

# 20-MINUTE MONTHLY BUDGET REVIEW

Compare the plan with the real month, explain one gap, and choose one fix.

MIN 0-3

## Confirm actual income

Use the money that actually arrived, not the income you expected.

| PLANNED TAKE-HOME | ACTUAL TAKE-HOME | DIFFERENCE | LIKELY AGAIN? |
|-------------------|------------------|------------|---------------|
|                   |                  |            |               |

MIN 3-6

## Check bills, due dates and renewals

Tick anything that happened this month and note it below.

- |                                                           |                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A bill increased                 | <input type="checkbox"/> A free trial became paid            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A payment was late or duplicated | <input type="checkbox"/> A due date caused a cash crunch     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> An annual or quarterly charge    | <input type="checkbox"/> A bill will be different next month |

MIN 6-11

## Compare planned and actual spending

Focus on gaps big enough to change next month's decisions. Over plan = positive.

| CATEGORY                | PLANNED | ACTUAL | DIFFERENCE |
|-------------------------|---------|--------|------------|
| Housing                 |         |        |            |
| Utilities               |         |        |            |
| Groceries               |         |        |            |
| Transportation          |         |        |            |
| Debt payments           |         |        |            |
| Savings                 |         |        |            |
| Other flexible spending |         |        |            |
|                         |         |        |            |

MIN 11-14

## Review savings and debt transfers

- ☐ Did the planned transfer happen?
- ☐ Was it smaller because income was lower or a bill was higher?
- ☐ Did you withdraw from savings later in the month?
- ☐ Did an extra debt payment leave too little for an essential bill?
- ☐ Is the target realistic for an ordinary month?

# 20-MINUTE MONTHLY BUDGET REVIEW

Page 2 of 2: explain one gap, choose one fix

MIN 14–17

## Explain the biggest useful gap

Name the type of gap so you pick the right fix.

THE GAP, IN ONE SENTENCE

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☐ **One-time or timing**

Repair, annual fee, late invoice.

Fix: sinking fund or timing.

☐ **Estimate problem**

Target too low for normal life.

Fix: raise it, fund it elsewhere.

☐ **System problem**

Limit wasn't visible or easy.

Fix: weekly check, one card.

MIN 17–20

## Choose one fix for next month

*my one fix:*

Specific beats "spend less": "Set dining out to \$120 and check it every Friday."

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☐ Done

ALSO NOTED FOR LATER (NOT THIS MONTH)

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*make the next plan more accurate than the last one*