

THE BEAN GAME

Living on a "20 Bean Salary"

Recreated and Reproduced by
Jana Darrington, M.S.
Family and Consumer Science Agent
Utah State University Extension, Utah County



Game Instructions

Purpose

Managing money means making choices. There is never enough money available for all of the things we'd like to have or do. This game will help you decide what is most important to you.

How to Play

This game may be played individually, but optimum results come from playing in a group of 2 or more. Divide participants into groups of at least 2 and not more than 5. Each individual/group receives 20 beans and a set of spending category sheets. The individual/group must decide how to spend their "income" based on life circumstances, values and goals. Each item has a set number of squares which indicates how many beans are needed to "pay" for that item.

ROUND #1

First, each individual/group must select one item in each of the categories with the gold stars (Food, Housing, Furnishings, Transportation, Insurance and Clothing & Laundry). Once you have finished selecting items in the required categories, continue selecting items until you have used up your 20 bean income.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Why did you choose the items you did? In what ways were you influenced by your values? Your goals? Your previous experiences? Compare what you spent your beans on with another individual/group.

ROUND #2

Your income has just been cut to 13 beans. What will you give up? What changes will you make? Make changes until you only have 13 beans on your spending sheets.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What kinds of items did you choose to give up? Why? What did you learn about yourself and money in this process? Compare your budget-cutting choices with another individual/group.

OTHER CHOICES you may have to make...

- 1) Someone in the family just broke their leg. If you have insurance, you don't need to do anything. If you don't, take off 3 beans.
- 2) Your mom or dad just got a 2 bean raise! Decide where it should be spent.


RESOURCES:
Parker, L. (n.d.). *The Bean Game*. Washington State University Extension, Family Resource Management Specialist.
Office of State Treasurer John Pendue. (n.d.). *The Budget Game: Living on a 20 Source Salary*. Financial Education Programs, Charleston, WV.
Retrieved October 26, 2008 from <http://www.wvtreasury.com>.

Distributed by:


Utah State University Extension, Utah County
100 E Center St., L600, Provo, UT 84606
801-851-8460
<http://extension.usu.edu/utah>



Utah State University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity institution.




Housing with Utilities




live with relatives sharing cost of utilities (no phone) ☐ ☐

share an apartment or house with others, including basic utilities (no phone) ☐ ☐ ☐

rent place of your own, including basic utilities (no phone) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐



Insurance



Auto

Liability coverage only ☐ ☐

Complete coverage ☐ ☐ ☐

Health and Disability

No coverage **No Cost**

Fringe benefits of job ☐


Basic health coverage ☐ ☐

Individual health & disability coverage ☐ ☐ ☐

Renters

Property and liability coverage ☐

Communications




No phone **No cost**

Phone with limited long distance calls ☐


Phone with many long distance calls ☐ ☐

Cell phone ☐

High-speed Internet ☐ ☐



Gifts



Make your own ☐

Purchase cards or small gifts occasionally ☐ ☐

Purchase frequent gifts for family and friends ☐ ☐ ☐



Savings




Change in piggy bank **No cost**

Five percent of income ☐


Ten percent of income ☐ ☐

Invest for retirement ☐ ☐

Contribution to charities and religious groups ☐



Furnishings



Borrow from relatives or friends **No cost**

Rent furniture or live in furnished apartment ☐

Buy at a garage sale or thrift shop ☐

Buy new furniture ☐ ☐

Recreation



Hiking, walking, visiting friends or library

No cost

TV, snacks, picnics, driving around

☐

Cable TV, sports and movies

☐ ☐

Fishing, hunting, hobbies

☐ ☐

CDs/music, books, DVDs

☐ ☐

Concerts, vacations & spectator sports

☐ ☐ ☐

Personal care

Basic products like soap, shampoo, toothpaste, make-up, etc.

☐


Occasional professional haircuts, basic personal care products

☐ ☐

Regular professional hairstyling, name brand personal care products

☐ ☐ ☐

Clothing & Laundry ★

Clothing

Wear present wardrobe

No Cost

Use your sewing skills

☐

Buy at a discount store, thrift shop, or used clothing store

☐

Buy at a department store

☐ ☐

Shop for designer clothes

☐ ☐ ☐

Laundry

Do laundry at parents

No Cost

Use Laundromat; some dry cleaning

☐

Rent or purchase washer or dryer

☐

Food ★



Cook at home; dinner out once a week

☐ ☐

Frequent fast food lunches and weekly dinner out; cook other meals at home

☐ ☐ ☐

All meals away from home

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Transportation



Walk or bike

No cost

Ride bus or join a carpool

☐

Buy fuel for family car

☐ ☐

Buy used car and fuel

☐ ☐ ☐

Buy new car and fuel

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

More choices

Books or other items purchased on installment plan

☐

Newspaper and magazine subscriptions

☐

New TV, DVD player or iPod

☐ ☐

★ Gold Star denotes Required Category



Utah State University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity institution.