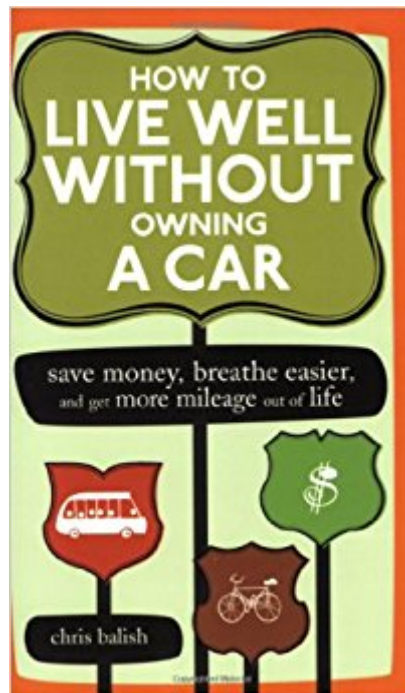




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# How To Live Well Without Owning A Car: Save Money, Breathe Easier, And Get More Mileage Out Of Life



## Synopsis

You don't need to own a car to live well in America. In fact, you'd probably be better off without one. In this groundbreaking guide, award-winning journalist Chris Balish exposes the true costs of car ownership and shows how car-free living can put anyone on the path to financial freedom. Using the book's car cost worksheet, first figure out how much owning a car really costs-you'll be surprised. Then, see how easy it is to transition to a car-free or car-lite lifestyle using Chris's strategies for commuting, running errands, taking trips, dating, socializing, and more. You'll also find hundreds of tips and success stories from car-free people in cities and suburbs across America. Without car payments, rising gas prices, and traffic jams to worry about, you'll have more money and leisure time to spend as you choose. Discover why getting rid of your car may be the soundest and sanest lifestyle change you can make.

Reviews

View a video clip from NBC's Today Show: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/25609661/> "Chris Balish offers a mix of the practical-a worksheet to figure out a car's total cost and impact-as well as the horrifying: The average American walks just 300 yards a day."-Sierra Magazine "If ever there was a practical inducement to get out of the car trap, this is it. For the multitude of Americans stuck in traffic and spending thousands of dollars a year on their cars, Chris's lively and pragmatic step-by-step solutions provide a way out."-Jane Holtz Kay, author of Asphalt Nation "Chris Balish's book can help environmentally conscious Americans live their values. If you're concerned about pollution and global warming, follow the program in these pages. There can be life without a car. And a good life at that!"-Ed Begley, Jr., actor and environmental activist "[Chris Balish's] prescriptions are feasible and most important, reasonable."-San Antonio Express News "Even if living car-free or car-lite isn't for you, you'll still learn a lot from this book. I did."-Michelle Singletary, Washington Post

Listen to Chris Balish talk about living car-free in Los Angeles on NPR's Morning Edition.

## Book Information

Paperback: 224 pages

Publisher: Ten Speed Press; First Printing edition (August 5, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1580087574

ISBN-13: 978-1580087575

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 0.5 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 79 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #542,243 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #59 in [Books > Engineering & Transportation > Transportation > Mass Transit](#) #442 in [Books > Reference > Encyclopedias & Subject Guides > Business](#) #1448 in [Books > Business & Money > Economics > Environmental Economics](#)

## Customer Reviews

"I hear people talking about how they couldn't live without a car. Then a few conversations later, they'll complain that their job doesn't pay enough and they don't have any money, without seeing the connection. The money I've saved from living car-free has helped me fund things like bike trips to Ireland and visits to farms in Tuscany." -- Jeffrey Rosenblum, 37

• The first practical, accessible, and sensible guide to living in North America without owning a car. • Exposes the true costs of car ownership and shows how getting rid of your car can simplify your life and put you on the road to financial freedom. • Packed with realistic, economical alternatives to owning a car, including chapters on carsharing, carpooling, and even car-free dating. • Includes more than 100 real-world tips, strategies, and success stories from people who are happily car-free or "car-lite," from cities to suburbs. • According to a 2004 American Automobile Association study, the average American spends \$8,410 per year (roughly \$700 per month) to own a vehicle.

Chris Balish makes a number of very good points in this book, the primary one being that if you REALLY want to do something to reduce pollution, wastefulness, and resource utilization, you'll get off the Western dependency on privately-owned automobiles entirely. Those who smugly drive around in their Prius's, Insights, or (if you're filthy rich) Volts thinking that they're actually doing something to "save the planet" are ignorant beyond words, and Balish explains the reasoning behind this pretty well (although he's much kinder toward these dunderheads than I am). For those of us who aren't Al Gore devotees, Balish does an excellent job of outlining the radical way in which your financial picture will improve if you ditch the cars, not to mention the health benefits that will ensue if you start walking and riding a bicycle. Where Mr. Balish misses the boat however is in ignoring the incredible degree to which elderly and infirm people are dependent on having ready access to an automobile. And his chapter discussing the advantages of moving your home to a location closer to public transportation is almost risible for the majority of Americans who live in the suburbs and as far away from population density as possible for very good reasons. In summary, I

think this is a great book for consideration if you are young, single or married with no children, and in good overall health. It would be a great way for younger people to save money during their high-earning days, but frankly as one matures and begins to suffer the vicissitudes of aging his suggestions become less and less practicable.

I've been car lite for about 3 years, often having to justify myself to friends and family simply because I don't want to drive a car. I don't want the expense-i'd rather put the money I save into my business, and eventually a home. I don't want the liability, the parking tickets, the life of road rage, the time wasted washing it, getting gas, going to mechanics, worrying about whether someone's going to steal it. I don't need it to define who I am. I've gotten to know my neighborhood better, have a little more peace of mind, and my doctor says my blood pressure is looking pretty good. These are all benefits that are stressed in other books that I've read about going car free/lite. But this is the first book that I've read which really emphasizes getting rid of car for financial reasons-which I think is good, because most of mainstream America doesn't tend to change it's habits until they realize there's money being left on the table. The author appears to be an upwardly mobile individual who's owned some nice vehicles in his day and has now given them up for financial reasons, and in the process bought a nice upscale home-a situation many Americans are now starting to identify with-Honey do we buy the new car so we can live on macaroni and cheese in our cracker jack apartment box, or do we dump the new car and buy a starter home instead? The book gives alot of insightful ways to limit car usage, and how to keep a social life in the process. The book really gets you thinking: how much better would we all be if only we were less dependent on the automobile? The chapter on socializing and dating is pretty key i think, as most people that I've talked to in Los Angeles that have contemplated giving up their cars, usually back down out of fear for losing a social life. If you've looked at other books on this topic and feel that they are "too green" for you the upwardly mobile individual, than this might be the one you'd better identify with. I often commute by bike at night and use the [Down Low Glow Lighting Kit - Two Tubes-Envy\(green\)](#) for side visibility.

When I started college in 2010, I commuted from home forty miles each way, because there were no buses that reached rural Kentucky areas. After transferring to the University of Maryland, though, I bought my first bicycle as an adult, and over time discovered that the only times I ever used my car were the trips I would take to drive home to Kentucky once or twice a year (600 miles one way). After reading this amazing book, I began to realize how much my car was actually costing me each

month. Even though I had paid it off, my apartment makes me pay \$50 a month for parking, and I have to pay \$200 a month for insurance because I'm a male under 25... After suffering through using a base model car with no air conditioning for years, I had originally made up my mind to purchase a new car after graduation (one that had air conditioning), but then one day at work (I work at a used book store), someone donated a copy of this book (which was an advance reader's copy, and had no ISBN, so we couldn't do anything with it). After reading this book cover to cover in about a week, my perspective has taken a 180 degree turn. Where previously I was trying to plan my life and future career around making enough to purchase and maintain a new car, now I am intent to sell my car as soon as I get my clean title back from the DMV! I'll be able to save \$6,500 a year (from a car I already paid off completely) by selling it and not buying another car! This book gives you everything you need to plan out living without a car. First it gives you reasons why it's better to live without one, and then it shows you how. For anyone who is interesting in saving TONS of money, helping the environment, and decreasing stress, THIS BOOK IS FOR YOU!

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