

# Loose Change<sup>®</sup>

a penny saved is a penny earned

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I am committed to helping my clients achieve their financial goals for themselves, their families and their businesses by providing them with strategies for asset accumulation, preservation and transfer.

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## Moves to Make Before Year's End

**Before you close the book on 2025, give yourself a head start on 2026. A year-end review of your portfolio and insurance policies can help ensure your investments are in line with your goals and your risks are properly covered for the new year.**

### Rebalance Investments

You chose your investments based on your risk tolerance and time frame. But market ups and downs can change your asset allocation and risk exposure. Rebalancing your portfolio at the end of the year can return your asset mix to your desired allocation.

### Review Your Plan Contributions

Make sure you're contributing as much as possible to your company's retirement plan, or at least enough to take full advantage of any employer matching funds. Then review how your funds are invested. Swap funds if necessary to align with your goals.

### Consider Losses

Selling individual stocks that have lost value since you acquired them allows you to offset taxable capital gains on stocks you've sold at a profit and up to \$3,000 (\$1,500 married, filing separately) of ordinary income in the year of the sale. Any additional losses can be carried over for deduction in future years. Keep in mind that the wash-sale rule prevents you from deducting losses if you purchase the same or similar securities within 30 days of the sale.

### Be Charitable

Consider making next year's charitable contributions before year's end to get a charitable deduction on this year's tax return. Gifts charged to a credit card by December 31 will qualify for the deduction, and you won't be billed until January.



### Bunch Expenses

Moving elective medical and dental procedures to this year may allow you to exceed the adjusted gross income (AGI) threshold for deduction on your 2025 tax return. To be deductible, medical expenses must exceed 7.5% of your adjusted gross income.

### Take Your RMD

If you were born between 1951 and 1959 you must begin taking required Minimum Distributions (RMD) from your qualified retirement accounts at age 73. If you were born in 1960 or later, you do not have to start taking RMDs until you reach age 75. Failure to take an RMD by December 31 could subject you to a penalty of 50% of the amount you should have withdrawn, but didn't.

Make an appointment with your financial professional to discuss and implement strategies.

# Surprise — It's Taxable!

It's almost that time of year when you and the IRS must settle what you owe — or what the government owes you. Before you prepare your tax return, consider whether you'll need to include any of the taxable items listed below.

- Social Security benefits
- Unemployment benefits
- Portion of a scholarship that covers expenses other than tuition, fees, and books (e.g., room and board, travel, etc.)
- Canceled debt from credit cards, car loans and mortgages (Student loan debt is exempt.)
- Honors with cash prizes
- Certain alimony payments
- Gambling winnings (lotteries, horse racing, casinos, sports betting, etc.) Some losses are deductible.
- Gifts from an employer that reward an employee for services or help promote the company
- Found property
- Bartered property or services in lieu of cash

Consult your team of trusted advisors to determine which items you should include when preparing your income tax return for 2025.



## Smart Budgeting Tips After the Holidays

The holiday season often leads to overspending, leaving many feeling financially strained afterward. To get your finances back on track, start by reviewing your expenses and creating a realistic budget. List all sources of income and categorize your expenses, including essentials, debt payments, and discretionary spending.

### Review

Identify areas where you can cut back, such as dining out, entertainment, or non-essential shopping. Setting specific savings goals—like building an emergency fund or paying down debt—can motivate disciplined spending. Automate your savings by setting up automatic transfers to your savings account soon after payday.

### Monitor

Track your spending regularly to stay accountable and adjust your budget as needed. Consider using budgeting apps to monitor your progress effortlessly. Avoid impulse purchases by making shopping lists and sticking to them. Review and revise your budget monthly to reflect changing expenses and financial goals.

### Implement

By implementing these tips, you can regain control over your finances, reduce stress, and set a solid foundation for a financially secure year ahead.



# Ways to Curb Holiday Spending

Although the winter holidays aren't here yet, now is a great time to prepare financially for them. For many people, this means starting with a plan, creating a budget and sticking to it. Here are a few ways you might accomplish this.

## Be Accountable

Set a holiday budget. Create a list of items you intend to buy with expected prices, and match the total cost to your budget. Hold yourself accountable. If it's not on the list, don't buy it. Try this exercise weekly to keep your spending goals front and center.

## Be Thrifty

You can find coupons for just about anything online, in print and through apps. Many stores also offer cash and discount rewards, but beware of the many that won't honor multiple promotions. Also, don't buy a sale item if it wasn't on your original list, no matter how low prices go. No discount is more than the 100% you save by not buying an item.

## Be Card-Smart

One of the easiest ways to not overspend during the holidays is to leave your credit cards at home. It's hard to exceed your budget when you only have cash. If you do use a card, use those with the best cash-back offers for additional savings, and pay your cards off in full each month.

## Be Money-Smart

If the thought is what counts, consider baking cookies and gifting them in a nice tin during the holidays. Have to give multiple gifts at work? Re-gift unused gifts you received in the past (but remember who gave you what the year before).



# Holiday Tipping Guide: A Refresher

Tipping during the holidays is a nice way to show your appreciation to service providers for all they do for you during the year. Here are some general guidelines.

Newspaper Carrier/Trash Collector	\$10-\$30
Parking/Garage Attendant	\$10-\$50
Mail Carrier/Mechanic	\$20
Hairstylist/Manicurist, Housekeeper, Massage Therapist, Personal Trainer	Cost of One Visit or Session
Dog Walker	One Week's Pay
Babysitter	One-to-Two Night's Pay
Dog Walker	One Week's Pay
Caregiver	One-Week's to One-Month's Salary
Daycare Staff	\$20-\$70 Per Person

# Successful Grocery Budgeting

Holiday grocery shopping can destroy your food budget in the blink of an eye. Save at the supermarket with these timely tips.



- Plan your menus so you're buying only the items you'll need for holiday meals and gatherings.
- Take inventory of the ingredients you already have on your pantry shelf.
- Check store flyers to see if any items you need are on sale. Use coupons.
- Create a shopping list and strictly follow it. No matter how tempting, buying extra items that are on display can put you over budget in no time.
- Shop at multiple stores to get the lowest prices.
- Score free food. Stores often have promotions around the holidays offering a free item when you spend a certain amount within a specified time frame.
- Think outside the supermarket. Drugstore chains sometimes have great deals on staples, such as baking supplies, mixes, and beverages.

## Preparing Financially for Winter

A severe snowstorm can increase vehicle accidents and cause property damage, hypothermia, heart attacks and carbon monoxide poisoning. They can create power outages that last for weeks. The following tips and the federal government website [www.ready.gov/winter-weather](http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather) can help you prepare and survive severe winter weather.



### Prepare

Caulk leaky windows and weather-strip your exterior doors. Consider buying a gas generator, but make sure to keep it outside your home to vent. Make sure your storm drains are clear of debris so water can flow off your roof properly during a warm-up, and clear your walkways to prevent serious falls. Check that you have the right amount of property and liability insurance, and consider disability income insurance.

### Survive

Make sure smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are working, and clear your heating system's outdoor vents to let the poisonous gas escape. If you live in a heavy snow area, keep a roof shovel to prevent collapses. Carry an emergency survival kit in your vehicle.

## Think About Charitable Giving at Year's End

Supporting a cause or charitable organization that's important to you may be high on your year-end to-do list. Before the ball drops and you bring out the hats and noisemakers, take time to identify charities that you want to receive your donations.

### Choosing a Charity

Whether you want to support multiple organizations or causes or only one, your first step should be to visit the charity's website. Form 990, which tax-exempt organizations are required to file annually with the IRS, offers an overview of the organization's activities and governance and provides detailed financial information. It gives you a helpful snapshot of the charity's mission and finances.

### An Unbiased View

Sites such as Charity Navigator and GuideStar can help you evaluate a charity by showing you how much of your contribution is used to fund actual programs and how much goes toward administrative costs. Low administrative costs mean more money is available for the charity's mission. This information can be helpful when you're

deciding between charities that support similar causes.

### IRA Contributions

If you're age 70½ or older, you can donate to a charity by taking a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) of up to \$108,000 from your traditional individual retirement account. You won't pay tax on the distribution as long as it goes directly from your IRA to the charity. IRA owners who are age 72 or older can use the QCD to fulfill their RMD requirement. Typically, a QCD is not included in adjusted gross income. However, other rules may apply. Donations charged to a credit card before midnight on December 31 will qualify for the tax deduction, even though you won't pay the bill until next year. Consult your tax and financial professionals for guidance with year-end charitable giving.







## ADVERTISING REGULATION DEPARTMENT REVIEW LETTER

June 27, 2025

Reference: **FR2025-0617-0135/E**

Org Id: 23568

1. Loose Change Nov - Dec 2025  
Rule: FIN 2210  
5 Pages

Our review is based on your representation that the final version of this communication will prominently disclose the name of the member, pursuant to FINRA Rule 2210(d)(3)(A).

The communication submitted appears consistent with applicable standards.

Reviewed by,

Jeffrey R. Salisbury  
Principal Analyst

**Reminder:** The fee charged for Regular filings submitted to the Advertising Regulation Department on January 1, 2025 and after, will increase from \$125 to \$300 (for the first 10 pages/minutes). The fee of \$10 per additional page/minute has not changed. The filing fee for expedited filings will remain at \$600 (for the first 10 pages/minutes) and \$50 per additional page/minute. Please see <https://www.finra.org/media-center/blog/funding-finras-mission-111224> for more information.

*Please send any communications related to filing reviews to this Department through the Advertising Regulation Electronic Filing (AREF) system or by facsimile or hard copy mail service. We request that you do not send documents or other communications via email.*

**NOTE:** *We assume that your filed communication doesn't omit or misstate any fact, nor does it offer an opinion without reasonable basis. While you may say that the communication was "reviewed by FINRA" or "FINRA reviewed," you may not say that we approved it.*