

Paige Myers
pmyers@iastate.edu
Iowa State University

I thought the blog post about living green on a budget was so important, especially for us as college students! It's also important to acknowledge the issue of privilege in the area of sustainability; as a white female from an upper-middle class background, I've always taken for granted my ability to spend discretionary income on organic and fair trade items. I also loved the DIY Kombucha-brewing example, although I realize that the learning curve and initial investment for some of these DIY projects can be a little steep.

I've been using the Mint app for about 2.5 months now, and I'm starting to get the hang of the monthly summaries and how to utilize this information. I'm really fortunate that I have a really inexpensive rent, most of my groceries come either for free from the campus student farm (I have a workshare) or are things that I "rescue" from the loss food at the grocery co-op where I work. So far in October, I've spent less than \$30 on food!

One of the things I do end up spending a lot of money on are coffee drinks and snacks on campus when I forget to pack food and I'm on campus for a full day! I realized that I can save a lot of money by purchasing Clif bars in bulk from my co-op (for those days when I have NO time and need food) because they're so much more expensive in our campus cafes. I also want to make a better effort to prepare meals ahead of time and pack them for on campus, because I definitely had to throw away some veggies from my last CSA share.

In addition, I noticed that I spend a significant portion of my disposable income on massages and facials. These things make me feel great, and are a huge part of my self-care routine. I'm an anxious person by nature, so it's important for my mental and emotional well-being that I schedule time for self-care and stress relief. I get 4-5 stress headaches every week due to my anxiety, and massages help a LOT with those—I'm down to only about two headaches each week now. However, since I do want to save money, I'm going to cut out one professional massage a month and instead do a fun massage-swap/spa night with one of my friends! I think this will help just as much with stress relief and be a good way to devote time to our friendship. At \$55/massage, this will save me almost \$700 dollars in one year!

Below, I added in two screenshots of my Mint summary from the last week. I've been really happy with my reduction in spending so far, and I look forward to directing my spending away from mindless consumerism and more towards things that truly add to my happiness!

