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From: Roxie Dinstel via Ronda Boswell
Re: Pinching Pennies to run Mondays on page A-3
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Car insurance is a necessity — not only because it is required by law, but also because it protects our assets. It can be pricey, but discounts can save you a lot of money.

Everyone knows that there are certain factors that can add considerable additional discounts to your insurance quotes. A clean driving record, good credit rating, installed anti-theft device in your vehicle and even good grades for student drivers are some of the most commonly known discounts. But what about the ones that aren’t as well known? Just because you’re not aware of them doesn’t mean they’re not there waiting to be used. Look for some of the following discounts when filtering through your vast list of instant insurance quotes.

Group Affiliation Discounts. The first insurance I had as an adult was with Ag Workers, a company that insured only people who worked in the field of agriculture. Group discounts are a great source of savings, if you’re affiliated with certain groups or organizations. You’ll probably be surprised at the groups that some auto insurers are partnered up with. Be sure to check if discounts are offered for members of any of these types of associations and organizations:

- Alumni associations, including students of certain colleges and members of some fraternities and sororities
- Student organizations like medical and dental associations, as well as certain honor societies
- Educational organizations, including teachers’ associations and foundations
- Credit unions — if you’re having a hard time finding your credit union, contact them directly and ask them what insurers they’re affiliated with
- Technical organizations
- Financial organizations and alliances
- Accounting organizations
- Attorney organizations, including bar associations for certain states
• Military organizations for active duty and retired military members, including some federal credit unions
• Members of discount wholesalers like Costco or Sam’s Club

Infrequent Driver Discounts. More of us are using public transportation. Many auto insurers offer discounted rates to drivers who simply don’t drive as much. If you ride the bus often or simply don’t drive much, check for these discounts when getting insurance quotes. If you already have insurance, contact your insurance company to ask them if they offer the same type of discount. When one of my kids was off at college and wasn’t driving often, I listed him as an infrequent driver. It made a big difference in my rates.

Loyalty Discounts. Insurance is a very competitive business. Car insurance companies are grateful for your business and many offer loyalty discounts for sticking around. But sometimes you have to remind your agent how many years you have been around. Most loyalty discounts kick in automatically after you’ve reached a certain point with a car insurer, but if you’ve been with the same company for several years, ask if they have a discount.

Double up your coverage. Many companies give you a discount if you have two or more types of insurance. The company that carries my car insurance also insures my house. You can expect a 10 to 20 percent discount when more than one policy is carried by one company.

Discounts on your vehicle are related to your VIN, or vehicle identification number. Your VIN gives your insurance company information on what your car is equipped with. If you have airbags and antilock brakes, for example, most insurers will offer discounts for those items. Customers who only purchase liability coverage won't see these kinds of discounts, though. They are only for people who have other coverage options such as medical payment, uninsured/underinsured motorists, and personal injury protection. The same is true for a car alarm. You can get a discount for that, but only if you're carrying theft coverage — which is part of comprehensive.

Just make sure that you're not giving up any coverage in order to get your discount. If that's the case, you have to consider whether it's really a discount at all. You should always choose good coverage over getting a discount, so keep that in mind when you're shopping for an insurance company that will meet your needs.

If you need insurance, watch for (and ask for) discounts. Unfortunately, a lot of people overlook a discount or two (or more) that they could have gotten if they'd known about them.

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