

Building financial security

Feeling stressed or anxious about finances? You're not alone. Over 70% of Americans feel stressed about money. And the recent economic challenges mean that even more are dealing with financial struggles and hardship. Like any source of stress, financial problems can take a toll on your mental and physical health, relationships, and overall quality of life. Learning how to manage your financial situation will help you gain control, reduce stress, and build a more secure future.

Whatever your circumstances, there are ways to get through tough economic times. Below are four strategies and resources to help you get started.



1. **Create a household budget.** A budget is one of the most important tools for managing money. It will help you get the most out of your money, give you a sense of control, and prevent stress that comes from spending more than you have.
 - [How to create and manage a budget](#)
 - [How to make a budget in 5 steps](#)
2. **Increase your financial literacy.** Financial literacy means having the skills to make smart decisions about money. People with higher levels of financial literacy are more likely to spend less, have an emergency fund, and open a retirement account.
 - [What is financial literacy](#)
3. **Tackle debt.** Between a mortgage, car loan, student loan, and credit cards it's easy for debt to grow. It will take time and effort, but by consistently using good financial strategies you will successfully dig your way out of debt.
 - [How to get out of debt](#)
4. **Get professional help.** Talk to a financial professional and mental health professional to help you make decisions about money and cope with stress.
 - [Lutheran Social Service](#): Guidance, knowledge, and tools to establish a budget, pay off debt or loans, purchase a home, and more.
 - [Family Means](#): Solutions and tools for creating financial stability and reducing debt.
 - [EMERGE Minnesota](#) Participant-centered financial coaching and financial education.
 - [NAMI Minnesota](#) (National Alliance on Mental Illness) is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of children and adults with mental illnesses and their families.

