

FREE

Know Your Money²⁰¹⁸

Advice and tips about
your finances

Konsument
verket • KO

40^{år}
Koll på pengarna
1978–2018

Welcome to Know Your Money



How much does a car cost, and how does moving away from home affect your finances? What happens when you are unable to pay your bills, and who can you turn to for advice?

This and much more besides is what we try to find out in Know Your Money, which this year is celebrating the 40th anniversary of the first edition of this Consumer Agency publication. The publication gives you plenty of tips and advice on matters such as food, housing, car ownership, insurance and loans. It includes examples of how costs are affected by the arrival of your first child, how you can save money by looking over your mobile subscription, and what living at home with your parents can cost. Know Your Money also provides checklists that

can be of help when you are looking over your insurance policies or buying a car.

If you find yourself in trouble financially, it can be good to know that there is help available free of charge. We can tell you where to find advice on financial and consumer issues in your municipality. There are also four consumer agencies in Sweden that help consumers, plus an information service called Hallå konsument (Hello Consumer). hallakonsument.se can provide answers to many of your questions on consumer issues.

Know Your Money also includes the Consumer Agency's cost estimates for a reasonable standard of living. These estimates apply to some of the most common expenses incurred by a household and provide examples of what it can cost to have a standard of living that is neither luxurious nor at the bottom of the scale. Leaf through, read and get to **Know Your Money!**

Contents

- 3 Making a budget
- 4 If your money does not stretch far enough
- 6 Saving, investing or borrowing
- 8 Food
- 9 Car
- 10 Housing
- 12 Sustainable consumption
- 14 Telephone, TV and Internet
- 16 Insurance
- 17 Becoming a parent
- 18 Your finances as a young person
- 19 Leaving home
- 20 Free advice from the municipal authority
- 21 Free help from the consumer bureaus
- 21 Hallå konsument!
- 22 Consumer Agency estimates for 2018



Project management & text:

Swedish Consumer Agency

Layout: Universitetsstryckeriet, Karlstad

Photography: Øyvind Lund, Joel Samuelsson, Martin Götenstedt, Michael Nilsson and Shutterstock

Illustrations: Annika Carlsson

Print: Danagårds Litho, 2017

Edition: 135 000 copies

Making a budget

Making a budget is a smart move if you want to keep a close eye on your finances. To make a budget, write down the income and expenses you have each month. If you want to have more money to spare, you can try to cut down on your expenses or increase your income.

On this page you can check your current monthly budget and make a new budget if you want. You can find some of the figures you need to enter in the table below on other pages in Know Your Money.

Once you have made your monthly budget, consider whether there is anything you want to and can change. If so, enter this in the column headed "my new monthly budget" and begin living within the new budget as soon as you can.

Maybe you have an opportunity to save or pay off a loan?

If you would rather make your budget on your computer or mobile, you can do so using the Budget Calculator (Budgetkalkylen) which you will find on hallakonsument.se/budgetkalkylen

Would you like more advice about managing your finances?

Get in touch with a budget and debt advisor or a consumer advisor in your municipality.

You will find contact details on Hallå Konsument's website: hallakonsument.se

You can find further information on the municipal services available on page 20.

Tip:

Bear in mind that your budget must work for every month. In some months there will be bigger bills coming in, while in other months there may be none at all.

My monthly budget

		My current monthly budget	My new monthly budget
Total income (from page 5)			
Costs			
Food	} (from page 23)		
Clothing and shoes			
Recreation and play			
Mobile phone			
Personal hygiene			
Insurance for children and young people			
Expendable items			
Household utensils and small appliances			
Media			
Home insurance			
Car	(from page 9)		
Other insurance			
Housing			
Household electricity			
Loans (payment by instalments and interest payments)			
Local travel on public transport			
Unemployment insurance fund and trade union membership fee			
Medical appointments/dental care/medication			
Other (such as sweets, games, presents, alcohol, tobacco, pets, holidays)			
Savings			
Total costs			
RESULTS (income minus costs)			



If your money does not stretch far enough

It may be difficult to balance your budget so that your money lasts the entire month. The rent, bills and any loans must be paid in time, and you need to buy food. Sometimes expenses can also arise that you have not budgeted for.

In some months you will receive more bills and have bigger expenses than in other months. If you keep an eye on which bills come in each month, it is easier to plan your budget. If you are able, save some money to put in a reserve fund – a so-called buffer. You will then be better able to manage the more expensive months and any unexpected costs. If you think that your budget is working, you might be able to increase the savings in your buffer.

Changing your situation

If you have recurrent problems paying

the bills, you must change your situation completely. In the worst case, you might be thrown out of your accommodation if you do not pay the rent on time or if you have a record of non-payment with credit rating agencies.

Hopefully you can resolve your problems in a short time. You may have the opportunity to move to cheaper accommodation or rent out a room in your existing accommodation. Or you may have a relative who can help you on a temporary basis. You can also look over the subscriptions you have. Maybe some

of these can be terminated, but bear in mind if so that you have a period of notice. Can you sell your car or items you have at home which are of value?

Have you run up debts on expensive credit cards?

Have you purchased something but chosen to pay for it later by using a credit card or by instalments? Try to get a bank loan with low interest and pay off all your loans. Cancel your loans and then get rid of your credit cards so that you do not run up new debt.

An unpaid bill can prove expensive

Telephone bill
SEK 600

+

Reminder fee
SEK 60

+

Debt collection fee
SEK 180

+

Application for order for payment
SEK 300

+

Legal fee
SEK 380

+

Basic charge for enforcement
SEK 600

=

Total including all fees
SEK 2 120

Record of non-payment

If you neglect to pay a bill, you may get a record of non-payment on the credit rating agencies' registers. If you have a record of this kind, you may, for instance, be refused a bank loan or prevented from buying a subscription for a mobile and the Internet. You may also be denied the opportunity to rent a flat.

If a bill has been made out in error, it is important that you send your objection in writing to the company as soon as possible. Save a copy of your letter. You can then show it to the Swedish Enforcement Authority if you receive an order for payment, which is a letter from the Swedish Enforcement Authority demanding payment of the debt.

The outstanding amount on an unpaid bill increases fast

A bill that you neglect to pay can end up being much more expensive. On this page you can see an example of a telephone bill for SEK 600. If it is not paid in time, it can quickly increase to over SEK 2 000. If you are unable to pay a bill, contact the organisation that sent it to you as soon as possible. Perhaps you will be allowed to pay the bill in small instalments over several

months? You can also contact the budget and debt advisor in your municipality who will give you financial advice free of charge.

Work out your income

It is a good idea to obtain an overview of the income and contributions in your

household. Enter your household income in the table. Then transfer the total called "total income per month after tax" to "total income" in the table on page 3.

For further information on the Budget Calculator visit hallakonsument.se

Income and contributions per month (after tax)

	Household member 1	Household member 2	Total income
Salary			
Parental allowance			
Child allowance			
Maintenance support/child support			
Housing allowance			
Unemployment benefit			
Study allowance/training allowance			
Sickness benefit			
Sickness and activity compensation			
Pension			
Other income (allowances, scholarships etc)			
Total monthly income after tax			



Saving, investing or borrowing

Saving or investing is a good way of securing money, either for buying something you want or if something unforeseen happens. You can also borrow money, but borrowing money has a cost.

Save or invest?

There is a difference between saving and investing. When you save, there is no risk of losing any money. As soon as there is a risk of losing something, this is known instead as an investment.

If you want to save your money, you can do so in a savings account with a deposit

guarantee. The interest is usually not that high, but you do not risk losing your money either. If you want to get a better return, you can invest instead. Bear in mind if so that you might risk losing all or some of your investment.

Instead of borrowing money it is a good idea to save or invest in order to have a

buffer. This means it will be easier for you to manage in a month when a lot of bills are coming in or if you want to buy something you really want or need. If you are able, start by trying to save some of your income every month over one year.

When investing over a slightly longer period, you will have many alternatives



such as funds and shares, which can both rise and fall in value. Consider the risk you are willing to take with your investment.

Borrowing money comes at a cost

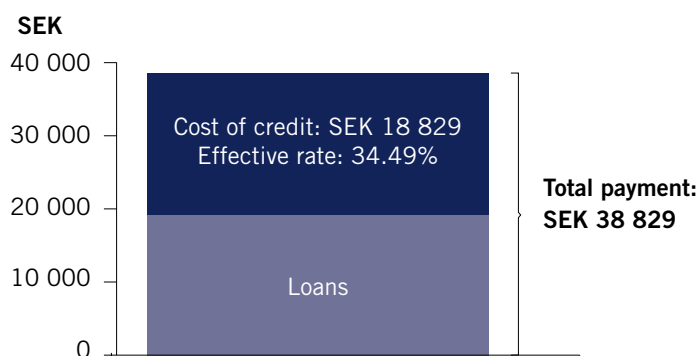
If you borrow money, you are using money that you do not actually have. You must pay interest on the borrowed amount, which means that what you have bought will be more expensive than if you had paid in cash.

You can apply for a loan from different creditors. You can also apply for a loan from a credit intermediary. A credit intermediary does not issue loans; it only arranges the contact between borrower and creditor.

There are many different kinds of loan. There are also many different names given to loans for private consumption, such as a private loan, an unsecured loan, a credit card loan or a quick loan. Regardless of the name of the loan, it is important that you read the terms and conditions so that you understand what the loan involves.

This is how much borrowing can cost

You borrow SEK 20 000. You pay back SEK 647 per month over a five-year period. This is how much you pay in total:



Different loans come with different interest rates. The bank will want to be sure that they get their money back in the event that you are unable to pay. Many bank loans therefore require security in the form of a house or an owner-occupied flat which the bank can sell if you are unable to pay. If you do not have anything to use as security, the interest rate will usually be higher. How high the interest rate will be is usually something you can negotiate with the bank.

If you do not have any security to give the bank, another person can act as guarantor for you. This means that the person who is the guarantor can pay your debts if you cannot.

There are also loans for which you do not need to provide security. These loans often have a higher interest rate since the bank lending the money has either less security or none at all for the loan.

Check the effective interest rate

If you are about to borrow money, it is important that you check the effective rate. The effective rate is a tool for comparison which shows the total cost of the loan expressed as an annual interest rate. The total cost of the loan is called the credit cost. The credit cost should include advice fees, the arrangement fee and interest. You can then work out the effective rate of the loan from the total cost. You can see an example in the picture on this page.

Take time to examine the various alternatives and terms and conditions.

The creditor lending you the money shall give you a SECCI form before you make your decision. Read the form, as it will give you a good summary of the terms and conditions of the loan. Consider whether the cost of taking out a loan is worth it.

The creditor always carries out a credit check

Buying on credit is also a type of loan. The party lending the money shall find out whether you can pay back the loan. This is called a credit check. The creditor carries out a credit check to see if you are financially capable of paying interest and paying by instalment on the loan you want. A credit check must be carried out for all types of loans, regardless of how big or small the loan is.

In order to obtain an overall picture of your financial situation, the creditor draws up a credit report. A credit report consists of information gathered about you from the Swedish Tax Agency, the Swedish Enforcement Authority and other public agencies to assess whether you can pay a loan. If you apply for a large number of loans, several credit reports will be registered in your name, which may give you a lower level of creditworthiness. A lower level of creditworthiness can make creditors less willing to lend you money.

For further information visit the Swedish Consumers' Banking and Insurance Bureau's website: [konsumenternas.se](https://www.konsumenternas.se)

Food

Food is a major cost, but a cost that you can affect yourself depending on what you choose by way of food and how you plan your purchases. Good healthy food for an adult costs about SEK 2 300 per month.

What you eat and drink is of great significance for your health and also for your finances and the environment.

Knowing what is healthy and nutritious may seem difficult. One simple approach might be to choose keyhole-labelled products when you shop.

We throw away large amounts of food in Sweden, and much of it is thrown away unnecessarily. The National Food Agency

has calculated that the Swedes throw away food worth SEK 3 000 to 6 000 per household each year. One third of all the food thrown away would have been edible.

Throwing away food is bad not only for the environment but also for one's wallet. Smell and taste food even if the "best by" date has expired. Food is often still edible.

For further information visit livsmedelsverket.se

Tip:

Cut down on your food costs

- Make lunchboxes out of leftovers. If you take a lunchbox to work instead of going out to eat every day, you will save about SEK 1 800 per month.
- Make a plan of what you will eat over the week.
- Write a shopping list and buy only the things that are on that list.
- Buy fruit and vegetables according to the season.
- Use frozen vegetables – these are as nutritious as fresh ones and easy to cook.
- Buy less meat, and more beans and lentils.
- Use the food before it goes off, and keep track of the food you have in your fridge freezer.

Small purchases can become large expenses

	Cost per week	Cost for one year (52 weeks)
Coffee in town once a week	50	2 600
Pick and mix sweets 3 hg per week	18	936
Soft drinks 1 per day	70	3 640
Crisps 200 g per week	20	1 040
Cigarettes 1 pack a day	441	22 932
Snuff 3 tins per week	130	6 760
One magazine a week	40	2 080



Car

Owning a car is expensive. Apart from fuel costs, insurance, tax and maintenance must be paid. Moreover, the car will depreciate in value for every year that you own it.

Before acquiring a car, it may be a good idea to find out about the different costs. Get quotes from different insurance companies to find out what your car insurance might cost. Certain cars have lower petrol consumption than others, which will affect your wallet. Vehicle tax is paid on an annual basis, and the amount depends on what kind of vehicle you have.

Buying a car privately

Usually it is cheaper to buy a car from another private individual compared to buying from a car dealer. Buying a car from a private individual is covered by the Sale of Goods Act. This means you have less protection than if you buy from a car dealer, in which case the Consumer Sales Act applies. You also have greater responsibility for carrying out a careful inspection of the car if you buy it privately. Check if there is any guarantee that is still valid.

You cannot go back on the purchase if that has not been specified in the contract of sale. According to the Sale of Goods Act, you are covered to some extent by a legal guarantee when you buy the car privately. You will find a form for drawing up a contract for the private purchase of a car on konsumentverket.se.

Research the market. The Swedish Consumer Agency has an online service, bilsvar.se, where you can compare cars in terms of make, budget, environment and technology.

- Test drive the car before you buy.
- Carry out a careful inspection of the car and check that it is in good working order.
- Check for any dents, scratches or other damage.
- Do bring the car in to a garage for inspection or an MOT.
- Check that the seller is the registered owner and that there are no debts on the vehicle that are owed to the Swedish Transport Agency.
- Check that there are no outstanding payments for the car.
- Carry out a delivery inspection (see checklist). This means that you check the car is in good working order and good condition before you buy it.

Buying a car from a car dealer

If you buy a car from a car dealer, you are covered by the Consumer Sales Act, which gives you certain rights such as being able to make a claim for any faults.

However, there are some aspects associated with this which you ought to consider:

- ask for a goods declaration on the car
- read the service manual to check that the car has been serviced at the right times
- write out a contract of sale.

Instead of buying a car

If you only want to pay for a car when you really need it, there are carpools in many locations. An alternative if you do not need to use a car that often is a rental car. You can also lease a car.

Leasing is a form of long-term rental and you are bound by the contract over a longer period. If you lease a car, read the contract carefully and consider whether this solution is right for you. Maybe your situation in life will change during the period of the rental? Other aspects to consider are, for example, whether the car can be used overseas, who is responsible for servicing, damage to and condition of the car, and whether tax, insurance and winter tyres are included.

Checklist

When carrying out a delivery inspection

- ☐ Check the brakes, steering, lights, windscreen wipers and other movable parts. Ask the seller to come with you on a test drive.
- ☐ Check that the lacquer on the car is not damaged. It may be hard to prove that damage was incurred before delivery of the car if you only discover it after the purchase.
- ☐ Check that the car is delivered with all the particulars specified in the purchase agreement.
- ☐ Note any deviations you find on your copy of the document of sale, and ask the seller to sign.
- ☐ Check that all the documents belonging to the car have been provided: the contract, instruction manual, proof of registration, service book and any guarantees.

Read more about buying a car on hallakonsument.se. At bilsvar.se you can read more about different makes of car and calculate what various cars cost.

This is how much your car costs per year

	Cost
Loan/interest/instalments	
Fuel expenditure	
Tax and MOT	
Insurance	
Repairs, service etc.	
Tyres	
Parking	
Total cost per year	
Monthly cost (divide the total cost per year by 12 months)	*

*Enter this total in the table on page 3.



Housing

Accommodation is often the biggest expenditure in a household budget. It is therefore important to choose accommodation you can afford. There are several different types of accommodation to choose from. You can live in a rented flat, an owner-occupied flat or a house.

In some types of housing you are personally responsible for all maintenance, while in others there is a landlord who is responsible for maintenance. This may affect your costs.

Renting accommodation

If you live in a rented flat, the landlord is responsible for maintenance and repairs to the flat and for fixed equipment such

Tip:

Whatever type of accommodation you have, you can save energy. Check whether you can change the type of heating you have or your electricity supplier in order to reduce your costs.

as an oven or refrigerator. The landlord must also see to it that the heating works and that the flat is in good condition when you move in. If you have problems with



Checklists

Before you rent accommodation

- ☐ Ensure you have a written rental agreement.
- ☐ Request that you and the landlord inspect the flat together. Write down a record of any damages – a record you then both sign.
- ☐ If you discover damages after having moved in, write these down and request that these are also added to the record. Otherwise you risk having to pay for damages caused by previous tenants.

Before you rent a sublet

- ☐ Ask to get a copy of the permit to sublet from the person you are renting from.
- ☐ Inspect the flat together with the person you are renting from, and note all damages in a record that you both sign and receive a copy of.
- ☐ If you are renting a furnished flat, make a list of all the items in it. Note if anything has been damaged. You both sign this and you each keep a copy.
- ☐ You will find further information on renting accommodation, be it renting or subletting, at **omboende.se**

Before you buy accommodation

- ☐ There are many things to consider before buying a house or an owner-occupied flat. On **omboende.se** you will find different checklists and helpful information before making your purchase.
- ☐ You will also find information there on your rights and obligations as a home owner and what you should consider if you are selling your home.

the flat you should contact the landlord. You are responsible for paying the rent and taking care of the flat. Should you break a window or tear the wallpaper you will be responsible for the cost of repair.

Subletting

If you rent a flat from another tenant, this is known as renting a sublet. The landlord must give permission for the flat to be sublet. If the main tenant gives notice on the flat or is evicted, you must move out. You are thus dependent on the person you are renting from.

Buying accommodation

If you buy an owner-occupied flat or a house, you will usually need to take out a loan. You must pay at least 15 per cent of the price in cash. For the remaining 85 per cent, you can apply to borrow from the bank.

It could be a wise move to save the difference between the amount you pay

based on the current interest rate and a notional interest rate of 6 per cent. If the interest rate exceeds 6 per cent, you can use the money you have saved and then you will not need to cut back on other expenses. Another way of managing to pay off higher costs for a loan is to pay by instalments when the interest rate is low.

On 1 June 2016 new requirements came into force for paying off new home loans. If you are taking out a home loan, check carefully with your bank what the requirements are for paying by instalments. A home loan can also be called a mortgage.

Buying an owner-occupied flat

If you buy an owner-occupied flat, you are actually buying a share in a cooperative housing association. The share entitles you to live in the flat. The association owns the building where your flat is located, the land and the common spaces. You pay a monthly fee to the association and in addition your private costs for interest and loan payments.

You will also have costs for electricity and in some cases water as well. You are personally responsible for the maintenance of the flat. If the oven, refrigerator or similar appliances break down, you will need to buy new ones.

Buying a house

Owning a house, be it a detached or terraced house, means that you yourself are responsible for all the costs. There are expenses for items such as rubbish collection, sweeping the chimney, gardening equipment, home insurance and heating. You also have to pay for the registration of title, the mortgage deeds, the arrangement of new loans and annual property fees. Having a buffer for unforeseen expenses is a good idea.

You will find further information on elpriskollen.se, hallakonsument.se, konsumenternas.se, omboende.se



Sustainable consumption

We often hear the term sustainable consumption, but what does it actually mean? And what can you do to become a sustainable consumer?

A large part of today's environmental problems are connected with our private consumption and lifestyle. We consume goods every day, and this affects both our environment and other people in different ways.

Everyone can help create a sustainable way of life through their everyday choices. Keep in mind that our consumption should not give rise to injustices in the world and that we should not consume more of the Earth's resources than can be regenerated.

What can you do?

Basically sustainable consumption is about the need for us to review our consumer behaviours. We can, for instance, choose

to take public transportation to work, buy second-hand items, throw away less food or quite simply be satisfied with the mobile we have even if it is not the latest model.

At the same time, it can be hard changing our behaviours. Our budget, habits, lack of time and surroundings can affect the choices we make. It can also be hard to find information on what we should do to make the right choices.

It is especially important to consider how we consume food, which modes of transport we choose and the way we live. These are three areas which when taken together create the biggest outlay in terms of private consumption.

Changing our behaviours in these areas would benefit our health as well as the environment and household budget. Deciding to get rid of the car, swapping a meat dish for a vegetarian meal from time to time, and keeping an eye on the household's energy consumption are a few good examples of sustainable consumption.

Tip:

There are many different kinds of eco-labelling. You can see what the different labels mean on hallakonsument.se/markningsguiden

We went into town to find out more about other people's views on sustainable living and whether they had any tips for the rest of us.

Public transport



Jan Strandqvist and Katarina Ljungberg

"Sustainable means sustaining the world! We try to choose organic when buying food, but it depends a bit on the price. Sometimes organic products are much more expensive, but usually there isn't much difference. We also buy local produce.

We don't have a car, but I have a Vespa and sometimes we take the bus," says Jan. "Sometimes we fly and that isn't so good, but it's hard to get to other countries any other way unless you're prepared to spend several days travelling."

"For me it's important to buy clothing made from organic materials since I am sensitive to chemicals," says Katarina. "Usually they're hanging among the other clothes in the shops, and that isn't so great for me."

Home cooking



Ranjit Sivia

"In a way I've been thinking more about what I buy since starting a family. Our

child doesn't want to eat tinned food but eats the same food as us, which means we also eat more organic produce."

Waste sorting and organic products



Oliver Byström

"The first thing I think about when I hear the term sustainable consumption is

recycling. And that the consumer is environmentally aware and, say, buys organic products in food stores. I don't buy many organic products myself. But I do sort waste."

Growing your own



Rigel and Janne Pettersson

"When we go out for food we try to think about what we're buying to ensure it's either local produce or organic. And we grow a lot of things ourselves such as potatoes, beetroot, dill and so on. Unfortunately it's quite expensive to buy a new and more environmentally friendly car, so we've not been able to do that."

Don't overconsume



Anton Storm

"For me sustainable consumption

means not buying too much stuff. I don't think we need the amount of stuff there is. I still live at home and my parents grow their own vegetables. I've learned from them to be economical and make the most of what I have, so, for instance, I've knitted a scarf for myself."

Sustainable investments



Cecilia Löfstrand

"I keep in mind many aspects of sustainable consumption at all times.

Where I work, we have to place capital in sustainable investments, so that is something I consider very important. For my part I try to sort my waste and buy organic products. I think it's difficult in today's society to know whether what I'm doing is the right thing; we're always hearing about new findings."

Recycling clothes



Sylvie Lundström

"Buying organic is sustainable but sometimes expensive.

We mostly buy organic fruit. I work in a clothes shop where you can hand in clothes for recycling, so I take a fair bit of stuff there. It's good that it can be reused. We've decided to have just one car in our family, so when someone else is using it we take the bus instead. And sometimes I walk to work."

Fewer chemicals



Carina Pedro Berglund

"People of my age have a lot of stuff, and I don't share the throwaway

mentality. I buy a fair bit of second-hand stuff: clothes, furniture and crockery. I feel that many of the younger generation are thinking more sustainably. Our daughter, who lives at home, is environmentally aware and that influences us. When we do housework my husband uses more chemicals, whereas I believe that water and washing up liquid go a long way."



Telephone, TV and Internet

One way of saving money is to look over your contracts and subscriptions for your telephone, TV and Internet. The costs can vary depending on which service or provider you choose.

There are many providers to choose from, and they offer several different kinds of contracts. Often the services are sold as a package which makes them difficult to compare with each other. It is important that you understand the differences between the various offers in order to decide which is the best option for you.

There are many things to think about when making your choice. Should you pay as you go or have a subscription? Is there good network coverage? What is included in the subscription? Are there any other costs?

You can find out more about mobile phone subscriptions on Hallå konsument's

website under the heading "Tips för olika köp".

Using your mobile phone abroad

Within the EU there is a maximum limit for how much it can cost to make calls, send texts and surf the Internet privately. As of 2017, mobile operators are no longer



Tip:

The Swedish Telecom Advisers provide free and impartial consumer advice on TV, telephone and broadband subscriptions.

Shop around



Name: Jonas Hjalmarson

Hi! You have a TV, phone and Internet. What did you have in mind when choosing your service provider and subscriptions?

"We chose to have separate subscriptions instead of a single package. As regards the mobile phone, we use it mostly for making calls and we don't need the Internet on it. My neighbour works for a service provider, so he helped us choose what suited us."

allowed to apply additional roaming charges for people travelling within the EU. In order to keep an eye on the costs, you can ask your mobile operator to let you know when you have been using the Internet for a certain amount of money. When you travel abroad, consider the following:

- check with your mobile operator how much it costs to make calls and surf the Internet in the countries you are going to visit
- shut down apps that automatically connect to the Internet. Shut down roaming as well
- both receiving and listening to voicemail messages can cost money.
- if you use free wifi you do not pay anything when surfing the Internet.

TV subscription

Choosing your service provider and TV subscription can be difficult. Today there are several ways of watching TV, and there

are a lot of channels. Find out how you can receive TV broadcasts where you live. Do you have terrestrial, cable, satellite or broadband? For instance, it can be unusual to have access to cable TV if you live in a house.

Avoid simply comparing the total price between service providers. Check what is included in the price and what it will cost if you want to cancel the contract early. A subscription may include costs for getting set up, installation, a card etc. Also find out about the term of the contract/period of notice and which terms and conditions apply in the case of faults and disruption.

Internet

Today broadband can be connected in different ways, such as via the telephone network, cable TV, optical fibre or the electricity network. Think about what you use your connection for. How much data are you downloading and what speed do you think you need? If you use the Internet

to listen to the radio and music, watch films and send pictures, you will need larger and faster amounts of data traffic than if you mainly send emails. When you sign up for a new subscription with a service provider, it is important to check the term of the contract and whether there are charges in addition to the monthly cost.

At present the broadband infrastructure is undergoing huge expansion, and an increasing number of detached homes are being offered the opportunity to connect to fibre. The Broadband Forum's website provides a checklist of things that are important to bear in mind when connecting to broadband, such as whether a ROT deduction is included in the price you have been quoted. What does the time scale look like? Look at bredbandsforum.se/bredband-till-villa

For further information visit
telekomradgivarna.se

Insurance

Insurance gives you financial protection, which means you can access money if, say, you are involved in an accident or become ill. You can decide for yourself which insurance you think you need. Before you purchase an insurance policy, it is important that you read the pre-purchase information where you will find a summary of important conditions and exemptions you should know about.



Home insurance

If you have home insurance, you can receive compensation if your possessions are destroyed or stolen. If you have destroyed something owned by someone else, that person may be able to receive compensation through your home insurance. Legal protection is also included, which may mean you receive compensation if you find yourself in a dispute that must be resolved in court. Most home insurance policies also include travel insurance and cover for assault that can pay your costs for medical treatment and loss of income. You can supplement your home insurance with an all risk insurance policy in order to have extended cover.

Sickness and accident insurance

If you fall seriously ill or have an accident, you can receive compensation via the Swedish Social Insurance Agency, although this compensation is limited. Lifelong injuries may affect your financial situation for the rest of your life. Sickness and accident insurance can give you extra compensation for health care costs or for permanent injury. Ensure that the insurance policy pays compensation if you are unable to continue working or if you become disabled – known as medical and financial invalidity.

Child insurance

Children who are permanently injured after an accident or illness receive a relatively low amount of compensation from the Swedish Social Insurance Agency. In addition, children are not protected by their school's insurance outside of school hours, such as during the summer holidays. Child insurance can provide extra compensation if anything should happen to your child.

Car insurance

If you own a car, you are required by law to have car insurance as well. If you cause an accident, your car insurance provides compensation for personal injury and damage to the other driver's car and property. However, you receive no compensation for damage to your own car. For this you need comprehensive cover or partial coverage insurance. Partial coverage insurance provides compensation for your own car in a collision with another car, but to receive compensation for a single vehicle accident – that is to say, where you do not collide with another car – you need comprehensive insurance.

Product liability insurance

When you buy a new product, the seller will sometimes invite you to buy something called product liability insurance. However, you have good protection even without special product liability insurance.

- The Consumer Sales Act gives you the right to make a complaint about the product within three years if it is faulty.
- Usually the manufacturer provides a guarantee for a fixed period.
- You can receive compensation via your home insurance.

Start by finding out which protection you already have, and then you can judge whether or not you need the product liability insurance.

Tip:

Sometimes you may be offered insurance policies that cover only one product or a specific event. Examples of this are payment protection insurance for your loans, watch insurance and ID protection. In these cases, it is even more important that you read the pre-purchase information to see what is included and consider what the insurance will cost over time.

Unemployment insurance and unemployment insurance funds

Everyone who works and meets certain conditions is covered by unemployment insurance. If you become unemployed, you receive a basic amount – a relatively low amount of compensation. If you are a member of an unemployment insurance fund, you can receive somewhat higher compensation based on your salary. In addition to this are so-called income insurance policies.

You will find further information on the conditions relating to unemployment insurance funds and the amount of compensation you can receive on your unemployment insurance fund's website. The Swedish Unemployment Insurance Board's website will provide you with the links to the various unemployment insurance funds that are available: iaf.se

Find out more at konsumenternas.se

Tip:

Visit konsumenternas.se to make comparisons between most of the insurance policies available. By doing so you avoid having to look up all the companies on the Internet yourself.

Becoming a parent

Having children is a major event in life. You may not have considered that it also means a fair number of changes to your financial situation.

If you have had a child, you can apply for compensation from the Swedish Social Insurance Agency in order to stay at home and take care of your child instead of going out to work. This compensation is known as a parental allowance. If you take out the maximum amount of parental allowance, you take out approximately 80 per cent of your salary. In the case of child allowance it will be a bit more than this.

You can use the Parent Check (Föräldrakollen) on the Swedish Social Insurance Agency's website to find out how your income changes when you have a child.

Items for the child cost money

Before the baby arrives, there are several things you may need to get, such as a buggy, a cot and maybe a child seat for your bicycle or car.

To keep costs down you can buy used ones or maybe borrow from your family or friends. You can also wait for a bit before

buying equipment, since it can be difficult to know before the baby is born which items will be needed.

The Consumer Agency has carried out estimates showing that the basic equipment for a child's first year costs approximately SEK 20 000 if you buy everything new. Added to this are costs for items such as food, clothing and nappies which cost approximately SEK 22 000 during the first year.

When your child is a little older there are other items that cost money. Your child may need a bicycle to get to school, in which case they will also need a bicycle helmet, or they may want to start a new sports activity where the equipment costs money, and so on.

Children and safety

Before you buy toys and other products for your child, you should check that the products are safe, approved and do not contain hazardous substances. You should

also consider what you and your child need and what suits your needs best.

Hallå konsument's website will give you tips on what you can bear in mind when buying items for your child, such as a buggy or a child car seat.

You will find further information on dinsakerhet.se, forsakringskassan.se, hallakonsument.se, trafikverket.se

Tip:

How you can save money

- Do more cooking at home.
- Invite friends who are also on parental leave to come round for coffee instead of meeting downtown.
- Buy used items or borrow from family and friends.





Your finances as a young person

Right from an early age you need to learn how to manage your money. Clothes, eating out, a mobile phone and taking your driving licence are some examples of things that cost money.

Your parents must pay for your upkeep until you turn 18, or until you are 21 if you are still at upper secondary school. Your upkeep includes food, accommodation and clothes. However, if you are earning your own money it's a good idea that you pay some of that for living at home. The table on the next page shows you what is reasonable to pay.

Your own money

From the time you turn 16 you can decide

what to do with the money you have earned yourself. If you want to enter into a contract before you turn 18, your parents must give their approval, otherwise the agreement will be invalid and your parents can demand that the purchase be returned.

In order to access money of your own when still at school, you can talk to your parents to see if they will let you have part of your study allowance. If you have the opportunity, you can take on a job during evenings and weekends to earn your own

money. During the summer there are usually a good number of summer jobs giving you the opportunity to earn your own money.

Keeping track of your money

A good way of keeping track of your money is to make a budget. You can then see your income and expenses. On page 3 you can find out how to make a budget. For example, having coffee and a bite to eat in town once a week costs about SEK 2 600 per year! You will find other examples on page 8.

Leaving home

When you leave home you become personally responsible for both your financial situation and your accommodation. One prerequisite for managing to run a household is to keep track of both your income and expenses.

All the costs involved are suddenly your own

When you live at home with your parents, everything is right there: kitchen appliances, electricity, furniture and a vacuum cleaner. When you have your own accommodation, you are the one who has to make sure everything is there – and you have to pay for it.

It is a good idea to obtain home insurance when you leave home. This costs around SEK 100 per month. If anything disappears or gets broken you can receive compensation and avoid paying for everything yourself.

Will your money cover everything?

Apart from the rent and other costs for your accommodation, your money must cover other things. Count up how much money you have left after paying the rent. Your money needs to cover food, electricity, home insurance, a mobile phone and leisure activities. Review your financial situation – perhaps you are able to save a little each month?

If you cannot afford to pay a bill, it is important that you contact the person or organisation you received the bill from straight away. An unpaid bill of SEK 600 can quickly mount up to over SEK 2 000 if you do not do anything about it. On pages

4–5 you can find further information on what to do if your money won't cover everything, and you can see an example of what happens when a bill is unpaid.

Think economically

There are several things you can do to cut down on your expenses. Instead of living on your own you can share your accommodation with someone. If you do that, you will be sharing the joint costs. You may not be able to furnish the entire flat in one go either, in which case it might be good to wait for a bit and see what you really need. Another way of saving money can be to buy second hand furniture and crockery.

Tip:

Visit elpriskollen.se to find out about the different electricity suppliers and simply choose the one that suits you

Example: What it might cost a 20 year old with a private income to live at home with their parents or live on their own

Monthly expenses	Living with your parents	Living on your own
All food cooked at home except lunch on weekdays	1 910	1 910
Expendable items	70*	120
Household utensils and small appliances	230*	570
Media	360*	1 360
Rent	1 950*	5 140
Home insurance	30*	90
Total household expenses	4 550	9 190
Other expenses		
Personal hygiene	490	490
Clothing and shoes	690	690
Leisure	680	680
Mobile phone	380	380
Lunch out (20 times/month)	1 800	1 800
Local travel on public transport	550	550
Trade union and unemployment insurance fund membership	470	470
Total other expenses	5 060	5 060
TOTAL COST	9 610	14 250

* One quarter of costs for the entire household, since the calculation is based on a household of four.

Shop around



Name: Sara Christenson, student

Hi! You moved into your own accommodation two years ago. Do you have any tips on what to bear in mind?

"My best tip is to keep track of where your money is going. I've been lucky, because where I live electricity, water and heating are included in the rent. It's a good idea to write down what your money is spent on and to look out for student and youth discounts, where there's quite a potential for saving."

Free advice from the municipal authority

Are you aware that you can receive free advice from the municipal consumer guidance organisations and also budget and debt advice? Here you can find out more about these services and get tips from those who work with these issues.

Consumer guidance in your municipality

Many municipalities offer consumer guidance. These organisations can help you with consumer issues and finding information on goods and services. Some municipalities can also provide help with interpreting and signing contracts before purchasing products and services.

If you have already purchased a product or service you are dissatisfied with, these consumer guidance organisations can give you information on your rights. They can also explain what is the proper way to make a complaint with the support of consumer legislation, such as the Consumer Sales Act and the Consumer Services Act.

Budget and debt advice, a statutory municipal service

All municipalities have a legal requirement to offer budget and debt advice, a service which gives you advice about managing your money.

The budget and debt advisor can help you obtain an overview of your financial

situation, and can give practical advice on how to manage and prioritise your debts.

They can also help you do the calculations to restructure a debt and prepare for a review and an appeal against decisions on the restructuring of your debt. Debt restructuring means that you are given a plan for paying your bills. You apply for debt restructuring by filling in a special form from the Swedish Enforcement Authority. People who are in debt and are either unable to meet the requirements of the Debt Restructuring Act or do not want to restructure their debt can receive help from an advisor, who will propose realistic suggestions for paying off debt in cases where the agreements have been optional. The advisor can also help negotiate new terms of payment with the creditors.

What is it like in your municipality?

The way consumer guidance and budget and debt advice services are organised varies from municipality to municipality. Contact your municipal authority for

further information and contact details. You can also visit hallakonsument.se and look up your municipal authority there.

On the back page of this publication there is space for you to write down the contact details for your municipal authority.

Tips from consumer advisors



Maria Wiezell
Stockholm

"There is seldom such a hurry as you might think.

Consumers receive many offers that apply now and now only, according to the company. However, these offers usually come round again. Mistakes are usually made when one doesn't have time to think. It's harder to back out of an agreement you've already entered into, so think about it before going ahead!"

Tips from budget and debt advisors



Håkan Söderlund
Smedjebacken

"The most common question I get asked is: How can I get out of debt? When they come to me it's important they understand that we're tackling this together. I can't get them out of debt myself, but I give them the tools and then we work together on that basis. My best tip is that you don't live over and above your resources! If you have a buffer, it should be your own money. It's not a buffer if it's money you've borrowed."



Desire Turesson
Eslöv

"The most common mistake I know is that many people keep taking out a quick loan in order to settle an old debt. Some people also wait a long time before they contact us, when we could have helped them even more had they come to us in time. The best tip I have is always to read the terms and conditions of a contract carefully before signing it. Don't buy things with money you don't have. Make a budget!"

Free help from the consumer bureaus

There are four consumer bureaus which can give you advice free of charge regarding your telephone, TV, Internet, energy consumption, banking and insurance. You can call or email them.

The Swedish Consumers' Banking and Finance Bureau, the Swedish Consumers' Insurance Bureau, the Swedish Consumer Energy Markets Bureau and the Swedish Telecom Advisors provide pre-purchase information, explain the terms of a contract and tell you how to proceed if you are dissatisfied with a company's decision. The consumer bureaus represent government agencies and trade associations. The Swedish Consumer Agency sits on the different boards of these bureaus.

The bureaus provide free and impartial information and advice to consumers.

As a consumer you can turn to the different bureaus both before and after a purchase.

Contact the consumer bureaus

The bureaus' websites enable you to make comparisons and find guides and tools.

For example, on the Banking and Finance Bureau and Insurance Bureau websites you will find the Loan Lab (Lånelabbet). Use this to obtain an overall picture of your loan costs and do your calculations to see how changes in interest rates and payment by instalments affect the costs. Find out more at konsumenternas.se

The Energy Markets Bureau's website has tools such as the Electricity Price Check (Elpriskollen) where you can easily compare the price contracts offered by different electricity suppliers. Find out more at energimarknadsbyran.se

The Swedish Telecom Advisors have checklists that may be of help when you choose a subscription. Find out more at telekomradgivarna.se

**HALLÅ
KONSUMENT!**

Independent advice from the
Swedish Consumers Agency

Hallå konsument!

Are you wondering how a loan works or what you should do to pay your bills? Do you want to know more about different methods of payment or making a budget with the aid of the Budget Calculator?

You can find out these things and much more on the Hallå konsument website. Hallå konsument is an information service that is coordinated by the Swedish Consumer Agency. You can turn to them with all your questions on consumer issues. You can also visit hallakonsument.se to find information on money and budgeting. In addition, you can see films on different situations in

life, such as becoming unemployed, having children or embarking on studies. The website also provides a large number of articles and smart tools for consumers, such as the Budget Calculator, the Complaint Guide (Klagoguiden), the Labelling Guide (Märkningsguiden), the Q&A Forum (Frågeforum) and checklists. Information is provided in 18 languages including sign language.

You can contact the advisors via telephone, chat, Facebook, email and ordinary post. They will either give prompt and useful answers or refer you to the municipality's consumer service, the consumer bureaus or one of the government agencies jointly providing this service. Find out more at hallakonsument.se

Consumer Agency estimates for 2018

The Swedish Consumer Agency makes an estimation each year of reasonable costs for households of various sizes. The figures can be a starting point when you want to go through your finances. You can also compare our estimates to your own.

The Consumer Agency’s estimates are based on the basic needs for goods and services and show examples of the costs of these. The individual costs are an estimated average cost for men and women.

The estimates assume that you have no disabilities or illnesses that require extra expenditure for items such as medical appliances, special kinds of food or medication. They also assume that you

live in a flat and do not have any expenses for gardening or repairs.

Note that the estimates do not cover all household costs. Travel, healthcare, glasses, presents, holidays, entertainment, alcohol, eating out at restaurants, tobacco and gambling are some of the costs that are not included.

What the costs include

Expendable items: Everyday items primarily used for the care and running of a household such as laundry detergent and cleaning agents, toilet paper and paper towels etc.

Household utensils and small appliances: Furniture, kitchen utensils, TV, computer, tablet etc. Electrical appliances such as a dishwasher and washing machine are not included.

Media: The cost of broadband, landline, TV licence, streaming services, daily paper etc.

Home insurance: Costs vary depending on the amount of insurance and location of the household.

All food cooked at home: Children and adults always have their meals at home, based on the Consumer Agency's menu which can be found on the Consumer Agency's website. This is a four-week menu which covers daily calorie and nutritional requirements for the respective age groups. The menu includes breakfast, lunch, dinner and two or three snacks.

All meals at home except lunch on weekdays: Food costs except for lunch five days a week, where you enter the cost of lunch at a restaurant yourself.

The children eat at school.

Other food costs such as for parties and extra coffee breaks (whether at home or out) are not included in the estimate. You must add the costs for these yourself.

Clothing and shoes: One basic need is clothing and shoes for everyday use, for leisure time and for more festive occasions. Handbags, watches, umbrellas and other accessories are also included here.

Recreation and play: Common leisure time activities, toys, books, skis, bicycles, membership fees, and so on.

Mobile phone: The cost of a smart-phone with a pay-as-you-go card.

Personal hygiene: Applies to items such as soap, toothpaste, nappies, haircuts etc and the cost of an annual dental appointment (check up) for adults.

Insurance for children/young people: The cost of sickness and accident insurance for children and young people, which also covers illness and accidents during leisure activities.

Further reading

If you want to know more about the Consumer Agency’s estimates, visit konsumentverket.se

Use the estimates

Enter your household costs in the table or use the Consumer Agency’s figures if you are unsure about how much you spend. Then transfer your costs to the budget on page 3.

The amounts in the tables have been rounded to the nearest ten kronor.

Individual food costs per month

All meals cooked at home
All food cooked at home except lunch on weekdays

Other individual costs per month

Clothing and shoes
Recreation and play
Mobile phone
Personal hygiene
Insurance for children and young people
Total costs



Number of inhabitants

Big city: over 200 000 inhabitants.

Medium-sized city: 50 000–200 000 inhabitants.

Small town: less than 50 000 inhabitants.

Shared household costs per month

	1 member	2 members	3 members	4 members	5 members	6 members	7 members	My household per month	
								Consumer Agency estimates	My costs
Expendable items	120	150	230	270	330	380	440		
Household utensils and small appliances	570	670	830	920	1 010	1 120	1 210		
Media	1 360	1 410	1 420	1 420	1 430	1 530	1 580		
Home insurance									
big city	150	170	190	220	230	240	240		
medium-sized city	90	100	120	130	140	140	140		
small town	90	100	110	110	130	130	130		
Total joint costs									
big city	2 200	2 400	2 670	2 830	3 000	3 270	3 470		
medium-sized city	2 140	2 330	2 600	2 740	2 910	3 170	3 370		
small town	2 140	2 330	2 590	2 720	2 900	3 160	3 360		

	6–11 months	1 year	2–5 years	6–9 years	10–13 years	14–17 years	18–30 years	31–60 years	61–74 years	75 years >	Consumer Agency estimates	My costs
	810	820	1 070	1 510	1 900	2 280	2 500	2 360	2 120	1 880		
	600	620	820	1 150	1 450	1 740	1 910	1 800	1 620	1 440		

	0 years	1–3 years	4–6 years	7–10 years	11–14 years	15–17 years	18–25 years	26–49 years	50–64 years	65 years >	Consumer Agency estimates	My costs
	360	490	720	730	730	720	690	680	670	660		
	100	260	440	600	710	740	680	670	660	560		
	-	-	-	180 ¹	200	290	380	290	270	170		
	500	650	140	170	250	370	490 ²	490	480	480		
	150	150	150	160	160	170						
	1 110	1 550	1 450	1 840	2 050	2 290	2 240	2 130	2 080	1 870		

¹ Applies to children from age 10 upwards.

² The cost for 18–21 year olds is reduced by SEK 70/month because of free dental care.

Contact details for your municipality

.....

.....

.....

.....

How much does it cost to send money to other countries?

You can find the answer on moneyfromsweden.se. This is a free service which is independent and run by the Swedish Consumer Agency. Here you can compare how much it costs to send money using different companies. You can also see how long it takes. The service is directed at you as a private individual.



Would you like more issues of Know Your Money?

More brochures are available from your municipality's budget and debt advisors and consumer advisors. The brochures can also be ordered free of charge from the Consumer Agency's website: publikationer.konsumentverket.se

