

Financial To-Do List for 2021

To successfully manage your finances, you need to have control over them. Assume control as early in the year as possible by creating a financial to-do list and sticking to it.



1

ASSESS YOUR CURRENT FINANCES

Just as you may have a physical examination once a year to help ensure your physical health, it's a good idea to [perform a financial checkup](#) once a year to ensure your financial health. Ask yourself the following questions:

- How many of your financial goals from last year have you met?
- What is your current net worth?
- What is your [credit score](#)? Did it change over the past year? If so, was the change positive or negative?
- What is your debt-to-income ratio?
- Do you have an adequate amount of savings on hand?
- Is your credit card use under control?

2

SET FINANCIAL GOALS

Once you've answered these questions, you can make some decisions about where to make adjustments to improve your financial health. Think realistically about some [financial goals](#) you believe you can achieve this year. Write them down.

3

SET UP A BUDGET

Once you know your financial goals, you can set up a budget. Having goals can provide motivation and focus but by setting up a budget, you take action and envision a plan that will help you reach your goals.

(Want additional advice about how to budget wisely this year? [Download "The 2021 Guide to Staying Out of Debt."](#))

4

PREPARE YOUR TAX RETURN

This year, the IRS has started accepting and processing [2020 tax returns](#) later than usual due to some changes to tax law that passed in December as part of the new stimulus bill. Make sure you understand the changes and whether they affect you in any way.

You have until April 15, 2021 to file your tax return, but it makes sense to get it out of the way sooner. Doing so will give you ample time to review the numbers, ensure that you do not miss any tax credits and available deductions, and optimize your refund. Gather up your tax documentation and contact a professional if needed.

5

GET OUT OF CREDIT CARD DEBT

One of the most expensive types of debt most people carry is credit card debt. Make it a goal this year to reduce or eliminate your credit card debt as quickly as possible to improve your financial health. If the debt you are carrying is less than \$5,000, try to make more than the minimum payments each month to pay down your debt more quickly.

6

BUILD UP YOUR EMERGENCY FUND

To keep your finances in shape, [build up an emergency fund](#). Having an emergency fund can keep you from slipping into debt if a sudden, unexpected event arises. Aim for at least three months' worth of essential living expenses socked away to start. Once you have that, try to double it over time to get a thicker cushion of protection against life's curveballs.

If you are trying to reduce a debt of \$10,000 or more, you may feel that you cannot make enough progress trying to pay down your debt on your own. The good news is that you don't have to try to do it alone. ClearOne Advantage can help. Rather than allowing your debt to continue to mount month after month, you can **contact a ClearOne Advantage Certified Debt Specialist at 866-481-1597** to discuss your [credit card relief options](#) and [get a free savings estimate](#).

Get a free savings estimate

See how much you can save

See Your Savings

