they try to discuss their finances

4: Prepare a budget

Write and stick to a monthly budget :

Make a list of your incomings and outgoings – **what comes in should always be the higher amount.**

Prioritise needs before wants. Make sure you get your finances in order before buying non-essential goods

Download the Red2Black budget challenge from the resources section at www.red2black.org.uk

5: Think cash

Try using cash for a month, separated into different pots for the different parts of your budget.

Did you know? 34% extra is spent if plastic is used instead of cash! Half of all new credit taken out in shops wasn't planned before the shopper left their home that day!

Little things add up as well, so at the same time try keeping a record of all you spend for a month. Use a notebook, or if you have a mobile phone download a free 'Spendometer' from www.creditaction.org.uk

6: Review on a regular basis

Review household bills as they come in or the statements arrive. Always look for where savings can be made.

Did you know? The average household could save up to £547 every year by switching the five financial basics (insurance, motor insurance, mortgages, personal loans and credit cards) to the best deal on the market, MoneyExpert.com research shows.

7: Be aware of the pressures

Be aware of the pressures we all face in relation to our future financial decision making:

University	Home ownership	Weddings
Holidays	Buying a car	Furniture
	Gadgets / mobiles	

8: Spend less than you earn

Aim to live within your means and limit your exposure to money draining activities:

- The more television you watch the more you spend.
- The more you look at catalogues and magazines and internet the more you spend.
- The more you shop the more you spend.

Don't buy it immediately – sleep on the idea for 24 hours and see if you still need it when you wake up.

Top tip: One excellent way to think about how much you are spending when you are out shopping is to think about the cost of an item in terms of how many hours you need to work to pay for it.

If you earn £400 / week (£20,800 a year) then you would have to work 2 weeks to pay for a £612 TV / holiday and you would have to work 5 hours to pay for a £40 pair of jeans.

9: Pay bills on time

Aim to pay all your Credit card bills off at the end of each month. If you cannot achieve this can you do it within 3 months?? or 6 months??

Did you know? In last 6 months, 6.9 million household bills went unpaid and 5 million people missed credit card payments.