

Good Housekeeping

Stop Wasting Money!

Even smart women make spending goofs. Here are the top slip-ups—and clever solutions **By MP Dunleavy**

It's comforting to know that even the wisest women suffer from a spending blind spot (or two) in today's economy: We interviewed five of America's most accomplished women about their secret splurges and mindless money-wasters. Turns out their foibles are the same as yours, according to a recent online poll of *Good Housekeeping* readers. Here, the top five blunders—and smart fixes.

Money-Waster #1:



"I order out too often"

Alexis Glick

Fox Business Network anchor

The top way women waste money? "Eating out too often," confessed 43 percent of *Good Housekeeping* readers. TV business newswoman Glick, mother of three young boys, can relate. With her demanding on-air schedule and husband Oren running his own business, "I know the takeout number of every restaurant in my neighborhood," says Glick. Like many

busy moms, Glick is torn between the convenience of eating out and the need to rein in her household's food costs.

Solution The key to preventing a budget breakdown is moderation—and planning. For a week or two, track how much your family spends eating out or getting takeout. Put receipts in an envelope, and write notes on the outside. Jot down eating-out triggers to find patterns, like "Sally's Wednesday piano lesson is next door to the pizza parlor, so..."

With precise dollar amounts, start gaining control of your meal choices: Pizza once a week is fine. But two nights in a row of takeout Chinese is poor planning (and not healthy). Let your freezer be your friend. By making double batches of sauces, pastas, and casseroles, you'll have a backup plan when dinner-time is rushed and KFC looks tempting. Or try some of the "100 Best Convenience Foods" described on goodhousekeeping.com.

Give up just one \$30 restaurant meal per week and you'll be able to stash \$120 extra in the bank monthly—about \$1,500 a year. And that's certainly some food for thought.