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What's this Charge on My Account?

Is this really a fraudulent transaction? Maybe or maybe not. If you see a charge you don't recognize, you should call the credit union to see what to do. When you call, we will ask you a series of questions to help us decide the best course of action. If it is fraudulent, you will need to fill out a dispute form and file a police report. If it isn't, we will guide you, as the scenarios do below. Some of the questions we may ask:

- Has a charge posted to your account or do you only see the funds being held for a pending transaction? **Charge posted** – continue reading. **Funds pending** – to start a fraud process the charge needs to be posted on your account.
- Have you Lost your card or Loaned your card out to a family member or friend? – **Loaned out** – **ask** the person who you loaned it to about the unfamiliar charge(s). **Lost** – call credit union 503.253.8193. After hours? Lost VISA Credit Card call 800.528.2273
Lost Debit Card call 800.682.6075. You can also manage your cards on our mobile app.
- Have any charges on your account cleared from this merchant before? (Examples- pay shipping only trial and now you are getting charged? This is a merchant dispute – reach out to merchant/vendor to start the dispute process.
- Have charges cleared your account, for a dollar amount you do recognize, but you **do not** recognize the merchant? Did you know some merchants/vendors have different business names? (Example – **FRED MEYERS = KROGERS**)
- Have charges cleared your account that you do not recognize, but you have an affiliation with the merchant? Did you know that you are charged when your shipment has shipped? Your transaction could have many shipment days. – (Example, I ordered from Amazon and I purchase TWO items. One item ship that day, and another the next day. You will see TWO different charges on your account.)
- Did you make an online purchase and received a different item? – contact the merchant to start dispute process.

If you are still unsure if you really have fraud. Please give us a call! 503.253.8193 option 5 or visit ibewuwfcu.com.

Holiday Closures 2021

Washington's Birthday	February 15
Memorial Day	May 31
Independence Day (Observed)	July 5

Click here for all the holidays in 2021.

How to Plan Your Retirement Using Age Banding

Following this simple model can save you money during retirement

Even if you're nowhere near retirement age, chances are you've been — or have recently begun — preparing for the eventuality of leaving a working lifestyle behind. A lot goes into retirement planning, and knowing where to start or how to make sure everything goes as planned can be daunting. That's where the concept of "age banding" comes into play. This easy-to-understand model can help you plan ahead for your retirement, and ensure that you have plenty of money when you need it most. Whether you're looking to start preparing for retirement or have already begun that exciting new stage, consider this your guide to how age banding can help you prepare smarter.

Understanding age banding

Before you can fully understand how age banding benefits you, it's important to first know what exactly this model is and what it means. Financial planner Ben Harvey, writing for Investopedia, defines age banding as the idea that annual spending levels will vary throughout a person's retirement years. In other words, the amount a retiree might be spending at 65 will differ from what they spend at 75, 85, and so on. Many financial advisors warn people planning for retirement that a "replacement ratio" may be needed to ensure that you have more money later into retirement, and the age banding model is an extension of this idea.

The model divides a person's retirement into three distinct stages based on relative age and spending. The first stage is commonly referred to as the "go-go years," during which time retirees are often healthy, active, and spending more funds on things like traveling than they are on health care. After that comes the second stage, called the "slow-go years," and sees the retiree slowing down with recreational activities as they age. During this stage, the amount of money being spent on fun things and on health care tend to even out a bit more.

The final stage is called the "no-go years," and sees the balance fully tip in favor of health care spending. When this data is put into a graph, the result is a curve in which spending goes up in stage one, falls in stage two, and rises again in stage three.

How this model can help you

With the age banding model now defined, the next big question to answer is how it can help you prepare for retirement. While age banding will affect everyone's retirement spending projections a bit differently, there's plenty you can do using this model to make your planning go smoother. First, understand the amount of money you're are likely to spend in each stage. This may be hard to predict exactly, but having an understanding of the averages is a great help in understanding what your future may hold. There are many expenditures to keep in mind, including leisure activities, possible emergencies, and taxes. Wade Pfau at Forbes suggests that, thanks to a 3-percent tax inflation rate, "at age 65, the lifestyle adjustment factor for taxes is an assumed drop to 50% of their pre-retirement level." By taking these expenditures into account early on, you'll be better prepared for how each stage effects your life and finances.

It's also important to monitor these expenses during your retirement years, and not just before. Financial writer and planner Michael Kitces suggests on his website that keeping track of spending during each retirement stage as its happening is a great way to combat spending decreases and changing inflation rates. He also recommends projecting your needs based on a gradual decline in spending, allowing you to better prepare for possible unforeseen shifts.

Now that you understand age banding and how it can help you plan smarter for your retirement, you're better equipped to prepare for entering the next, exciting stage of your life, no matter how far away it might be.



How to Save Money on Your Grocery Bill

Six simple tips to cut your food costs

We all need to eat, but buying food can be a major expense — especially if you have a large family to take care of. However, if you're willing to put in a little effort, there are plenty of ways to save money on your grocery bills and take a bit of stress away from your financial situation.

Set up a meal plan

Walking into a grocery store or market with no clear idea of what you should buy is a recipe for overspending. So, rather than aimlessly wandering the aisles until something catches your eye, sit down and plan out your meals for the week. Then, take a look at the ingredients you already have so you don't waste anything or buy products you don't need. Not only will building a weekly meal plan help you avoid potentially costly impulse purchases, it can go a long way towards helping you cook healthy, nourishing meals for your family.

Keep an eye out for sales

One of the easiest ways to cut a sizable chunk out of your weekly food costs is to see what's your store of choice has discounted. Thankfully, many of the major supermarket chains advertise current sales through their websites or smartphone applications, so it's remarkably simple to plan your purchases out before you set foot in the store. Searching for deals on products nearing their sell-by dates can also help you save on potentially expensive items like fresh meat.

Opt for store brands when possible

Most grocery stores have their own labels for products like cereal, medicine, deli meat, and more. Generally speaking, these items cost considerably less than their name brand counterparts, and the difference in quality is negligible. Clark.com's Theo Thimou suggests that "buying the store brand will typically save you up to 30% without clipping coupons." If you end up satisfied, you can maintain those savings with every repeat purchase.

Learn to love leftovers

If you routinely prepare meals for your family, odds are you close out the week with a fridge full of unfinished food. Rather than leaving it all to spoil and then condemning it to the trash can or garbage disposal, factor one big leftover dinner into your plan. It may be an eclectic spread, but it will reduce waste and slice the number of full meals you have to pay for by at least four every month.

Stock up on staples

There are tons of foodstuffs like rice and pasta that you can store without refrigeration for months on end. Business Insider's Gina Zakaria recommends waiting for these items to go on sale, then picking up enough of each to carry you to the next time they receive a discount. In some cases, you may be able to save even more money by buying these products in bulk.

Grow your own ingredients

Fresh produce is a welcome addition to any meal, but it can get expensive very quickly. Instead, consider planting a small garden in the back yard where you can grow seasonal fruits and vegetables for a fraction of the price. If you're working with limited space, you can still grow delicious ingredients like basil, rosemary, and chives in a pot on your window sill. Jennifer Beeler, a writer for Southern Living, says, "a pack of herbs from the grocery store can cost anywhere from \$3 to \$6 and you can use the pack for one, maybe two meals. Potted herbs, on the other hand, cost from \$2.50 to \$4 and they last for about eight months."

Armed with these simple ideas, you'll be able to cut monthly food costs while still enjoying high-quality, delicious meals.



At-Home Date Night Dinner Ideas

Three themes for at-home date nights

If hitting the town for date night does not fit into your budget, align with your schedule, or work with your child-rearing responsibilities, the following ideas will help you create an unforgettable date night at home. All you need is some creativity, great food, and an open heart to transform your home into a movie theatre, dance hall, or trip abroad.

Movie night

You won't need to fight any crowds or long lines or put up with any loud talkers or screaming children with a movie night at home. Whether you choose a comedy, romance, or drama to watch, you'll have the best seat in the house. Plus, concessions are much more affordable when you make them yourself. Variety is the theme of this movie night and features plenty of sweet, savory, and hearty snacks.

Lisa Appleton, writer at Kitchn.com, recommends a cheese board as an appetizer. "In addition to a few types of cheese, I always include crackers or bread, fresh and/or dried fruit, and jelly. If the rest of your appetizers aren't protein-heavy, it's also a great place to set out some cured meats," Appleton advises.

Appleton also says you cannot go wrong with bacon-wrapped potato bites, mixed nuts, flatbread, or your favorite sandwiches. If you prefer a hands-off approach to your dinner, ordering pizza is always a tasty option. When it comes to popcorn, Appleton suggests thinking outside the butter box. "Make your own popcorn bar with spices, herbs, cheese, and more. I like to include crushed-up cookies and candies on the popcorn bar as well, so you have the balance of salty and sweet in every bite," Appleton adds.

Once you set the menu and are ready to hit play, be sure to grab a comfortable spot on the couch and a soft blanket for snuggling up. Turn of the lights and turn the volume up so your feel like you are at the movies.

Dinner and dancing

Who says you have to go to a club to get your groove on? You can transform your living room into your own private dance hall. Push furniture out of the way and crank up your favorite tunes. Mix up the tempo to test out your favorite dance moves or hold each other close as you dance cheek to cheek to a lovely ballad. Once you've danced up an appetite, it's time for substance and perhaps a glass of wine or two. Since dancing is a cardiovascular activity, you need as much energy as possible. That means decadent carbohydrates and a burst of veggie goodness courtesy of Good Housekeeping Test Kitchen's recipe for creamy broccolini pasta with chile breadcrumbs.

City of love and lights

Paris, France, boasts many monikers including the City of Love and the City of Lights. Renowned for its beauty, the city provides the perfect inspiration for a romantic night in. You'll need to set the mood with candlelight, soft music playing in the background, and a table set for two. Since you're bringing Paris to your neck of the woods, you'll need a French-inspired dish like white wine Coq Au Vin from Erika Dugan and Kate Merker at Country Living. If you prefer a less time-consuming entrée, try their recipe for Herbes de Provence shrimp with basil and pea couscous.

Use these at-home date night ideas to inspire a wonderful evening between you and your loved one.



4 Tips for Getting Started With Yoga

Set yourself up for yoga success

A regular yoga practice can improve your fitness, flexibility, and mindset. If you want to start a new yoga routine, consider these tips to get you off on the right foot.

Get the right equipment

Yoga can be a cheap form of exercise and doesn't require a lot of equipment. At the very least, you will need a good quality mat. Yoga mats are widely available for purchase from online merchants or even some larger chain grocery stores. If you lack flexibility, consider investing in some foam blocks and a strap that will help aid your stretches and make them more effective. Gentler yoga practices such as prenatal may have you use a bolster and blanket for support and comfort, but most basic yoga sessions don't require these extras.

Choose online or in-person

If you are starting from scratch with your yoga practice, consider attending in-person classes so you can get hands-on instruction from a certified yoga teacher. A teacher will be able to help correct your posture in various positions so you know you're doing them correctly. If you're not comfortable attending an in-person yoga session, there are plenty of yoga videos online to choose from. Free YouTube yoga workouts are great if your schedule is unpredictable as you can stream them anywhere, anytime. For a true yoga class feeling, consider signing up for virtual classes through a local studio. An added benefit to a virtual class is that you can get to know the instructor and ask questions as you settle into your new yoga routine.



Try different yoga styles

Brand-new yogis may be overwhelmed by the number of yoga styles out there. Research them all and decide which one sounds best for your fitness level. You can also try out several different style classes and decide which you like best.

According to Medium, hatha yoga is a good choice for beginners because it introduces poses and stretches slowly. As you become more comfortable with the basic yoga poses, consider vinyasa, which is more fast-paced than hatha and can introduce an element of cardio to your practice. Hot yoga has gained popularity in recent years, but it's almost impossible to practice at home as it requires the room to be heated to around 105 degrees Fahrenheit, according to Mayo Clinic, so it's best to try hot yoga in a specialized studio.

Establish a routine

One of the hardest things about starting a new form of exercise is figuring out a routine that works for you. If you're an early riser, try starting your day with a yoga practice as soon as you get out of bed. You might find that a lunchtime or evening workout is better for you. Whatever time of day you choose to practice yoga, schedule it into your day as you would an appointment and commit to it.

Whenever you start something new, it can take a while to get into the routine. But if you stick with it, you may find that your new yoga practice becomes an important part of your daily life.

