

Money Matters: Get Financially Fit

Complete one of the following financial activities daily, with a goal to complete *at least* 14 over the next 21 days. If you are actively doing a task, mark it as complete.

Budget	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Take one step from the list below toward setting up a budget, or review yours if you already have one. (See Building a Budget) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Write down all your expenses (3 months look back). <input type="checkbox"/> Add up your income. <input type="checkbox"/> Subtract your expenses from your income. <input type="checkbox"/> Categorize your expenses: Fixed or Variable <input type="checkbox"/> Categorize your expenses: Essential or Non-essential.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Set up a system to track how you spend your money.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Research a few budget apps to see if one is right for you.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Budget as a family. Discuss together where to spend money and where to cut back.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Set three budget goals as a family. (i.e., save so much a month, be debt-free, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Schedule monthly meetings to review the budget.
Spending and saving	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Count how many times you've eaten out in the past three months. Plan to reduce that number by 25% over the next [how many] months.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Meal plan. Plan out your meals for the week and only buy what you need. Take stock of pantry and fridge items that need to be used soon. Consider what's on sale at the store. Make a list and stick to it.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Track or monitor how many convenience items you buy at/from the store (i.e., pre-chopped veggies, hamburger patties, pre-divided snacks, etc.). Identify where you can adjust.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wait for 24 hours before making a purchase. Ask yourself if it's a need or just a want.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan a spend-free day or week where you only purchase essential/needed items.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Create a wish list of items you want but don't necessarily need. (Revisit in one month. Are you still feeling the urge to splurge?)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Adopt a spending mantra. (i.e., "Is this [item to purchase] better than vacation next year?" or "I only charge items that are [set amount] or more.")
<input type="checkbox"/>	Set 1 short-term goal (to achieve in the next three months) and one long-term goal (takes longer than three months to achieve).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Calculate your emergency funds. Do you have savings that will cover 3-6 months of expenses or other unanticipated costs? Be realistic about what you might encounter in the future. (i.e., pet bills, car maintenance, home repair, vision/dental/medical bills, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Take a household tour and identify savings. (i.e., turn the thermostat down, use energy-efficient lighting, wash clothes in cold water, change/clean filters, turn off lights when not in use, use a power strip and turn off when not in use, run full loads of wash or dishes, adjust your water heater temperature, weather strip doors, and windows, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review your subscriptions and service plans. Are there any plans you can change or cancel? (i.e., phone, cable, internet, streaming services, memberships, etc.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Explore what bills have an autopay option and see if there's a discount for doing so.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Set up direct deposit to have a portion of your paycheck sent straight to savings regularly. (i.e., biweekly on payday)
<input type="checkbox"/>	If you don't already have one, open a savings account. Consider using a different bank from your checking account; transferring money out of savings can be too easy if both accounts are at the same bank.

Insurance

<input type="checkbox"/>	Review your home and auto insurance policies. Reassess your needs and determine if there are any gaps in your coverage.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Understand your insurance policy regarding your personal possessions/valuables.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Conduct a home inventory. Make a list of your possessions, especially valuables such as jewelry, family heirlooms, antiques, musical instruments, artwork, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ask your home insurance company about discounts. (i.e., long-term customer, having sprinklers or smoke detectors, living near a fire station, owning a new home, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ask your auto insurance company about discounts. (having airbags or anti-lock brakes, driving a few miles yearly, no previous claims, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	If you rent, consider getting renters insurance to replace items if they're ever stolen or damaged by water or fire.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shop around for insurance. Could you be getting the same coverage for less?

Investments and retirement

<input type="checkbox"/>	Take advantage of your employer's match to your 401(k) if one is offered. Double-check your elections and make sure you're contributing at least the minimum amount to receive the match.
<input type="checkbox"/>	If your employer doesn't have a 401(k), consider saving in another tax-advantaged account, such as an individual retirement account (IRA).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Educate yourself on how investments work. (See Basics of Investing and Planning for Your Retirement)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review your portfolio to make sure your allocations still match your investing goals.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make sure you have beneficiaries appointed to your retirement, life, and other account(s). Is their contact information current?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Use a retirement calculator to determine how much you will need to retire and if you are on track to reach your goal. Make a plan to adjust your current financial habits accordingly.

Debt

<input type="checkbox"/>	Learn what affects your credit score . (See Improving Your Credit Score)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request and review your credit report with annualcreditreport.com . Federal law allows you to get a free copy of your credit report every 12 months from each credit reporting company (Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Calculate what percent of your borrowing limit you use on your credit card(s). It's recommended to use less than 10%.
<input type="checkbox"/>	List all your debts and their interest rates. Then, review the snowball and avalanche methods for paying them off; determine which works best for you. (See Paying Down Debt)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Educate yourself on other debt-relief options and consider the pros and cons (borrowing against your home equity or 401(k), debt consolidation or settlement, etc.)

Misc.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Explore your employer's EAP program to see what financial programs are available to you.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Protect your money by changing your banking passwords. Update your passwords regularly (every 60-90 days), and don't use the same password for different accounts.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Create a financial calendar (or add to your current calendar) with tasks and reminders such as checking your yearly credit report, getting taxes done, reviewing your budget, updating passwords, regular money check-ins, major spending events such as holidays, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gather all your important financial documents and put them somewhere secure.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make an estate plan, including a will, a health care proxy, and a list of your assets. Most states have free templates available if you don't have a will.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have a financial conversation with your significant other/family to ensure you have the same goals in mind.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confront your financial anxieties. Write down the finance-related things that are stressing you out. Identifying what's holding you back can help you decide what to prioritize.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Write in your own activity:

Additional resources:

- [Building a Budget](#)
- [Saving Money](#)
- [Understanding Insurance](#)
- [The Basics of Investing](#)
- [Planning for Your Retirement](#)
- [Getting the Most from Your 401\(k\)](#)
- [Improving Your Credit Score](#)
- [Paying Down Debt](#)
- [Navigating Taxes](#)
- [Home Financial Planning: Buy or Rent?](#)
- [Becoming a Financially Fit Family](#)
- [Building Financial Resilience](#)

Explore more [Real Goals and Supplemental Resources here.](#)

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