MODULE 1

# Budgeting for Unpredictable Income

FOOTHOLD

## Overview

This guide is designed for individuals with irregular income such as gig workers, hourly employees, and those in job transition. Instead of a rigid budget, this system focuses on stability and protection.

## Part 1: Your Survival Baseline

Your Survival Number is the absolute minimum amount needed to cover your essential needs.

| Category | Monthly Cost ($) |
|---|---|
| Housing (Rent/Utilities/Trash) | |
| Food (Groceries/Essential household) | |
| Transportation (Gas/Bus Pass/Insurance) | |
| Phone & Internet | |
| Medication & Healthcare | |
| Sinking Funds (Saving $5–$10 for annual bills like ID renewal or car tags) | |
| **TOTAL SURVIVAL NUMBER** | |

**Income Benchmark:** What was your lowest monthly income in the past year? $________________

## Part 2: The Flex Budget (Tier 2)

These are "nice-to-have" expenses. Only fund these if your Survival Number is fully covered.

**Clothing:** $________________

**Entertainment/Dining Out:** $________________

**Subscriptions (Netflix, Spotify, etc.):** $________________

**Other:** $________________

## Part 3: The Weekly Management Strategy

Review your finances once a week to stay in control.

**1. Money available right now:** $________________

**2. Survival bills due before next week:** $________________

**3. The "Surplus" Calculation:** If you have money left over after paying survival bills, use the 50/50 Rule:

- 50% goes to your Income Shock Buffer (Target: One month of survival costs).

- 50% goes toward your Flex Budget (Tier 2).

## Part 4: Core Habits for Success

- **Plan for the Lows:** Use your lowest-income month as your primary planning tool.
- **The Buffer Goal:** Aim to save enough to cover one full month of survival expenses to protect you during slow work weeks.
- **Weekly Check-ins:** Spend 15 minutes every Sunday or Monday reviewing your available cash.