

6 National Numeracy Day Tips for Money Management



Timi Merriman-Johnson
National Numeracy Ambassador

MR MONEYJAR

Budgeting

It is useful to divide the money you earn into Needs, Wants, and Savings. Needs are the 'must-haves' - food, rent, energy bills, council tax. Wants are the 'would like, but can live without' items. Savings are what we can keep for later. At the moment, more of our cash is being spent on Needs than ever before, so deal with those first, put your Wants on a wishlist to come back to when possible and save what you can, if you can.

Spending

Once your regular expenses have been paid, there is nothing wrong with spending your money on things you love. For many of us, it's hard to spend on anything but essentials right now, so plan for future purchases by making a wish list and prioritise your favourites. That way you can start to save up for them when savings are possible.

Saving

Saving is a great habit to get in to, even with small amounts. We're less likely to overspend if the first thing we do with a pay cheque is put some aside. I recommend working out a manageable amount to save and banking that, before spending the rest.

Emergency Fund

Having an emergency fund can help if you lose your main source of income or have to make an unexpected purchase. It's reassuring to know you have some cash set aside. It's hard to save right now, but if you can, keep a bit of money in a separate and accessible savings account in case something unexpected happens.

Debt

We should never feel pressurised to borrow money if we don't need it. If we do need it, we should try to borrow only what we can afford to repay and aim to pay it back on time and in full. For anyone struggling with debt, it's important to get help straight away, and charities like Step Change offer free, independent advice. <https://www.stepchange.org/how-we-help/debt-advice.aspx>

Confidence

Feeling confident with numbers can help us feel better able to make decisions about money. The National Numeracy Challenge is a great way to boost your number confidence this National Numeracy Day. It's free and it includes resources to help you manage your money.

Try the National Numeracy Challenge by visiting: nationalnumeracy.org.uk/challenge

Three reasons why maths is great for money management

1

It's worth having the basics covered, so you aren't tempted to avoid your finances.

If you aren't able confident with numbers, then you could be excluded from managing your money.

2

Maths can help you make decisions about your money.

Once you have the numeracy skills to understand financial information, you can start to make decisions for yourself about your money.

3

Basic maths can unlock other ways to manage your money.

Helpful financial aids, such as budgeting tools, tend to assume a basic understanding of numeracy. Once you're confident with numbers, you can get the most out of these.