



Retirement readiness checklist

Whether retirement is far off or fast approaching, the best time to plan is now. Follow this retirement readiness checklist to help ensure you cover all the important elements. Once completed, a [Thrivent financial advisor](#) can help you put your plans in motion.

Step 1: Answer some basic questions

Timing: When will you retire? This may be a target age, a milestone work anniversary, or the point you'll have access to certain retirement accounts or benefits.

Location: Where will you live? This could be your current home, or even a downsized (or dream!) property.

Lifestyle: What will you do in retirement? Jot down a few of your hopes for family time, travel, hobbies, volunteer hours and more.

Debt: Do you want to be debt-free in retirement? Explore payment plans that may support your goals or calculate the threshold of debt you're comfortable carrying. List out any current debts, like a mortgage or car loan.

Budgeting: Create a budget based on your new expected expenses vs. income. List out your recurring expenses and projected retirement income to help lay the foundation for your budget.

Step 2: Determine how much to save

Determine how much you'll need to retire. The standard recommended total to save for retirement is roughly seven times your yearly income.

\$ _____ x 7 = \$ _____

Your current annual income

Your target retirement savings

Optimize your retirement savings accounts and investments. You'll want to evaluate your risk tolerance, **as well as the tax treatment of your various savings vehicles**. Consider a mix of accounts that are:

- **Tax now** (i.e., savings accounts, CDs, mutual funds)
- **Tax later** (i.e., 401[k]s, traditional IRAs)
- **Tax never**¹ (i.e., Roth IRAs, Roth 401[k]s)



Don't forget to factor in your projected retirement expenses and how long your retirement may last. You can try a [retirement income calculator](#) for a more fine-tuned estimate.

Step 3: Prepare your retirement income plan

After determining you've saved enough to provide yourself with a comfortable retirement, decide how you'll turn that savings into a stream of income.

- List all your [retirement income sources](#)**, including personal retirement accounts, your estimated Social Security benefit, any pensions or annuities, and more.

- Choose a [retirement withdrawal strategy](#)**. How much money should you take out—of where, and how soon? The 4% rule may be a helpful guideline—where you withdraw no more than 4% of any account balance per year during retirement. Use these lines to plot out how you may withdraw from the retirement income sources you listed on the left.

Step 4: Protect your retirement savings

Lastly, make sure your plan accounts for [key retirement risks](#). Even with a solid plan in place, unexpected factors can pop up, such as:

- [Long-term care needs](#) and [health insurance gaps](#).
- [Market volatility](#).
- [Inflation](#) (budget to account for the standard 4% estimate).
- [Longevity risk](#).
- [Taxes](#).



Ready to take the next step?

Preparing for retirement is a marathon, not a sprint. Working through this checklist can help you keep the big picture in mind as you make progress toward your goals.

[Connect with a Thrivent financial advisor](#) to help you build confidence in your [retirement readiness](#).

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