

Name or symbol(s)	Get Quote	Dow +8.25▲ +0.07%	Nasdaq -1.97▼ -0.07%	S&P -1.99▼ -0.16%
		11,567.74	2,665.84	1,256.85



Smart Spending combines the best money-saving tips from MSN Money and the rest of the Web. Our team of experts on stretching dollars:



Karen Datko, lead blogger, is a veteran journalist in small-town Montana, where her mortgage is \$310 a month.



Teresa Mears is a veteran writer in Florida. She doesn't clip coupons, but she does shop at Goodwill.



Donna Freedman, our "Living With Less" columnist, is a student, freelance writer and handywoman in Washington.

See all contributors

Smart Spending Index

Subscribe to this blog

- + live.com
- + MY YAHOO!
- XML
- B Bloglines
- MY MSN
- + Add to Google
- + newsgator
- twitter
- facebook

Message Board

So - where does the end of this board leave you, financially? (12 messages)

Goodwill is awesome. (11 messages)

Merry Christmas (20 messages)

"The Hallelujah Chorus," Quinhagak-style. (2 messages)

What's your favorite Christmas song? (15 messages)

Blogs We Like

- The Simple Dollar
- Get Rich Slowly
- FiveCentNickel
- Consumer Affairs
- Wise Bread

The awesomest compilation of weird and crazy jobs ever

Some of the hardest jobs pay the least.

Posted by Karen Datko Sunday, October 11, 2009 1:12:10 AM

This guest post comes from J. Money at Budgets Are Sexy.

And you thought today was going to be boring. This all started the other day when my girl MoneyMate Kate posted about some crazy jobs she's taken in the past (Italian ice truck driver, bone counter, substitute mommy). I was dying.

Once I began to compose myself, it got me thinking. I've done some pretty whacked-out stuff, too. But as I started writing this post, another thing occurred to me: If she's a frugal person with a frugal blog, and I'm a frugal person with a frugal blog, wouldn't it make sense that other personal-finance bloggers would have similar experiences, too?

So I reached out to my PF friends and readers on e-mail, Twitter and the Money Blog Network Forum (a great resource, by the way) and hit them up for the weirdest jobs they've ever done -- and holy cow, did I get some whammies.

- Bing: What's the world's worst job?

I knew that some of us frugal people will get down and dirty to make a few pennies, but what I didn't know was how far they'd go. We're talking dirt sifter, tick remover, Chuck E. Cheese dresser-upper -- jobs you couldn't make up if you tried.

So, grab a coffee, close your office door, and get ready to enjoy some crazy awesomeness.

I'll start with some of my former jobs:

Campground timeshare tour guide -- \$700 to \$1,400 per sale. You know those tours you "have to take" in order to claim your "free" prize or weekend getaway? I was one of those people who gave them and then tried convincing you to buy a timeshare at the end. And in this particular case, you'd get your very own campground lot forever and ever. (Oooohhhh ahhhh.)

Wrecked-car washer -- \$10 an hour (plus anything you'd find). Two of us guys with a van full of water and a generator, listening to headphones and washing the crap out of these things in the hot sun. Apparently, smashed cars that are washed bring in \$500 more at auction than do dirty/bloody ones. And since it cost only about \$5 per car, the company raked in the money.

Stamp maker/packager -- \$12 an hour. Packaging and making stamps (the 42-cent ones) on an assembly line. Twelve-hour shifts, four days a week, one 15-minute break every two hours. The craziest part was that we couldn't wear any clothes with pockets, or bring any bags that weren't see-through, so we wouldn't be tempted to steal and sell them on the black market. It felt like prison.

And now, jobs from around the blogosphere, as described by the bloggers themselves:

Bone counter -- \$5 an hour. Temp job in the shipping/receiving department of a company that took cadaver bones (which arrived semi-butchered and frozen) and chopped them up into usable bits for transplant purposes. I was the only temp they didn't gross out. -- MoneyMate Kate

AdChoices

The Death of the PC

The days of forking over costly fees for software upgrades are numbered. The PC will soon be obsolete. And BusinessWeek reports almost 70% of Americans are already using the technology that will replace it.

In fact, the biggest names in computing -- IBM, Yahoo! and Amazon -- are spending hundreds of millions to harness the potential of this technology. Everything you need to know about this phenomenon -- including two stocks you must buy -- are all in a free report from The Motley Fool called, "The Death of the PC."

Click here for instant access to this FREE report!

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE MOTLEY FOOL

bing Get cash back when you shop

Most recent Smart Spending posts

The Web's best last-minute gift guide ideas

'The 12 Days of Christmas' -- updated

In with the new: Reduce your phone bill

Do receipt checks violate your rights?

Note to kids: Smurfberrys cost real money

Best Buy ends restocking fee

More ...

Please install the latest version of the free Adobe Flash Player. Download now.

For help with Flash, see Adobe's Flash Player Support page.

5 hottest deals from DealNews



- Carhartt Men's Sandstone Bomber Jacket for \$30 + \$9 s&h
- 40% to 77% off Rockport Shoes at 6pm: Deals from \$15 + \$7 s&h
- Victoria's Secret Semi-Annual Sale: Up to 75% off select items
- Fandango: Buy 1 movie ticket, get 1 free
- Irwin 81-Piece Tool Accessory Kit with Contractor Bag for \$15 + \$6 s&h

Most Recent on MSN Money

Haven't converted to a Roth IRA? Good

Is credit counseling right for you?

How much insurance does Santa need?

3 retirement moves to make by Dec. 31

9 money goofs that won't hurt much

More ...

Featured Tools

Estimate your credit score Also compare your score to others'.

Where does your money go? Try the easy 50/30/20 budget.

How do you measure up? Compare your financial

Quizzes

Have a spending problem? You know what you should do, but...

Homeowner smarts Find out what you don't know.

What's your life worth? If you die, will your family make #?

Bargaining
MSN Money Top Stocks
Market Dispatches
The Dough Roller
Surviving and Thriving

Follow Smart Spending

- Website fabricates job references.
- Free shipping and more deals.
- Fed proposes limit on debt card 'swipe' fees.
- 4 presumptuous gifts that can strain a budget.
- No more liquid lettuce!

Follow Smart Spending on Twitter

Money Jobs

Tongue boy -- 5 cents per tongue. Cut the tongues out of codfish. -- [Money Grubbing Lawyer](#)

Meatpacker -- minimum wage. For eight hours, I manually flipped one half of figure-eight hamburger patties so they landed on top of the other half, concealing a slice of cheese in the middle to make a "pizza" hamburger. -- [Financial Reflections](#)

Utility study researcher (nicknames: space cadet, space police) -- minimum wage. Walking around my college campus, poking my head into classrooms and counting the number of students in the room -- much to the confusion of students and professors. -- Stephanie at [Poorer Than You](#)

Stock boy at Victoria's Secret -- \$10 an hour. See title. -- [My Journey To Millions](#)

Bug book stippler -- \$2 an hour (in 1967). Stippled (added dots to) illustrations of bugs in a book being written by a college entomology professor. -- [Mr. ToughMoneyLove](#)

Dirt sifter -- 50 cents more than minimum wage. I would scoop dirt onto a screen, then shake the screen so fine dirt would come out of the bottom. -- Trent Hamm at [The Simple Dollar](#)

Promotional rep for Altoids mints -- \$12 an hour. I had to hand out free samples of mints to people in movie theaters, and before each movie had to use a microphone to interact and play trivia games with the audience. I had no boss. The company just shipped me 14 massive boxes of Altoids mints and promotional material and told me to work until I had no more inventory. I made my own hours, got to watch all the free movies I wanted with my friends, and got a free megaphone out of the deal. Score! -- Krystal at [Give Me Back My Five Bucks](#)

Class note-taker in college -- \$5 a week. I did it for one semester thinking I'd be a better student. Nope! -- [mauliesmall](#)

Timeshare telemarketer -- \$10 an hour. Selling timeshares in Williamsburg, Va., to people living in Williamsburg, Va.! We had a call list from another account and a third to half of the numbers were locals. It had easy four-hour shifts. I hated the work and left shortly afterward. -- [Green Panda Treehouse](#)

Pea inspector. I've never done any crazy jobs but I knew one guy who was a pea inspector. He inspected peas in a pea factory. -- Ashley at [Wide Open Wallet](#)

Engineering intern for Metro -- \$12.50 an hour. Performed QA/QC on the construction of a Metro line by visiting different construction sites and verifying that the work was being correctly executed. I had absolutely zero qualifications for this job and I have no idea why Metro hired engineering students for these positions. -- [Budget Save Buy](#)

Donation solicitor -- nothing. (Salary was based on donations solicited, and I'm not a very good salesperson.) I had to go door-to-door to solicit donations for CALPIRG. (I didn't even know what CALPIRG was.) -- Lynnae at [Being Frugal](#)

Direct-marketing rep -- \$200 a week. Convince people in malls and train stations to sign up for a credit card (for real). Worst. Job. Ever. -- Mr. Stokes at [Brizzle Bound](#)

Cutco knife salesperson -- nada. (Never made it out of training, couldn't bring myself to sell to friends and family.) Selling Cutco knives to friends and family. -- [Living Almost Large](#)

Tick remover -- one penny per tick. Remove ticks from dogs with tweezers. We can almost hear you saying "ugh!" but as kids we loved the job because it relieved the dogs from the pests. -- [FIRE Finance](#)

Dishroom girl in a dorm cafeteria -- \$6 an hour. Hairnet, long plastic apron, gigantic sprayer and garbage disposal, washing ridiculous quantities of wasted food down the drain, filthy sopping mess by the end of my shift. -- [Frugal Babe](#)

Electrical-environmental systems specialist, USAF -- Enlisted pay grade E-2 through E-5. Aircraft mechanic -- worked in 30-plus countries in temperatures ranging from 20 below zero to 135 Fahrenheit (not

picture to others' by age and income.

Your magic retirement number
A quick, easy rule of thumb.

Home equity calculator
See your current and future equity.

Have the right insurance?
Find out with our planner.

make it:

Should you file for bankruptcy?
Find out if you need to make a fresh financial start.

Retirement readiness
It seems simple, but there's a lot to it.

TODAY'S STAFF PICKS



MONEY
10 exotic retirement spots for 2011

[Fastest-growing small towns in the U.S.](#)

[Gifts for bacon lovers](#)

[Confessions of a mall Santa](#)

[Top 20 news hogs of the year](#)

Sponsored Links

Mortgage Rates Hit 2.99%

If you owe less than \$729k you probably qualify for govt Refi Programs
[www.MortgageRatesExperts.com](#)

Hot Stock-CelulasGenetica

Stem Cell BioReactor Technology. Boost Your Portfolio, Invest Today.
[www.TheStemCellGroup.com](#)

Invest In Gold - Free Kit

Over \$500 of Gold Delivered, Since 1960. Get Free Kit Now!
[Goldline.com/Invest-Gold](#)

Penny Stocks Soaring 900%

Sign up to the #1 Stock Alert Service for Free Now
[www.PennyStockGains.com](#)

including wind chill or heat index). -- Patrick at [Cash Money Life](#)

Cubicle farmer -- too good to quit. Ever seen "Office Space"? -- Patrick at [Cash Money Life](#)

Chinese drive-through-window fast-food worker -- \$6 an hour. Took orders for Chinese food in an old Burger King, packed up food, and re-boiled dumplings in the same water for a week. Only lasted a month. Jonathan at [My Money Blog](#)

Library organizer -- \$10 an hour (with a max of 20 hours a week). The mission: Working with a local organization, I was to start a local French lending library in one year with no budget (and by no budget, I mean no money available to me besides my salary, not no budget, spend whatever you want). Some asides: Believe it or not, I lived on that salary for a whole year. It involved having a roommate and never going anywhere, but I did it. And knowing I could live way below the federal poverty line gives me the confidence to stay on my relatively generous budget now. Oh, and in the end I had over 10,000 books all on their shelves in Dewey Decimal categories, and 100 multimedia resources (movies and music mostly) that I purchased from a grant I got. I even opened a month early. And the old people said I couldn't do it. -- Nicole at [Breaking Even](#)

Model for drug treatment center brochure -- \$150 (one-time fee). A friend from our church was doing some literature for Hazelden, drug treatment center to the stars. He needed someone to do a before and after picture for the brochure. On the before picture I was a sad, drug-addled youth, and in the after I was a happy, well-adjusted young man. It was pretty funny sitting there making sad faces pretending to be on drugs. -- Pete at [Bible Money Matters](#)

Farmhand on a blueberry farm -- minimum wage (at 14 years of age). While this job sounds fun, it actually entails riding on a massive blueberry harvester, at wide-open speed, through fields infested with wasps, bees and fire ants, in the 100-degree heat of July. -- [No Credit Needed](#)

Chuck E. Cheese dresser-upper -- minimum wage. Entertain customers, kids and mainly myself in the sweltering heat of Hot-lanta dressed as Chuck E. Cheese. -- Alan Corey at [A Million Bucks By 30](#)

Watermelon thrower -- \$10 an hour. I worked in a watermelon patch the summer after my senior year of high school. As a thrower, we would pick up watermelons from the field and throw them into a trailer with a 6-foot wall, where a "catcher" was waiting with open arms. It was the hardest work I've ever done. I only lasted a week. The money I earned that week helped me with a down payment on my car for college. -- [Prime Time Money](#)

Calf catcher -- nothing. Wrangle a calf with bare hands and try to gently push it through a cattle squeeze. Try not to get kicked. (I'm a city girl, so moving to a ranch was a rude awakening on how weird jobs can be.) -- [Squawkfox](#)

Whew! So did I tell ya, or did I tell ya? We frugal ones sure know how to party. For all who participated -- thank you (especially you, [Kate](#)). And for all who still want to, go ahead and relive your job all over again by dropping a comment.

Related reading at [Budgets Are Sexy](#):

- [The budget is back, baby! \(and it's all yours if you want it\)](#)
- [My 4 favorite pieces of financial advice E-V-E-R](#)
- [Renters are bad for your home value? Are you cereal?](#)

Published Feb. 5, 2009

Tags: [budgeting](#) [getting started](#) [income](#)

< [Back to Smart Spending](#)



Add a comment

Sign in with your Windows Live ID, or create a new one.

[Sign in](#)



Saving money -- you can do it

Strategies for saving more and spending less. Here's how to build a rich nest egg one paycheck at a time.

Please install the latest version of the free Adobe Flash Player. [Download now.](#)

For help with Flash, see Adobe's [Flash Player Support page.](#)

The best of MSN Money

Readers' Choice

Rating	Top 5 Articles
4.28	Tax deal says we're deadbeats
4.08	Be wary of these 9 credit card scams
4.06	10 reasons the bond crunch matters
3.92	Say goodbye to the bond bull market
3.87	Focus on Bank of China, not the Fed

[View all Top-Rated articles](#)

Editors' Choice

- [How to be a millionaire by age 25](#)
- [7 steps to an early tax refund](#)
- [10 exotic retirement hot spots for 2011](#)
- [Find the best mortgage rates in your area](#)
- [Credit tips from Building a Brighter Future](#)
- [Business on Main: Lessons learned in 2010](#)