

should be even lower, with 22% citing \$1,000 to \$1,999 as appropriate, and 21% citing less than \$500. Five percent felt shelling out \$10,000 or more for the ring was most suitable.

From First Dates to Marriage

When unmarried consumers were asked who pays for a date, 58% of unmarried men overwhelmingly identified themselves, while only 39% of women expect men to foot the bill. In fact, many women will break out their own wallets despite tradition: 39% believe whoever asked for the date should pay, and 14% would split the bill.

How long into dating before finances are disclosed? Fifty percent report that they waited at least six months before discussing their finances. Among married couples, 20% waited until after saying 'I Do' and 26% broached the subject during their engagement.

The majority of married couples surveyed maintain joint checking (66%) and/or saving (51%) accounts, and many discuss their finances on a regular basis. More than half (56%) of couples say they speak about money once a week or more with their spouse, while 25% opt to discuss finances once or twice a month.

Household disagreements over finances have also declined in some areas since last year: with arguments decreasing over spending on the kids (12% vs. 15% in 2011); setting household budgets (10% vs. 14%); and making everyday purchase decisions (7% vs. 9%). The threshold at which spouses feel they should get permission before purchasing has increased to an average of \$300, up from \$245 in 2011.

In terms of who takes care of household finances, more men than women credit themselves as the primary handler of filing income taxes (74% vs. 52%), paying property/school taxes (62% vs. 45%), making credit card payments (61% vs. 22%), and applying for a loans (56% vs. 30%); but more women than men take credit for managing their household budgets (70% vs. 54%).

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The [American Express Spending & Saving Tracker](#) research was completed online among a random sample of 2000 adults, including the general U.S. population, as well as two sub-groups—the Affluents and Couples. Interviewing was conducted by Echo Research between October 18 and October 22, 2011. Overall, the results have a margin of error of +/- 2.2 percentage points at the 95 percent level of confidence.

Affluents are defined as having a minimum annual household income of \$100,000. Couples are defined as single living with a partner or single with a significant other.

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