



**MANNING & COMPANY**  
Independent Financial Advisers

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## OVERCOMING INVESTMENT-PHOBIA

During spooky season, the fear of investing can feel just as daunting as the unknown—yet those who take the leap can build long-term financial security.

### Balancing Finances in a Blended Family

Managing finances in a blended family can present unique challenges.

### The Self-Employed Financial Playbook

Strategies to help the self-employed navigate their personal finances.

### Aligning Values with Financial Goals

Responsible investment has never been more important.

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# WORKING WITH MANNING & COMPANY

For over 30 years Manning and Company has been giving clients trustworthy, proven and personal financial advice.

Based in Ivybridge near Plymouth, we're a respected and well-established name in Plymouth and South Devon – but we also work with clients throughout the UK.

We provide financial guidance to individuals and businesses alike. We're completely independent of any financial institutions, and we offer financial products from across the whole of the market – so our clients always get fully-informed, impartial advice. We firmly believe good financial advice should be available to everyone, not just wealthy clients – and all our clients receive the same level of attention and respect.

From a first-time mortgage to a complex investment portfolio, we have the breadth and depth of experience to help.

*- Manning & Company*

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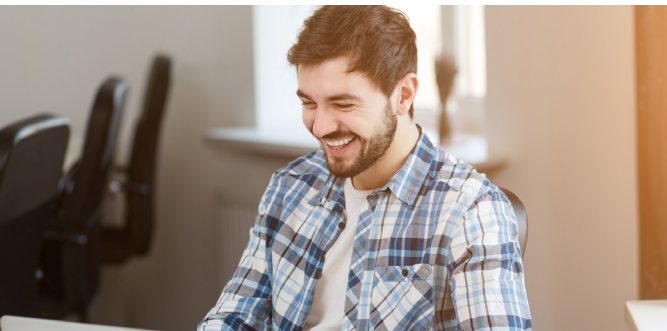
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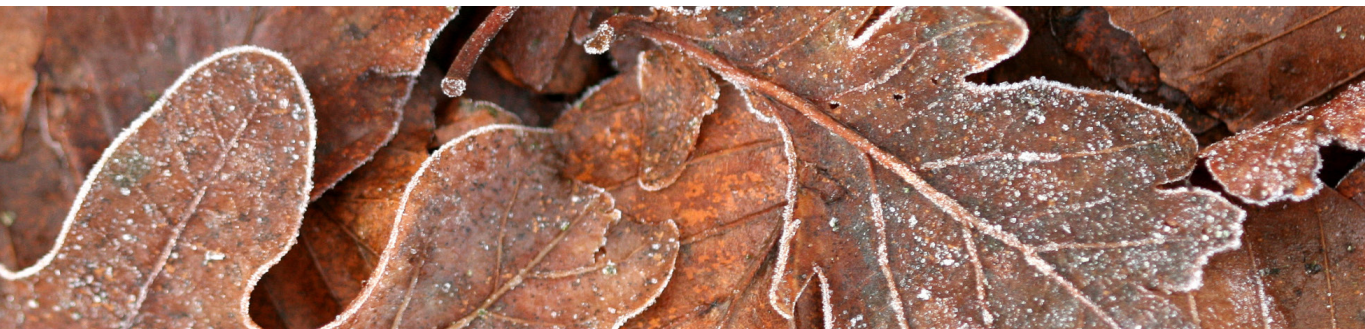
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# OVERCOMING INVESTMENT-PHOBIA

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As we are in the midst of “spooky season,” it’s not only the time of year that can feel daunting. When it comes to the fear of investing, the unknown often plays a role, along with the difficult decision to put money aside and lock it away for the future. Sacrificing access to your hard-earned cash in the present can feel uncomfortable, especially when immediate expenses or desires come into play. However, while it may seem easier to leave your money in a savings account or spend it now, those who take the leap into investing can reap long-term rewards and build financial security.

If you’ve never invested before, now might be the time to face both the practical and emotional challenges head-on. By understanding the value of investing, taking small steps, and keeping the bigger picture in mind, you can begin your investment journey with confidence.

## **UNDERSTAND WHY INVESTING IS IMPORTANT**

While it may be tempting to keep your money in savings or spend it as you earn it, investing offers an opportunity to grow your wealth over time. The money

you save in a standard account will barely keep pace with inflation, meaning its real value could diminish over time. Meanwhile, putting money to work in the stock market or other investments can help it grow at a much faster rate, even if you start small.

It can be tough to make the decision to put your money away for the long term, especially when you’re used to thinking about immediate financial goals. But the earlier you invest, the more time your money has to grow. And by focusing on long-term growth, you’re giving yourself

a better chance of achieving major life goals, like buying a house, funding your children’s education, or retiring comfortably.

## **START SMALL AND BUILD CONFIDENCE**

Another major barrier to investing is the feeling that you need a large sum of money to get started. The reality is, you don’t need to invest huge amounts to see results—starting small is perfectly fine, and it can be a good way to dip your toes into the investment world without feeling too exposed.

By contributing modest amounts regularly—perhaps monthly—you can take advantage of pound-cost averaging, which can help you build wealth gradually while spreading risk. This approach makes investing feel more manageable, and it ensures that you aren't sacrificing too much of your immediate financial flexibility while still putting something away for the future.

### **MAKE THE TOUGH CHOICE: PRIORITISE LONG-TERM GAINS OVER SHORT-TERM WANTS**

A significant reason many people avoid investing is that it requires making tough decisions about their money. When you invest, you're effectively committing to parting with your cash for the long haul. This can feel uncomfortable—especially when you think about what you could spend that money on today. But this is where focusing on the bigger picture becomes essential.

Investing forces you to think beyond the immediate, whether it's a night out, a holiday, or a new gadget. By prioritising your long-term financial goals over short-term desires, you're setting yourself up for greater security in the future. Once you understand the power of compounding returns, the trade-off starts to feel more like an investment in your future self rather than a sacrifice.

### **ACCEPT THAT SOME RISK IS INEVITABLE**

Another common fear around investing is the risk involved—no one wants to lose money. However, risk is a natural part of investing, and it's essential to accept that there will be ups and downs.

The key is to manage risk wisely. Diversifying your investments—spreading them across different asset types—can protect you from the worst of market fluctuations. Moreover, by keeping a long-term view and staying patient, you give your investments time to recover from temporary dips. It's not about avoiding risk altogether; it's about managing it in a way that supports your long-term financial goals.

### **DEVELOP A LONG-TERM MINDSET**

Investing is a journey, not a sprint. One of the most important things to remember is that markets will rise and fall, but

staying the course often pays off in the long run. It's easy to get spooked by market volatility, especially if you're just starting out. However, those who remain focused on their long-term goals tend to see the most significant rewards.

Avoid the temptation to check your investments daily or make impulsive decisions based on short-term market changes. Keep your eyes on the bigger picture and trust the process—over time, you'll likely see your investments grow and contribute meaningfully to your financial future.

### **WORKING WITH A FINANCIAL ADVISER**

If the idea of investing still feels overwhelming, or if you're unsure where to start, speak with a financial adviser. We're here to help you design a strategy that matches your personal financial goals and risk tolerance. We can also provide reassurance and guidance through the inevitable ups and downs, helping you stay focused on your long-term success.

### **CONQUERING YOUR INVESTING FEARS FOR LONG-TERM SUCCESS**

Facing your investing fears is not about eliminating risk or uncertainty—it's about managing them effectively. By educating yourself, adopting a long-term perspective, diversifying your portfolio, and seeking professional guidance when needed, you can gain confidence in your investment decisions and turn your anxiety into a sense of control.

With time, patience, and the right approach, you'll not only overcome your fears, but also build a strong foundation for financial success that will benefit you for years to come. Whether you're making the tough decision to prioritise long-term gains over short-term spending or learning to navigate market volatility, the rewards of investing can be significant. And the sooner you start, the sooner you'll begin to see your financial goals come into reach.

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# BALANCING FINANCES IN A BLENDED FAMILY

With an estimated 1 in 3 families in the UK now classified as blended families, the blending of parents, stepparents, and children from previous relationships is becoming increasingly common in today's society. [1] While the joy of creating a new family unit is immense, managing finances in a blended family can present unique challenges. Effective financial planning is crucial to ensure that everyone's needs are met and financial harmony is maintained. Here are some key considerations for navigating finances in a blended family:

## 1. OPEN COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Effective communication is essential in any family, but it is particularly vital in blended families, where different financial backgrounds and expectations can lead to misunderstandings. Set aside time to discuss your financial situation openly, addressing any concerns or misconceptions. This includes discussing debts, assets, income levels, and financial goals.

Encourage all family members to share their perspectives, especially if children are old enough to understand family finances. By fostering a culture of openness, you can work together to find solutions that benefit everyone.

## 2. ESTABLISH A JOINT BUDGET

Creating a joint budget is an important step in managing finances as a blended family. This involves consolidating incomes, tracking expenses, and establishing shared financial goals.

When creating your budget consider:

- **Income Sources:** Combine all household incomes, including salaries, child support, or alimony payments.
- **Shared Expenses:** Identify which expenses will be shared, such as housing, utilities, groceries, and extracurricular activities for the children.
- **Individual Expenses:** Discuss how you will handle individual expenses and savings for personal goals or interests.

By creating a transparent budget, you can avoid misunderstandings and ensure that everyone contributes fairly to the household expenses.

## 3. FINANCIAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Assigning financial roles and responsibilities can help create a sense of accountability within the family. Decide who will handle specific financial tasks, such as:

- **Bill Payments:** Who will ensure that household bills are paid on time?
- **Savings and Investments:** Who will manage savings accounts or investments?
- **Grocery Shopping:** Who will handle the shopping and meal planning?

These roles should be based on each person's strengths and preferences. This approach helps streamline financial management and reduces the likelihood of conflicts over money matters.

## 4. SAVING FOR THE FUTURE

In a blended family, it's essential to prioritise saving for both short-term and long-term goals. These may include:

- **Emergency Fund:** An emergency fund provides a financial cushion for unexpected expenses, such as medical bills or home repairs. Aim to save three to six months' worth of living expenses to ensure that your family is prepared for any surprises.
- **Family Breaks:** If you plan on taking family holidays or outings, set aside money in advance to avoid financial strain during those trips.
- **Children's Education:** Consider saving for your child's education. It can be done through savings accounts or investment vehicles.



By actively saving for future expenses, you create financial security and opportunities for all family members.

### 5. DISCUSSING INHERITANCE AND ASSETS

In blended families, discussions about inheritance and assets can be particularly sensitive. It's crucial to address how assets will be divided among children from different relationships, and to make clear plans for wills and estate planning.

- **Wills and Trusts:** Consider creating or updating wills to reflect your blended family dynamics. Establishing a trust can also help manage how assets are distributed among your children and stepchildren in the event of a parent's death.
- **Open Dialogue:** Discuss inheritance plans with all involved, ensuring transparency about your intentions. This helps mitigate potential conflicts and misunderstandings in the future.

### 6. FINANCIAL EDUCATION FOR ALL FAMILY MEMBERS

Educating all family members about finances is essential, especially if children are involved. Teaching kids

about money management, budgeting, and saving can foster financial responsibility and help them develop good habits for the future.

- **Involve Children in Discussions:** Involve children in budgeting discussions appropriate for their age. This can include deciding on family spending priorities or discussing how to save for specific goals.
- **Encourage Financial Literacy:** Introduce age-appropriate resources, such as books, online courses, or workshops that focus on financial literacy. Encouraging children to manage their own allowance or savings can also be a practical way to teach them about money.

### 7. SEEKING PROFESSIONAL GUIDANCE

Navigating finances in a blended family can be complex, so seeking the assistance of a financial adviser can be invaluable. A financial professional can help you:

- **Create a Comprehensive Financial Plan:** Work with you to develop a tailored financial plan that considers your family's unique situation.
- **Address Legal Matters:** Provide guidance on estate planning, wills,

and trusts to ensure all family members are accounted for in financial decisions.

By seeking expert advice, you can gain confidence in your financial decisions and create a stronger foundation for your blended family.

### BUILDING A FINANCIALLY SECURE BLENDED FAMILY

Navigating finances in a blended family may seem daunting, but with open communication, a clear budget, and shared financial goals, you can build a financially secure and harmonious household. By prioritising saving, discussing inheritance matters, and seeking professional guidance when needed, you can create a strong financial foundation that supports all family members. Embracing these strategies will help you manage the complexities of blended family finances and foster a sense of unity and stability as you move forward on this journey together.

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[1] Stowe Family Law - Blended families and stepparents: A beginners guide





# THE SELF-EMPLOYED FINANCIAL PLAYBOOK

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*Being self-employed offers a world of freedom and flexibility, allowing you to shape your career according to your passions and goals. However, it also comes with its own set of financial challenges. Unlike traditional employees, self-employed individuals must manage their income, expenses, taxes, and savings without the safety net of a regular paycheck. In this article, we'll explore key strategies to help self-employed individuals navigate their personal finances effectively, ensuring financial stability and long-term success.*

## UNDERSTANDING THE SELF-EMPLOYED FINANCIAL LANDSCAPE

Self-employment encompasses a wide range of professions, from freelancers and contractors to entrepreneurs running their own businesses. This diversity means that income can be unpredictable, often fluctuating month to month based on client demand, project completion, and seasonal trends. Understanding these financial dynamics is crucial for managing your finances effectively.

One significant aspect of self-employment is the need to differentiate between personal and business finances. Establishing separate bank accounts for personal and business transactions is vital.

This separation not only simplifies bookkeeping, but also ensures that you have a clear understanding of your personal financial situation, which is essential for budgeting and saving.

## CREATING A FLEXIBLE BUDGET

Creating a budget as a self-employed individual requires a more flexible approach compared to traditional employment. Start by tracking your income and expenses over several months to identify patterns. This data will help you establish an average monthly income, allowing you to allocate funds accordingly.

In your budget, prioritise essential expenses such as housing, utilities, food, and transportation. Next, allocate funds for variable expenses, including business costs, marketing, and unexpected expenses. Remember that some months will be more profitable than others, so consider setting aside a portion of your income during high-earning months to cover leaner periods.

Moreover, a budget should include savings goals. Aim to save at least 15-20% of your income for both personal savings and retirement. Even if you can only set aside a small amount initially, developing a savings habit will pay dividends in the long run.

## PREPARING FOR QUIET MONTHS

An emergency fund is crucial for self-employed individuals to weather unexpected financial challenges. This fund can serve as a financial cushion during lean months or in the event of unexpected expenses.

To build your emergency fund, consider automating your savings. Set up a direct transfer from your business account to your emergency fund each time you receive income.

This way, you prioritise saving as soon as money comes in, making it easier to accumulate funds over time.

## UNDERSTANDING TAX OBLIGATIONS

Taxation can be one of the most complex aspects of being self-employed. Unlike employees whose taxes are automatically deducted from their paychecks, self-employed individuals are responsible for calculating and paying their own taxes.

It's essential to understand your tax obligations and keep accurate records of your income and expenses.

Start by keeping detailed records of all business-related transactions, including invoices, receipts, and bank statements. This documentation will be vital when it comes time to file your taxes. Consider using accounting software or hiring an accountant to help you manage your finances and ensure compliance with tax regulations.

Self-employed individuals may also need to make estimated tax payments throughout the year, based on their expected income. Be proactive in calculating your tax liability to avoid surprises at tax time. Additionally, explore available tax deductions for self-employed individuals, such as home office expenses, business travel, and professional development costs.



## RETIREMENT PLANNING

Planning for retirement can be challenging for self-employed individuals, especially when income fluctuates. However, it's crucial to prioritise retirement savings to ensure financial security in your later years.

Consider establishing a pension scheme or individual retirement account (IRA) that suits your financial situation. Many self-employed individuals benefit from a Self-Invested Personal Pension (SIPP) or a Solo 401(k), allowing for flexible contributions based on earnings. Aim to contribute regularly, even if the amount varies from month to month.

In addition to traditional retirement accounts, explore investment opportunities to grow your wealth over time. Consider diversifying your investments to mitigate risk and enhance your financial portfolio.

## SEEKING PROFESSIONAL GUIDANCE

Navigating the financial complexities of self-employment can be overwhelming, and seeking professional guidance is often a wise decision. A financial adviser can provide valuable insights tailored to your specific circumstances, helping you develop a comprehensive financial plan.

They can assist with tax planning strategies, ensuring you take advantage of deductions while remaining compliant with regulations. Additionally, they can help you set long-term financial goals, evaluate investment opportunities, and create a retirement plan that aligns with your aspirations.

## EMBRACING FINANCIAL STABILITY

While being self-employed presents unique financial challenges, it also offers the opportunity for personal and professional growth. By adopting proactive financial management strategies, you can navigate the complexities of self-employment with confidence.

Establish a flexible budget, build an emergency fund, understand your tax obligations, plan for retirement, and seek professional guidance when needed. By doing so, you'll not only achieve financial stability, but also empower yourself to pursue your passions and dreams as a self-employed individual.

With dedication, careful planning, and a commitment to financial well-being, you can thrive in your self-employment journey and enjoy the rewards that come from your hard work and creativity.

***HM REVENUE AND CUSTOMS PRACTICE, AND THE LAW RELATING TO TAXATION, ARE COMPLEX AND SUBJECT TO INDIVIDUAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND CHANGES WHICH CANNOT BE FORESEEN.***

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# ALIGNING VALUES WITH FINANCIAL GOALS



In a world shaped by diverse challenges and complex political landscapes, the importance of making thoughtful and responsible investment choices has never been more apparent. But what exactly does sustainable investing entail, and how can it fit into your financial strategy? In this article, we'll explore the essence of sustainable investing, its numerous benefits, and how you can seamlessly incorporate it into your investment portfolio.

## WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE INVESTING?

At its core, sustainable investing is about choosing investments that align with your values and contribute positively to society and the environment. It goes beyond traditional investing by considering Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) factors in addition to financial performance. This means looking at a company's environmental impact, its treatment of employees and communities, and its governance practices—essentially, how it operates

beyond just profit. Sustainable investing can take various forms, including:

- **Negative Screening:** Excluding companies involved in harmful activities, such as fossil fuels, tobacco, or weapons manufacturing.
- **Positive Screening:** Actively seeking out companies that excel in sustainability, such as those using renewable energy or prioritising fair labour practices.
- **Impact Investing:** Directing capital toward projects or companies that generate measurable social or environmental benefits alongside a financial return.

## WHY CHOOSE SUSTAINABLE INVESTING?

- **Align Your Investments with Your Values:** Many investors today are looking for ways to make their money matter. Sustainable investing allows you to invest in companies and projects that resonate with your personal

beliefs, whether that's supporting renewable energy, promoting social equality, or funding innovative healthcare solutions. This alignment fosters a sense of purpose, making your investment journey more fulfilling.

- **Potential for Financial Performance:** Contrary to the misconception that sustainable investments sacrifice returns, research has shown that ESG-focused companies often outperform their traditional counterparts. By supporting companies committed to sustainability, you may be positioning yourself for long-term financial success.
- **Risk Mitigation:** Companies that prioritise ESG factors are often better equipped to handle risks associated with regulatory changes, environmental challenges, and reputational damage.



For instance, firms that proactively address climate risks may be more resilient to market shifts and less likely to face costly fines or litigation. This risk awareness can ultimately lead to a more stable investment portfolio.

- **Growing Demand:** As consumer awareness of sustainability increases, companies are feeling pressure to adopt responsible practices. Investing in sustainable businesses positions you at the forefront of this shift, allowing you to take advantage of emerging trends while supporting responsible corporate behaviour.
- **Social Impact:** Beyond financial returns, sustainable investing empowers you to make a difference. Whether it's investing in clean energy initiatives, affordable housing, or education programmes, your investments can contribute to positive change in society. This sense of impact can be deeply rewarding, knowing your money is working towards a better world.

### HOW TO INCORPORATE SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENTS INTO YOUR PORTFOLIO

#### Research and Education

Start by educating yourself about sustainable investing. Familiarise yourself with key terms, strategies, and performance metrics. Resources such as ESG rating agencies or sustainable investing platforms can help you make informed decisions.

#### Assess Your Values

Consider what matters most to you. Are you passionate about environmental issues, social equality, or corporate governance? Identifying your priorities will guide your investment choices and ensure alignment with your values.

#### Explore Sustainable Investments

Look for mutual funds or exchange-traded funds (ETFs) that focus on ESG criteria. Many asset management companies now offer funds specifically tailored to sustainable investing. Additionally, consider investing directly in companies known for their responsible practices.

#### Work with a Financial Adviser

A financial adviser experienced in sustainable investing can provide valuable insights and help you navigate your options. They can assist in developing a customised investment strategy that balances your financial goals with your commitment to sustainability.

#### Monitor and Adjust

Sustainable investing is an ongoing process. Regularly review your portfolio to ensure it aligns with your evolving values and financial objectives. Be open to adjusting your strategy as new opportunities arise and market dynamics change.

Sustainable investing is more than just a trend; it's a powerful way to

merge your financial goals with your ethical beliefs. By understanding what sustainable investing entails and how to incorporate it into your portfolio, you can achieve financial success while making a positive impact on the world. As you embark on this journey, remember that every investment choice you make has potential to contribute to a more sustainable and equitable future.

By aligning your investments with your values, you're not only setting the stage for potential financial growth, but also participating in a movement that seeks to create a better world for future generations. Embrace the opportunity to invest sustainably, and watch as your financial portfolio grows alongside your commitment to a better world.

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# HOW TO ENSURE YOU'RE FINANCIALLY READY FOR THE COLD MONTHS AHEAD

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*As the colder months approach, it's time to not only prepare your home for the chill but also ensure your finances are ready for the season's unique challenges. Autumn and Winter can bring various financial pressures, from rising energy costs and Christmas spending to unexpected expenses like car repairs or home maintenance.*

Here's how to winter-proof your finances so you can confidently navigate the months ahead.

## **PREPARE FOR RISING ENERGY COSTS**

As temperatures drop, energy bills rise. Heating your home through the coldest months can be one of your largest winter expenses, and if you're not prepared, it can put a significant dent in your budget. To combat this, review your current energy usage and take steps to reduce costs before winter arrives.

Start by looking at your energy provider's rates. If you haven't switched suppliers in a while, now might be a good time to shop around for a better deal. Locking in a better rate could save you a substantial amount over the winter. Fixed-rate plans can protect you from price increases during high-demand periods.

Small adjustments around the home can also make a big difference. Simple actions like draught-proofing windows and doors, installing energy-efficient bulbs, and setting your thermostat a few degrees lower can help reduce your bills.

For those willing to invest a little more, long-term solutions such as improved insulation, energy-efficient appliances, or a smart thermostat can help optimise your energy usage.

## **SET A CHRISTMAS SPENDING BUDGET**

The festive season, while filled with jubilation, can also be a source of financial stress. Between gifts, decorations, meals, and holiday outings, costs can spiral quickly. To avoid starting the New Year with debt, plan your spending early and create a budget that reflects both your desires and your financial limitations.

Start by identifying the key areas where you'll need to spend money during Christmas—gifts, entertainment, food, travel, and decorations are common categories. Set a realistic budget for each and stick to it. If you want to avoid dipping into your savings or relying on credit, consider setting aside a small amount of money each week or month in the lead-up to December. This way, you'll have a financial cushion when Christmas comes around.

To stay within your budget, try to avoid last-minute shopping, which often leads to impulsive and costly decisions.

Planning gifts in advance, using discount codes, and shopping during sales can help stretch your Christmas budget further.





### **BUILD AND MAINTAIN AN EMERGENCY FUND**

Winter can bring unpredictable expenses, whether it's an unexpected car breakdown, a boiler failure, or higher-than-expected utility bills. These surprise costs can easily disrupt your financial stability if you're not prepared. This is where an emergency fund becomes invaluable.

An emergency fund is your financial safety net, designed to cover unexpected expenses without derailing your long-term financial goals. If you don't already have one, now is the time to start. Aim to save enough to cover at least three to six months' worth of living expenses, but any amount saved will provide some peace of mind.

If you already have an emergency fund, the onset of winter is a good opportunity to review and replenish it, especially if you've had to use it recently. A well-stocked emergency fund will give you the flexibility to handle unforeseen costs during the colder months, keeping your finances on track.

### **BE PREPARED FOR UNEXPECTED EXPENSES**

Even with careful planning, some expenses are inevitable. Winter can bring higher transport costs, unforeseen travel delays, or unexpected home repairs, such as fixing a broken

boiler or replacing a burst pipe. To avoid these situations becoming financial burdens, factor in a buffer for unexpected expenses when planning your winter budget.

Having this buffer ensures you don't have to rely on credit cards or loans to manage emergencies and helps keep you in control of your financial health. Additionally, consider having a contingency plan for emergencies, such as having access to low-interest credit or speaking with your bank about other options for financial flexibility.

### **FACING THE FINANCIAL WINTER WITH CONFIDENCE**

Much like winterising your home to protect against the cold, preparing your finances for the months ahead can provide peace of mind and ensure you're ready to face the season's challenges. Whether it's dealing with higher energy bills, managing Christmas spending, or planning for unexpected expenses, a well-thought-out strategy can help you weather any financial storms that come your way.

With proper planning, sensible budgeting, and an emergency fund in place, you'll be able to enjoy the autumn and winter seasons and stay financially secure through the cold months ahead.





## **READY TO TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR FINANCIAL FUTURE?**

At Manning and Company, we excel at providing expert guidance and support to our clients in navigating their complex financial landscape, regardless of how unique their situation may be. Allow us to assist you in reviewing your portfolio and exploring a wide range of options tailored to your specific needs. Get in touch with us today, and let's embark on a journey towards financial success together.

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