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## Lobby Not Open, yet, but We are Still Here for You

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Most of our loans can be applied for online and, in most cases, approved the same day along with great service. We have some AMAZING rates that can't be beat. Do you ever think, "Umm, I don't think I would be able to get a loan for (fill in the blank)." Well, reach out and ask.... we are different than the big banks. We understand the Union Trades and how you could work for different businesses. That is why we don't ask how long you've been at your current employer, but how long have you been in the trade. That can make a big difference.

Do you have one of our VISA credit cards? No, well you should look to get one! We have no annual fees on our Classic or Platinum cards. Also, both cards earn a point for every dollar spent and that means you get to go shopping with your points in our dreampoints shopping mall.... how fun would that be?! Also, with so many people shopping online these days, you are better protected shopping with our VISA credit card. Sounds, like you should get one today.

We've been working hard to enhance your online experience. Contact us to get the form to sign up for the much-awaited Account to Account transfer. It works with online banking and the app. Many of you have been asking for it and now you can have it. We also have a way to private message you within the app and online banking under the Contact Us, check it out today. It is also a good time to sign up for our e-statements. You can view them online or in the app AND you will stop paying \$2 a month for a paper statement. Give us a call and well help you get this set up, you'll be glad you did.

Are you looking for some different investment opportunities with some of your money that is on deposit? Contact us and we can connect you with our financial advisor Bill Terry. He can set up a conference call to talk about your needs and options that will work for you.

## Holiday Closures

Independence Day (observed) July 3

Labor Day September 7

Columbus Day October 12

## U.S. Savings Bond Basics

### Breaking down one of America's most popular investment methods

Originally started as a way to raise money for the U.S. government during the Great Depression, savings bonds have been a popular form of investment ever since. Whether you're confused about what to do with the ones your grandparents got you decades ago or want to buy a few of your own, they're thankfully pretty simple to understand if you know where to start.

#### How bonds work

At the simplest level, savings bonds represent a direct contract between you and the government. You pay the U.S. Treasury any amount between \$25 and \$10,000, and they issue you a bond. It will slowly mature over a fixed period until it is worth the amount that you paid for it, plus any interest accrued over the years.

If your bond hits its full value before 30 years from its issue date, you can continue to gain interest until it hits that 30-year mark. According to James Chen, Director of Trading and Investing for Investopedia, the way you receive that interest varies depending on the type of bond you hold. Regardless, you can't use any of that money until you cash in your bond.

#### Series EE savings bonds

Series EE bonds are probably the most straightforward type of savings bond. They operate on a fixed rate of interest, meaning they will steadily gain value by the same annual amount until their maturity date. Up until 2012, Series EE bonds were sold for half of their face value and would reach their full value at the maturity date, doubling your investment.

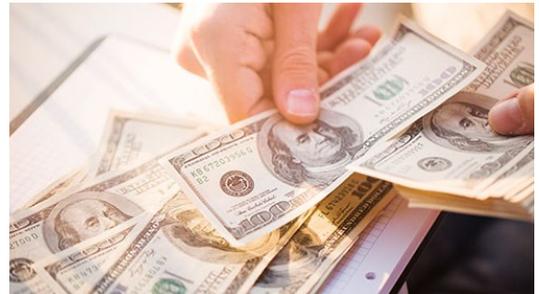
Today's EE bonds are sold at face value and are calculated to reach twice that within 20 years. If your bond doesn't hit that mark for some reason, financial author and writer for The Balance, Joshua Kennon, says that the U.S. Treasury will "make a one-time adjustment to make up the difference." You can then choose to cash it in or allow it to accrue compounded interest until it reaches 30 years old.

#### Series I savings bonds

The biggest difference between Series EE and Series I bonds is the way that they pay interest. As opposed to EE bonds' lifelong fixed rate, I bonds gain value in two ways: a slightly lower fixed rate and a variable rate calculated based on changes in market inflation.

Because the amount of interest your I bond earns over its life is dependent on the market, they are considered to be a slightly riskier bet than their EE counterparts. According to Kennon, if the market goes through a period of inflation, your interest rate will increase, and you'll earn money faster. Meanwhile, you run the risk of your bond's value-gain slowing down dramatically if the economy begins to deflate. As a safety net, the government guarantees that the interest rates on I bonds cannot drop below zero percent, meaning that, unlike other forms of investment, there's no way for you to lose money on the deal.

While U.S. savings bonds may not make you as much money as betting big in the stock market, they are a stress-free, safe way to grow and diversify your portfolio. To learn more about whether bonds are right for you, reach out to your trusted financial advisor.



## Elder Financial Abuse Scams to Look Out For

### How to recognize and prevent fraud against seniors

Financial scams against the elderly are on the rise — and getting more sophisticated. Whether you're looking to protect yourself or others, it's important to stay informed about the methods that scammers use to swindle people out of their money.

#### Romance scams

Romance scams are one of the most common ways for fraudsters to target elderly people, according to a recent analysis by the U.S. Financial Crimes Enforcement Network. Romance scammers make a fake social media or dating site profile to build trust with their unsuspecting (and perhaps lonely) victims. Then, they strike by requesting money for a made-up emergency or travel expense. The Federal Trade Commission notes that these scammers typically ask their victims to wire money or send it via gift card because these types of transactions are difficult to trace or reverse.

#### Person-in-need scams

Per FinCEN, person-in-need scams are a widespread method for defrauding seniors. For this scam, someone will call or send a message to the target, pose as his or her relative (usually a grandchild) and pretend to need money for a personal emergency or a sudden financial issue. The National Council on Aging points out that the scammer will usually request payment via wire service and ask the senior not to tell anyone else about the fake emergency. This scam is especially effective because it plays on the victim's natural desire to help a loved one facing an urgent crisis.

#### Prize or lottery scams

Many seniors are parted from their money via prize or lottery scams, according to FinCEN. In these scams, targets are informed that they have won a lottery or sweepstakes. They might even receive a fraudulent check in the mail. The catch: in order to redeem the prize, the "winner" needs to send in some sort of fee or tax. By the time he or she realizes the prize is fake, the scammer has already grabbed the fees and vanished.

#### Other scams

The NCOA lists a variety of other scams frequently aimed at the elderly. Medicare and health insurance scams collect a person's personal information and use it for fraudulent medical billing. Counterfeit prescription drug scams peddle fake or even dangerous products online. Telemarketing scams use an array of strategies to cheat seniors through misleading sales calls. Internet scams trick victims into downloading a virus or steal their personal information via email "phishing." Some scams feature phony investment opportunities or even con the victim into borrowing against his or her home equity.

#### Tips for preventing scams

If you're part of the senior demographic, it's important to stay on your guard against these scams. The NCOA recommends signing up for the Do Not Call list, carefully researching all unsolicited offers and reaching out to trusted friends or relatives if you need assistance. You should also avoid giving out personal information (like credit card, Medicare or Social Security numbers) over the phone unless it's a call you initiated yourself.

If you're looking to protect the seniors in your life from scams, Consumer Reports suggests several ways to help. Calling or visiting regularly will allow you to keep tabs on their safety. You can also take steps to stop or limit unsolicited mail and phone calls. You may even be able to arrange protection or oversight for important financial accounts.

Financial scams represent a significant threat for seniors. However, by taking the proper precautions and cultivating awareness, you can shield yourself or your loved ones from those who seek to victimize them.



## 6 Intriguing Books About Travel

### Captivating true-life treks for armchair travelers

Whether you're dedicated to armchair travel or fantasizing about an epic trip of your own, these books about real-life journeys will spark your imagination and satisfy your craving for adventure.

#### **"Nomadland" by Jessica Bruder**

In "Nomadland," author Jessica Bruder provides an insightful and in-depth look at the increasingly large subculture of Americans who live in their own vehicles as they travel across the country and work at temporary jobs. Bruder committed to extensive and immersive reporting for this book, taking on tough warehouse and field jobs and living in a van of her own while profiling the often difficult and dangerous lives of America's modern-day nomads.

#### **"A Walk in the Woods" by Bill Bryson**

This uproariously funny travel classic chronicles the misadventures of writer Bill Bryson and his hapless pal Katz as they attempt a long-distance hiking trip on the Appalachian Trail. You're sure to learn a lot while you're laughing, because Bryson seamlessly blends his hilarious first-person narrative with fascinating background on the ecology, history and cultural significance of this iconic 2,000-mile path.

#### **"The Lost City of Z" by David Grann**

"The Lost City of Z" tells the true story of the intrepid British explorer Percy Fawcett, who entered the Amazon rainforest in search of a legendary ancient city — and was never seen again. David Grann's nonfiction narrative reads like a pageturning thriller, and the stakes get even higher when the author decides to follow in Fawcett's footsteps with a jungle journey of his own.

#### **"Confederates in the Attic" by Tony Horwitz**

The American Civil War ended in 1865, but its consequences live on in many ways. In "Confederates in the Attic," writer Tony Horwitz takes a fascinating trek across 10 Southern states to explore how this bitter conflict still resonates. Along the way, the war's endless legacy comes to life as the author meets colorful battle reenactors, chats with obsessive eccentrics and witnesses how racism intertwines with the myths of the South's Lost Cause.

#### **"Hidden America" by Jeanne Marie Laskas**

In this riveting and thought-provoking book, reporter Jeanne Marie Laskas goes behind the scenes to learn about the working-class Americans whose dedicated labor forms the country's backbone. As part of her travels around the country, Laskas explores coal mines and migrant labor camps, rides with a long-haul trucker, spends time on an oil rig and interviews landfill workers — all the while amplifying the voices and experiences of workers whose efforts are too often overlooked and undervalued.

#### **"The Stowaway" by Laurie Gwen Shapiro**

In 1928, the famed explorer Richard Byrd set out on an expedition to Antarctica, where he planned to be the first person to fly a plane across the continent. A daring New York teenager sneaked aboard Byrd's ship — and proceeded to experience the adventure of a lifetime. Laurie Gwen Shapiro's book brings this story to life in exciting detail while vividly portraying the turbulent years when the Roaring '20s gave way to the Great Depression.

Even if you aren't able to head out on a trip of your own, you'll immediately be transported far away from your everyday routine when you begin reading one of these intriguing travel tales.



## Creative Ways to Get Kids to Clean

### Infuse creativity into your kids' cleaning chores

Cleaning chores aren't fun for anyone, especially kids. If you want your kids to complete their cleaning to-do list without complaining, implement the creative tips below into their routines.

#### Let the music play

Music is a wonderful motivator. Whether your kids whistle why they work, blare their favorite pop songs or sing along to their favorite movie soundtracks, they'll dance their way through their chore list. SheKnows.com writer Abbi Perets suggests creating a music list specific to cleaning time and setting the volume on high or allowing your kids to listen to their music device while they do their chores. If your kids are spending more time dancing than cleaning, though, switch the music into a break-time reward. After a certain amount of applying elbow grease, the kids can earn a 10-minute dance party before returning to their chores. Or, set the dance party for when all chores are done.

#### Set realistic expectations

Cleaning is a learned skill, and it will take time for your kids to master the art. To help them become efficient and lifelong cleaners, make sure the chores fit their ages and abilities. Just because toddlers aren't ready to vacuum or do laundry, they can still help out, according to The Spruce writer Apryl Duncan. "Toddlers can dust their rooms with socks on their hands. Preschoolers can begin to learn how to make their beds. Your kids can get a lot of cleaning done in only 20 minutes. Just be patient with them and make sure you're assigning tasks they can actually complete," Duncan advises.

#### Provide step-by-step instructions

Sometimes your kids balk at cleaning because they don't know where to start. They may feel overwhelmed at the order to "clean their rooms," and instead of asking for help, they whine, lash out or pout. You can avoid the tantrums by creating a step-by-step checklist of their cleaning chores, writes Duncan. If your kids can't read yet, use pictures and arrows to represent what they need to do. When they check off all the boxes, they can hang up their cleaning hat for the day.

#### Assign chores according to likeability

It's a universal fact — kids will complain less about the chores they hate the least. Be sure to include chores they like to do on their to-do list. If your middle-schooler enjoys vacuuming and your teen doesn't mind washing the dishes, assign the chores to the appropriate kid. Perets also recommends offering instruction on the proper way to complete the chore along with encouragement.

#### Reward efforts

Bribery may be an ugly word as well as an illegal activity, but it's an effective motivator for getting your kids to clean. Duncan calls it offering an incentive, but there's no need to raid the candy stash or your wallet. "If you've got a family movie night planned, have everyone pitch in to do their share of cleaning. The incentive is the movie," she notes.

A clean house is possible as long as everyone lends a hand. Assign chores to your kids that they like and are able to handle and try to make the process as stress-free as possible. Before you know it, your home will be clutter-free and clean.



