

How can I minimize my insurance costs?

Brokers can help find ways to control your premiums and still get the coverage you need.

Nobody likes to pay insurance premiums so any chance to control or reduce cost is welcome. Your broker can help you minimize premiums by helping to define your insurance needs and by shopping around for the best policy.

Don't over or under-insure

Under-insure and you might be left carrying the cost of damage, theft or loss of property. Over-insure and you will be paying more than you have to. Your broker can help you find the right balance by examining your assets, your risk profile and your insurance history. They can also alert you to choices that could reduce your insurance costs such as installing an alarm system in your home.

Set deductible and liability levels right

One way to control your premiums is to set a higher deductible, which means you accept more risk for covering small losses. Insurers tend to have deductibles ranging from \$300 to \$1,000. Ask your broker to explain the cost implications of different

deductibles. If you drive in the U.S., you might want to consider higher liability coverage due to the higher levels of personal injury awards in that country.

Stay claims-free

One of the best ways to minimize premiums and obtain discounts is to avoid making claims. One of the best ways to do this is to reduce the risk factors that drive claims.

For your vehicle:

- Avoid car accidents by driving defensively and never while impaired
- Install an anti-theft system
- Never leave valuables in the car
- Keep your driving record clean

In your home:

- Consider a home security system
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide alarms
- Clear the snow and ice off your walk
- Install good quality locks on your doors and windows

These are just a few examples of ways in which lowering the risk can mean lowering the cost to you.

Should I Claim?

If you experience a loss that exceeds your deductible, ask your broker what the impact might be on your premiums if you make a claim. The best advice might be to absorb the cost yourself in exchange for lower premiums long-term.

