



Managing Your Money

How To Give Yourself A Financial Checkup

by John A. Addison

(NAPSA)—Any time can be the right time to give yourself a thorough financial tune-up. Here are a few tips on how to get started.

Review your credit cards.

Do you have a stellar credit score? With industry competition fierce for your business, you may be able to ask for—and receive—a lower Annual Percentage Rate (APR).

While the average variable APR for credit cards is 14.46 percent, those with superhigh credit scores can actually cut that in half. If you're among that elite crowd and aren't happy with your current rate or terms, try contacting customer service. You could negotiate your way to a better rate, or possibly persuade them to waive the annual charge.

What's your get-out-of-debt plan? If you've ever thought about making a dent in your debt (or changing your credit habits), now's the time to create a plan to gain control of your credit for good. Try keeping a journal and tracking your spending patterns. After a few weeks, you'll have a better idea of where the money goes and where you might be able to make some changes.

Check your emergency savings. Do you have three to six months' salary stashed? If not, you're not alone—a majority of Americans say they don't have enough cash on hand to cover a \$1,000 emergency expense.

To find extra cash for your emergency fund, you may want to take on more work or look for ways to trim some of the "extras" from your monthly bills.



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Review your life insurance coverage. If you have had a change in your life—such as the birth of a new baby—this is crucial. Financial experts generally recommend about six to 10 times your annual salary.

Reshop your auto insurance. If you haven't comparison shopped your rates lately, give it a try. For an identical six-month policy, costs can vary as much as \$500 across carriers—yet it's estimated that only 20 percent of consumers actually take the time to shop around.

Do you have a will? Two-thirds of Americans do not, according to a 2010 survey. You can pay a lawyer to create a will, or ask your Primerica representative about the Primerica Legal Protection Program (PLPP), which includes free will preparation.

To learn more, visit www.primerica.com.

Mr. Addison is Primerica's Co-Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of Primerica Distribution.