

**Team Green Gang (Aurora Yuan and Alice Feng)**

**Username:** aurorayuan8

**Email address:** [aurorayuan8@gmail.com](mailto:aurorayuan8@gmail.com)

**School:** Princeton High School

Develop a budget of what you spend weekly or monthly. Two helpful resources are [Mint](#) or [YNAB](#). Think about where most discretionary spending goes. Could any of this be eliminated if, for example, you bring a reusable water bottle instead of buying a drink in a single-use container? Or other simple shifts?

- Find a few ways that you could realistically cut money out of your weekly budget. Multiply that savings by the 52 weeks in the year and see how much money you might save, while also lessening your environmental impact. Share your findings.

Monthly Budget

Budget Items	Before	After
Food	\$350	\$140
Drinks (Boba, Coffee, Smoothie, etc)	\$8*5 (boba -_-)+\$5*4 (Coffee)	\$20 (Cut boba and coffee consumption-- switch to fair trade coffee beans and make them at home if I have free time! If I don't then it's perfect for cutting consumption!)
Lunch during school	\$12* 20 (I eat sushi from Wegmans everyday)	\$5*20 (switch to homemade plant-based meals [salads, chia puddings, homemade sushi etc.]
Snacks	\$50	\$20 (I am recently obsessed with homemade veggie chips!)

<b>Beauty</b>	\$160	\$80
Makeup	\$40	\$40 every 4 months/ \$10 per month (I did spend excessively on makeup and skincare products. But recently I realized how much plastic pollution they would bring when I saw my drawer full of containers, so I would definitely cut down the beauty budget to only necessity)
Skincare	\$60 (subscription) +40	\$60+40 every 4 months/ \$60+10 per month (^)
Hair Care and Body Care	\$20	\$0 (I'll try to personally/ask my parents if I don't have time to DIY the products I need! (Day 6 Challenge!))
<b>Travel</b>	\$38	\$0
Train every week to New York	\$32	\$0 ( I'll try to carpool with one of my classmates! Seems more fun and saves money too!)
Metro from Penn Station to Columbia (to and back)	\$6	\$0 (^)
<b>Digital</b>	\$22.98	\$9.99
Netflix	\$12.99	\$0-- (CANCEL-- I should probably do more important things in life! )

Spotify	\$9.99	\$9.99 (I still need to listen to podcasts and piano :-( )
<b>Apparel</b>	\$150	\$37.5
Clothes	\$100	\$100 every 4 months/\$25 per month (fast fashion-- another PGC topic! I really need to cut down my clothing spending as I have a full closet of unwanted clothes... I'll ask my parents to supervise me to say NO to fast fashion! I'll try to only purchase seasonal staples from now on)
Accessories, Bags, and Shoes	\$50	\$50 every 4 months/ \$12.5 per month (^)
Total Project Costs/Total Request	\$720.98	\$267.49 (a 63% decrease if I shop consciously! This is exciting!!!!)

Annual Savings: \$5441.88 (whaaaaat)

What are three benefits of using this budget over your current method?

1. **More sustainable consumption.** By using this new budget, I am able to protect the environment by many, many means. Just to list a few, I can: 1. Reduce the plastic waste from my sushi and boba packaging 2. Reduce plastic waste from my beauty products 3. Reduce my garment waste by saying no to fast fashion. Though at first it might feel restricting because of my previous shopping habits, but it would definitely feel AWESOME to understand that I am being a better environmentalist when I shop!
2. **Save money!** Needless to say, this budget definitely helps me save money! I just became an adult and my parents are now asking me to manage my own budget. I didn't realize how much I spend each month, but thanks to this challenge, now I know I can save \$5441.88 dollars just by switching my shopping habits! (That is 181 Klean Kateen Water Bottles!! ;))
3. **Conscious consumer- feel good!** It is absolutely nice to know that while I'm purchasing items and spending money, I am not harming the environment by encouraging waste accumulation of excessive purchase, a 21st century social norm encouraged by the

market. I can not imagine how much our earth could change if everyone takes the time to consider the possible changes they can make in their shopping habits. Everyone can save more money to invest in more important cause and the future of our planet could be a complete different story. It's hard to change the market as an individual. But ultimately consumer behavior dictates the market. If everyone is willing to make the change, the market will, too.