

Feel uneasy?

Stay on course

Look at the bigger picture

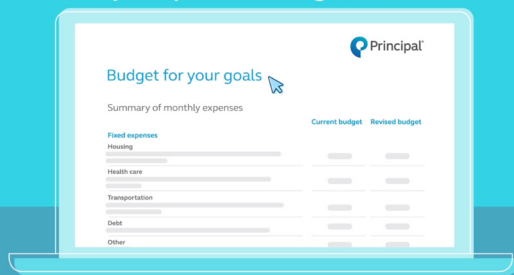
Focus on what you can control

What steps can I take toward my financial goals?

Check your spending habits



principal.com/BudgetGoals



For illustrative purposes only.



Budget Goals Worksheet

What is a Financial Wellness check up? Why do I need one?

Financial Wellness check ups give you a better understanding of how much progress you have made toward your goals. They also allow you to celebrate your progress. They give you a better picture of your discretionary budget which will allow you to better prepare for more of life's Milestone events like education, marriage, a home and retirement.

Ask yourself what steps can I take toward my financial goals? Whether they're short term, mid term or long term goals

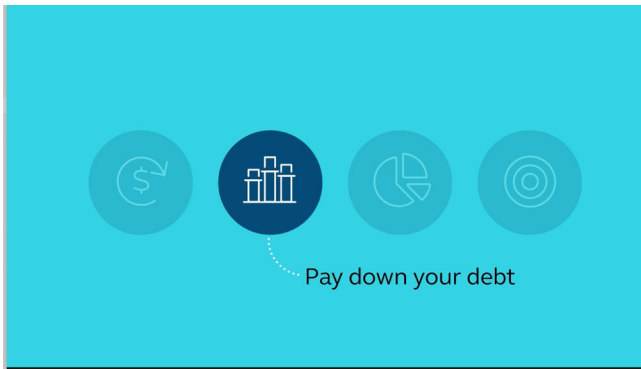
Step One: Check your spending habits

Begin by comparing your bank account statement to your budget. Don't have a budget mapped out? Get started today with the budget for your goals worksheet at principal.com/budgetgoals. Now you'll be able to track your current habits, revise your budget and rein in any unnecessary spending that stands in your way.

Start by taking a look at what's coming in versus what's leaving your bank account. Are you still on track and within your budget? If not, don't worry. You can make changes to reach your goals. One thing that may help you plan your budget and track your spending is using the 50, 30, 20 rule. 50% of your income goes towards essential living expenses, like your monthly rent or mortgage, utilities, food, basic transportation, and health insurance.

Then 30% of your income can be earmarked for non-essentials. Things like online shopping, streaming subscriptions and going out to local restaurants. After that, the final 20% of your income is allocated toward paying down any debt and increasing your savings. That's money you can contribute to your retirement fund, add to your emergency fund and invest for continued growth. Remember, with a 50, 30, 20 rule, nothing is set in stone.

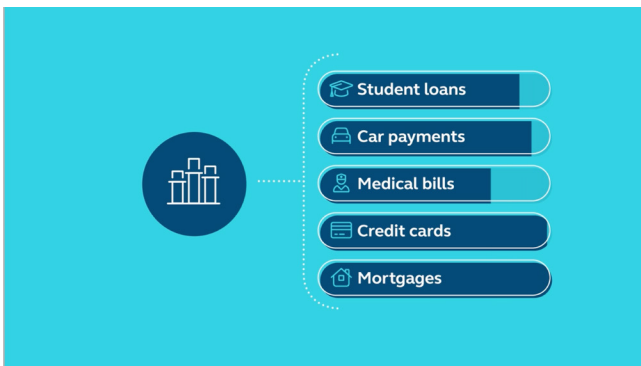
If you happen to go over in some categories, you can always make changes and reduce elsewhere to maintain a balanced budget. Ultimately, it's all about checking in with your spending. Once you do that, you'll have a better understanding of your overall financial picture, allowing you to prioritize your near and long term goals.



Step Two: Pay Down Your Debt

Next, take a look at any debt you may have, including student loans, car payments, medical bills, credit cards and mortgages.

If you've made substantial progress towards paying it down, congratulations! If you're still working on it, that's great too. Any progress is good progress. If you're not quite where you want to be on managing debt, try the snowball or the avalanche method.



With the **snowball method**, you pay down the account with the smallest balance first before gradually building up to the larger debts. When you use the snowball method, you continue to make the minimum payment on all other debts to avoid additional interest. Then, once the first account is paid off, you'll move to the second lowest balance. Rinse, repeat and rejoice as you move closer and closer to zero debt.

The **avalanche method**, on the other hand, means you tackle the debt with the largest interest rate, then the second largest and so on. Similar to the snowball method, you'll also continue to make the minimum payments across all of your accounts.



So which strategy is right for you? If you're motivated by seeing smaller balances disappear from your sheet, the snowball method may be right for you. Or if you'd rather pay less over the life of your loans, the avalanche method is probably your best move.

Take your pick. Just be sure to pick one and stick with it. Remember, the faster your debt is paid down, the sooner you'll be able to put that money toward your goals.



Check your accounts



✓ Brokerage accounts

✓ IRAs

✓ Retirement accounts
401(k)s, 403(b)s, Pensions

✓ Checking accounts

✓ Savings accounts

✓ CD accounts



Retirement accounts

Beneficiaries

Retirement accounts typically overrides the ones in your will

overrides the ones specified on your will.



Balanced your budget



Delved into your debt



Assessed online accounts



On your way to reaching your goals

Step Three: Check your accounts

Next, let's check in on the financial accounts that can help fund your goals.

That means investment vehicles like brokerage accounts, IRAs, retirement accounts, including four one ks for three B's and pensions, plus your checking savings and CD accounts. While reviewing your investment accounts, make sure you have the right allocation and investment strategies in place to help you meet your goals. Are your assets balanced based on age and time to your goal?

For example, a person in their twenties may invest on the aggressive side with more of their money in stocks than in other items like bonds and cash. But as they approach retirement age, they may shift more of their money towards bonds to help reduce risk. Beyond that, it's always a good idea to keep your account info updated. Nearly all financial accounts have online access, so make sure you're able to log into each one. Take time today to set up your Servant Solutions retirement account with Principal.com.

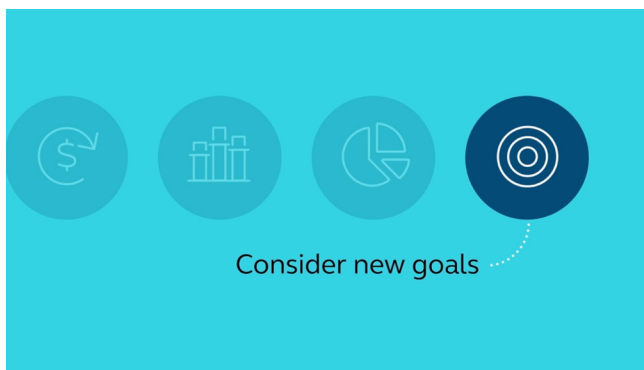
It's also a good idea to make sure your beneficiary information is current. Your spouse is the automatic primary beneficiary of your account and Plan benefits will be transferred into his or her name upon your death. Therefore, this form is intended to designate a contingent beneficiary.

Are you contributing enough to receive the full employer match? It's essentially free money, so it's a good idea to take full advantage. Increasing your contribution amount by just one or 2% could help you get the maximum employer match, which could help you reach your long term goal sooner as well. Want a way to help you feel more secure about your retirement? Bump up your contribution amount a percent or two. Or plan to increase your contributions 1% each year until you reach 10%. Studies have shown that you should save at least 10% of your pay throughout your career. In turn, that 10% can leave you with enough to replace about 80% of your income. If you can contribute more than 10%, that's great.

If you can't reach 10%, work toward getting as close as possible because a small uptick today may help boost your savings substantially five, ten, or 20 years down the road



Beneficiary Form

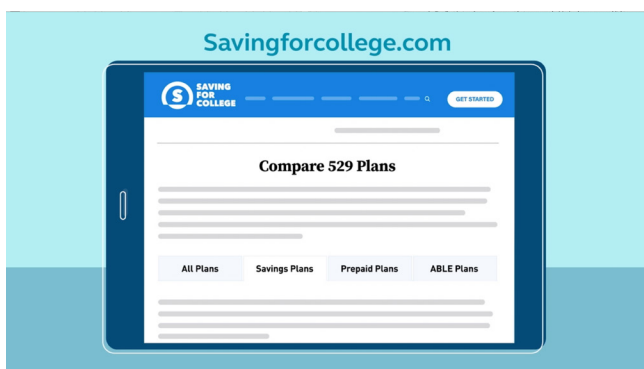


Consider new goals

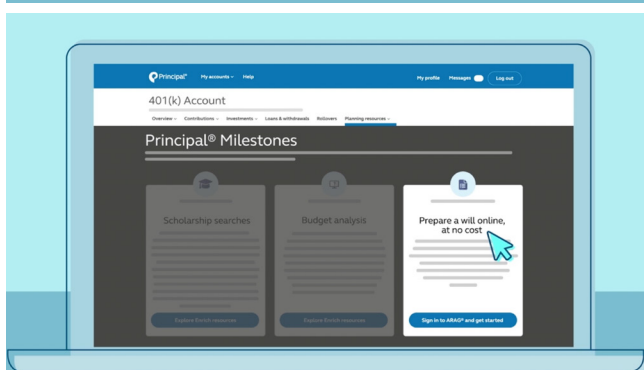


An emergency savings account

A 529 plan for child's education



Savingforcollege.com



Step Four: Consider new goals

Now that you've balanced your budget, delved into your debt and assessed your online accounts, you're well on your way to reaching your goals. Finally, it's time for step four considering new goals. Maybe that means establishing an emergency savings account or contributing to a 529 plan for a child's education. Remember, you can't control the market or the weather, but rainy day funds may help provide you with some peace of mind.

Once you crunch the numbers, be sure to keep your emergency fund in a bank account that's liquid and accessible but not too accessible. You may want to put the money in a separate savings account, one that you can access online, but not from an ATM where you may be tempted to withdraw it. That way your money will be out of sight and out of mind, but always within reach if you need it.

It's also important to choose the right account for your emergency fund. High yield savings accounts come with a higher minimum balance requirement than your average checking account, but they also give your funds an opportunity to grow at a higher interest rate. Want to help fund education for a family member or loved one? A 529 plan can help. It's an investment account operated by a state or educational institution, and it's specifically designed to help save for education expenses.

Plus, most states offer tax benefits for in-state contributions. Withdrawals from these plans, including potential earnings, are free of federal taxes as long as they're used for qualified education expenses. Want to find the 529 plan that works best for you and your scholar? Use the comprehensive 529 comparison tool to evaluate your options at [savingforcollege.com](https://www.savingforcollege.com).

Now you're ready to ace your four step checklist, but you can still go for extra credit with principal milestones.

You have access to hundreds of financial wellness tools and resources like scholarships, searches and budget analysis from Enrich and will preparation resources from ARAG. To learn more and save more, visit [principal.com/milestones](https://www.principal.com/milestones).

Whether you've taken small steps for giant leaps toward your goals over the last six months, it's time to celebrate your progress. You deserve a round of applause for doing your financial wellness checklist too.