

# Tools and resources for Financial Identity

## Debt

Debt is what we owe when we borrow - it comes in many forms, and usually costs us in interest and fees.

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### DEBT GUIDES

#### [Managing debt - what to know before borrowing money](#)

Debt comes in many forms - credit cards, hire purchase, car loans, personal loans, mortgages, student loans. There's no shortage of people out there wanting to lend us money. Borrowing money can seem like a quick fix, but carrying that can end up being a serious drag on our finances.

#### [Get out of debt fast - how to reduce debt](#)

The longer we take to pay off debt the more it will cost us. So if there's room in the budget it's smart to put more money towards debt repayments.

#### [Debt consolidation - benefits of consolidating debt](#)

'Consolidating' debt means taking out a new loan to wrap all our existing debts together and pay them off at once - ideally at a lower interest rate so we get out of debt faster. Debt consolidation can save money and simplify life, but only as long as we're not running up even more debt in the meantime! So, there are risks.

#### [Credit reports - how credit history and scores work](#)

When businesses decide whether to lend us money, for example, they look at our credit report and give it a score. Any missed bills or mortgage repayments have a negative impact on our credit score and affect our ability to borrow or get credit again. By understanding how credit ratings work and keeping an eye on ours, we can keep things sorted and get the best lending terms and rates.

#### [Credit cards - credit card debt and management](#)

Credit cards are an easy way to pay for things with a quick swipe or tap, but they can be expensive. High interest rates apply if we don't pay off the card in full each month - and the longer that debt goes unpaid, the more it costs can drag us down. Here's how to keep those cards under control, with a few tips for credit card management.

#### [Car loans - tips when borrowing for a car loan](#)

Most vehicles - unless they're classic cars - quickly go down in value, not up. So borrowing to buy a car can have a serious impact on our finances. Take time to think through all the options for a car loan when financing that new set of wheels!

### [Student - loans getting and paying back a student loan](#)

Borrowing to study can be a great opportunity, though it's important not to borrow more than we need. Under the Student Loan Scheme we can borrow money interest-free from the government to help pay for tertiary study, and repay the loan once we finish studying and start earning over a certain amount. If we move overseas after studying, though, we get charged interest on our student loans.

### [Personal loans - choosing the cheapest personal loans](#)

Personal loans are available through banks, credit unions, peer-to-peer and payday lenders, and loan shops. People use personal loans to pay for all kinds of things – weddings, renovations, holidays or consolidating their debts. But borrowing from some lenders can cost us dearly, so we need to research the options and know what we're getting into.

### [Hire purchase - the true cost of hire purchase](#)

With a hire purchase deal we can take home a product and use it while we're paying it off. Hire purchase can seem like an easy way to pay when we haven't got the money up front – especially if it's interest-free for a while. But it pays to find out the true cost of an hire purchase deal before signing up.

## TOOLS

### [Debt calculator](#)

See how much your different debts are costing you, and find the fastest way to be debt-free with our debt repayment calculator.

### [Mortgage calculator](#)

See what a mortgage costs, find out what the repayments might be, or find a quicker way to pay yours off with our mortgage repayment calculator.

## BLOG POSTS

### [Spending future dollars](#)

This doesn't get said enough about taking on debt – it's really just spending our future earnings before they arrive.

### [Debt snowball and avalanches - how to pay off debt fast](#)

The two strategies that often come up for repaying debts are either a debt "snowball" or an "avalanche". The difference depends on what you pay back first: the debt with the smallest balance or the debt with the highest interest rate. Which should you choose?

### [Pay later options can stretch you too thin](#)

Afterpay, Laybuy, Oxipay or Partpay smooth out your costs, but you can still end up taking on more debt than you're comfortable with.

### [Debt is fire – master it.](#)

Debt is like fire in so many ways. Like fire, borrowing can – and needs to – increase our wellbeing. Think of a warm fire on cold nights, or firing up the barbecue when summer comes around. Fire (and debt) can make life better.

### [Debt, what have you done for me lately?](#)

“What does debt do for you?” is the question we’re asking everyone. Instead of it being about good debt, bad debt, dumb or smart – this time the test for whether it’s worth taking on debt is our wellbeing.

### [How to get wheels and get ahead at the same time](#)

It’s a real challenge to buy a car and get ahead financially at the same time. Happily, there is a way! You can in fact buy vehicles while pushing your net worth higher.

### [7 common mistakes we make with debt](#)

Here are some of the most common mistakes, and how we can best avoid them.

## BOOKLET

### [Sorted Debt Booklet](#)

A guide to debt, written for teachers and students.

## THE DEBT EMPIRE GAME

### [Debt Empire](#)

Begin your quest for debt domination by loaning out money and reaping the rewards. Tap, loan, get paid, repeat. It’s your job to make sure the circle of debt never ends. Grow your empire by using all the tricks the loan industry has at its disposal

### [Game your way to debt smarts](#)

The Debt Empire app teaches debt lessons by letting people play at being the loan shark.

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## Saving

Supercharge your savings by making your money work harder for you.

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## SAVING GUIDES

### [Bank deposits - investing in bank deposits or savings](#)

Still keeping a stash of cash under the mattress? Savings accounts and term deposits with a bank, credit union or building society are convenient ways to save because they pay you interest. They’re safe places to park our money and earn interest, but returns on bank deposits aren’t as high as other types of investments.

### [Compound interest - learn about compounding interest](#)

Einstein called it the ‘eighth wonder of the world’. He was talking about compound interest, which supercharges our savings and investments. But compound interest can also increase the cost of our debt. Over the long run, we’re talking serious dosh! The best compounding happens when any interest we earn gets reinvested and earns even more interest. It’s interest earning interest, and our money is working for us instead of us working for it!

### [Saving - How to save and set up a savings plan](#)

One of the best habits we can get into is “paying ourselves first” and making it automatic by setting up a savings plan. The more we get into saving money, the easier it is to achieve our goals and get ahead. In most cases, it's cheaper to save for things – a phone, a car, a holiday – than to go into debt to buy them. Saving for the future also gives us more options later on and keeps us prepared for anything unexpected.

## TOOLS

### [Savings calculator](#)

Work out how much you can achieve by saving and how quickly you can reach your goals.

### [Money personality quiz](#)

What's your style with money? This light-hearted quiz lets you see your financial strengths and possible blind spots.

## BLOG POSTS

### [How good neighbours can help us rein in our spending](#)

Good neighbours are awesome – they do many a good thing for our finances. And then there's childcare, sharing garden produce, or just a drink on Friday evening out on the deck... May this be the start of a long list for us all.

### [Dynamic money duos: Savers vs spenders in a relationship](#)

If you're one half of your own superhero team and have a partner, your money needs to work for you both. The aim is to build a wealthy life together and above all make love not poor. Yet that goal depends so much on the money decisions we make with those we love.

### [How to get past piggy banks: 10 money tips for kids](#)

When it comes to teaching kids about managing their money, piggy banks are cute but useless. Young ones drop their money in to that black hole of a slot, can't see their savings growing, and may even have to break it open before they can figure out how much they've put away. So what to do for your super savvy kids? Here are some tips.

### [Start thy purse to fattening](#)

How much we set aside has to be an amount that works for our budget, a savings rate that fits our lifestyle.

### [Money talks: You never know when you'll need it](#)

Ever find it hard to get motivated to save? We talk to ordinary New Zealanders and find out what they do to save money.

### [Stark spaving mad](#)

It's mathematically impossible, but we get told we can save by spending all the time.

### [Why frugality is overrated](#)

We save here and scrimp there, but are we really getting ahead?

### [The urge to spave](#)

Heard of spaving? It's when we spend on things that we don't need, or even want, but just because we think we're saving money. Seriously.

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## Budgeting

A budget is just a plan showing what money we expect to receive and how we expect to spend it. Budgeting is a way of steering our money and staying in control. A budget is one of the best tools for getting the most out of our money and getting ahead.

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### BUDGETING GUIDES

#### [Getting money advice - finding a professional financial advisor](#)

Managing money can be challenging – not all of us have the skills to sort out the more complicated stuff. That's when it's time to call in the experts and get some advice. A financial adviser can be a great help, whether it's with day-to-day budgeting or investment advice.

#### [Setting financial goals - how to set money goals](#)

Here's the first step to sorting our finances: working out where we want to be money wise and what our priorities are. Setting financial goals help us focus our money and our lives. Goals can be short or long term, small or large, but they all need to be achievable. Many of us tend to underestimate how much we can achieve over time!

#### [Budgeting tips - how to plan a budget. Don't fudge it!](#)

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#### [Money tracking - how to track your money](#)

Budgets help us plan where our money should be going, but it's also important to track where our money actually goes. Getting a handle on how our money comes in and goes out is really the next step to getting our finances sorted and getting ahead.

#### [Net worth - what is my net worth?](#)

Simply put, net worth is the difference between the value of what we own and the total amount that we owe. Why does it matter? It's one way to tell if we're really getting ahead. Knowing our net worth helps us set goals for our money, make financial plans and track our progress. The most important thing with net worth is not how high it is, but rather which direction it's headed – may it always be trending up!

#### [Planning in a relationship - making joint financial plans](#)

If we're planning finances as a couple, both sides need to be involved in the process. It's all about getting on the same page and making sure our families will be taken care of in the future.

#### [Relationships - planning finances with a partner](#)

Partnering up brings new opportunities to build wealth that we wouldn't have on our own. Moving in together or getting married may mean we share earnings, costs, and money plans, but it can also bring its own financial challenges and risks. By planning finances together as a couple, we can make sure both our needs are met and avoid trouble later on. Like all aspects of a relationship, the key is getting on the same page and sharing the decision making. And the earlier we have that money talk the better!

### [Flatting - going flatting and managing money with flatmates](#)

Flatting is a big step towards becoming independent, but it also means we have to get used to paying the bills. It's important to find out how much rent and other expenses such as electricity and wifi will cost – let's not get caught out by the costs of flatting!

### [Student loans - where, and what to study](#)

Studying can be an investment in our future, but borrowing too much could leave us with debt for years. Earning income from other sources such as a student allowance, scholarships, and part-time work can help. Having a plan and sticking to a budget will save stress and let us focus on our studies.

### [Starting work - tips when starting a first job](#)

Starting a first job is a good time to think about what we want in life. Having goals and a plan will help us create the kind of life we want for ourselves – right from day one. When starting a first job there are also a few basics to sort out, like getting an IRD number, choosing the right tax code and enrolling in KiwiSaver.

## TOOL

### [Budgeting tool](#)

Give each of your hard-earned dollars a job to do with this budgeting tool, and steer your money where you want.

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## Goals

The first step to sorting our finances: working out where we want to be money wise and what our priorities are. Setting financial goals helps us focus our money and our lives. Goals can be short or long term, small or large, but they all need to be achievable.

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## BLOG POSTS

### [The pass to get you that holiday](#)

We type them in a dozen times a day. Who knew that passwords could help us hit goals?

### [Talk about stretch goals](#)

Set ambitious targets, and odds are you'll get further than you ever thought.

### [Tune into your future](#)

When planning for the future seems just too hard, we all need a way to put it in focus.

### [Planning's easier when you catch the wave](#)

With so many around us kick-starting their yearly routine, we can ride that wave and start fresh with our financial goals.

## TOOL

### [Goal planner](#)

Where do you see yourself? Would you like to own your own home? Would you like to travel internationally? Many goals in life need money and a plan – this goal-setting tool helps you take the first steps to make them happen.