

## GETTING STARTED

# Income and benefits tracker

Get a total picture of your income and benefits to help you plan when to pay your expenses.

Your income and benefits provide you with the financial resources to pay for your living expenses. It's important to get a clear picture of how much you have coming in every month, so you can better budget to pay your bills and possibly save toward your goals.

Remember that income isn't the same as benefits. While income (money earned from a job) can be used to pay for anything, some benefits can only be used for a particular purpose, like paying for food or medical costs.

Also, income may not always come on a regular basis. Knowing what income is regular, irregular, seasonal, and one-time-only can help you be prepared for when you have less coming in.

## What to do

- **Gather all of your pay stubs**, benefits statements, and records of electronic payments.
- **Enter the amount of income or benefits you receive** next to the correct category in the appropriate week of the month.

## A step further

Look at your total monthly income. If it's less than what you think you need, use the "Increasing income and benefits" tool in the toolkit for tips on how to make more.

If you haven't already, consider completing the "Spending tracker" (in Module 4). This will help you build a cash flow budget, which is covered in Module 5: Getting through the Month.

To access a dynamic and fillable version of this tool, visit <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/your-money-your-goals/tools>



# Plan the best times to save and spend with this **Income and benefits tracker**

1. Fill in the net income amount you receive each week for any category that applies to you. Note any income that comes at predictable times and in the same amount to help show you what income you can count on each month.
2. Add up the amounts you receive each week and write that in as the weekly total.
3. Add up the weekly totals to figure out your income for the month.

4. Make copies of the tracker to follow your income from month to month.

## Term to know: net income

Net income is what you actually bring home in your paycheck. It's your total pay (gross income) minus taxes, insurance, and other deductions that are taken out.

### Income for month of

	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5
Job 1					
Job 2					
Child support					
Disability benefits					
SNAP					
TANF					
Other government programs					
Other:					
Total weekly income					
Total income for this month					