2026

Year-end Financial Checklist



BADGLEY+PHELPS
WEALTH MANAGERS

Planning for the year ahead

The end of the year is a natural time to review your financial plan and make sure it still reflects your current goals, priorities, and circumstances. Whether you experienced a major life change in 2026 or are simply preparing for the year ahead, a thoughtful year-end check-in can help identify areas that may need attention before January.

Use this checklist as a starting point to review key areas of your financial life, from cash flow and investments to taxes, retirement, insurance, and estate planning.

CASH-FLOW PLANNING

- [ ] Identify all sources of current income
- [ ] Organize all expenses, monthly and annually
- [ ] Categorize expenses by type—fixed, variable, or discretionary
- [ ] Use a resource to help, such as Quicken or a budget worksheet
- [ ] Identify trends or expected changes to current income and expenses
- [ ] Identify any large expenses planned for next year
- [ ] Establish or tune-up an emergency fund
- [ ] Pay special attention to your liquid cash reserves

INVESTMENT PLANNING

- [ ] Evaluate your investments as compared with your written investment objectives
- [ ] Determine if your portfolio is balanced
- [ ] Reassess your risk tolerance
- [ ] Make changes to asset allocations where necessary and rebalance
- [ ] Meet with your investment or wealth manager to evaluate your financial plan; prepare a list of topics to focus your discussion

TAX PLANNING

- [ ] For inherited IRAs inherited prior to 2020, confirm your requirement minimum distribution (RMD) is taken for the year. For inherited IRAs inherited on or after January 1, 2020, discuss with your tax professional whether or not a distribution should be made prior to end of year.
- [ ] Identify any actions to reduce taxes
- [ ] Evaluate and maximize 401(k), IRA or other retirement plan contributions. If you are over 50 years of age, take advantage of increased catch-up contribution limits. Individuals age 60-63 may take advantage of additional catch-up contributions.
- [ ] Monitor tax loss carry-forwards and consider harvesting losses to offset gains
- [ ] Plan charitable contributions—direct gifts, indirect gifts, split-interest gifts, donor-advised fund. Consider making gifts of appreciated securities when possible.
- [ ] Consider a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) for individuals over age 70 1/2 from your IRA—up to $111,000
- [ ] Plan tax-free gifting—up to $19,000 per individual per year ($38,000 for married couples)
- [ ] Consider using tax-free gifts to fund/contribute to a 529 plan
- [ ] Consider your ability to defer or accelerate business expenses
- [ ] For residents of Washington state, be cognizant of recognizing capital gains over $278,000. Gains over this threshold will be subject to an additional state capital gains tax of 7 percent, unless they are part of an exempt category, such as real estate.
- [ ] Gains over $1,000,000 will be subject to an additional 2.9% tax.

RETIREMENT PLANNING

- [ ] Review target date for retirement
- [ ] Review amount of income needed for retirement Identify sources of retirement income
- [ ] Evaluate your strategy to reach your retirement objective

- [ ] Integrate retirement planning with your investment planning
- [ ] If you are older than 73, confirm you have taken your required minimum distribution (RMD) for 2026
- [ ] Consider whether a Roth conversion makes sense. Converting from a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA can be a long-term tax minimization strategy.
- [ ] Think about if you are nearing eligibility for Social Security and review maximization strategies

INSURANCE PLANNING

- [ ] Review your health savings account contribution—up to $4,400 per individual ($8,750 for families)
- [ ] Check to see whether your flexible spending account has a carry-forward option or if you must use it or lose it
- [ ] Adjust your homeowner's insurance for any major upgrades/renovations made to your home
- [ ] Review personal insurance policies (homeowners, auto) and evaluate the need for an umbrella policy
- [ ] Review your deductibles
- [ ] For any in-force cash value insurance policies, request an updated illustration and annual summary
- [ ] Review your long-term care and disability income insurance; determine if they continue to efficiently meet your coverage needs
- [ ] Determine period for open enrollment in the event you need to make changes to your health insurance coverage
- [ ] Consider comparison shopping if you have not done so in several years

ESTATE PLANNING

- [ ] Determine ownership of assets (including real estate) and beneficiary designation—update as necessary
- [ ] Take note of where your estate planning documents (wills, trusts, durable power of attorney, digital power of attorney, etc.) are located
- [ ] Review estate planning documents to make sure they are accurate and current
- [ ] Confirm whether your beneficiary designations are in line with your estate plan

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- [ ] Think about upcoming costs associated with caring for an aging parent
- [ ] Check your credit profile and protect yourself from identity theft
- [ ] Use the end of the year as a regular time to discuss finances and investments with the next generation
- [ ] Evaluate if material changes need to be made to your financial plan, including new or changing plans

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Use this checklist as a guide and check with your other professional advisers for direction on your specific tax or legal situation. Badgley Phelps is not an insurance, tax, or legal adviser.

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CONTACT US

INFO@BADGLEY.COM
(206) 623-6172
badgley.com