

How to Cut Your Insurance Costs

Over the lifetime of your car, operating costs can total almost as much as the original price. Insurance may account for nearly one-third of the final tab.

Rates for identical coverage can vary by 100 percent from one company to another. Competitive bids can save \$500 or more per year. In the long run, a little research will help you short cut your insurance costs.

Here's how to lower your insurance bill:

- *Take a higher deductible.* For every \$100 your deductible rises, your collision cost drops by seven percent to 15 percent and your comprehensive cost drops by 15 percent to 30 percent.
- *Drop collision and/or comprehensive coverage on older cars.*
- *Eliminate duplicate coverage.* In states with no-fault insurance, you must carry personal injury protection. But any coverage beyond the required amount may duplicate health coverage.

- *Drive an economical car.* Luxury and sports cars may be costly to repair and be the target of thieves.
 - *Pay your insurance premiums semi-annually or annually.*
 - *Inquire about discounts.* Most insurers offer discounts for automatic seat belts, anti-lock brakes, auto theft devices, and side air bags. Many also offer discounts for students with a B grade point average or better. Some also offer discounts to non-smokers, non-drinkers and adults 55 and older who have passed a defensive driving course.
 - *Assign drivers to specific cars.* Designate your children as the primary drivers of the least valuable cars to save about 15 percent. Also, when your children pass a driver's education course, you can save five to ten percent on their coverage.
- Finally, insure all your cars with one agent to get a multi-car discount. If the same agent also insures your home, you may realize even greater savings. Review coverages with your agent annually.