



Mechanics
COOPERATIVE BANK

Financial Checklist

for Consumers

It's essential to review your financial planning strategies year round - and Mechanics Cooperative Bank is here to help!



Questions on where to begin?

Give us a call at 1-888-MECHANICS (632-4264)



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Prepare for Tax Time

Right now is a good time to start gathering documents needed to file your taxes.

- ☐ Tax forms from employers and financial institutions include W-2, 1099, 1098 and 1095 forms. These must be mailed to you by January 31. It helps to make a list so you can be on the lookout.
 - ☐ Use the [IRS Tax Withholding Estimator](#) to confirm that your employer is withholding the right amount of taxes from your wages. If you need to adjust your withholding, complete a new W-4 form for your employer.
 - ☐ Use the funds in your Flexible Spending Account (FSA). Employer deadlines for this may vary.
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Review Budget Plan

Review your budget and expenses. What works and what doesn't?

- ☐ Assess your income and expenses, looking for places to save money or reduce unnecessary expenses.
 - ☐ Revise your budget to reflect any anticipated changes to your income or expenses.
 - ☐ Review your annual subscriptions and monthly subscription fees to ensure you are still actively using them. TV streaming services, music, podcasts, clothing, and software subscriptions can all add up.
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Examine Insurance Coverage

Set up an appointment with your insurance agent to review your coverage, including homeowners', renters', auto and life insurance.

- ☐ Make sure any life insurance and disability policies list the correct beneficiaries.
 - ☐ Look for ways to reduce insurance premiums, such as dropping unnecessary coverage or increasing deductibles.
 - ☐ Need help getting started? Mechanics Cooperative Bank and our insurance partner can help. Call us for a free evaluation of your current insurance needs.
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Review Retirement Accounts and Investments

A lot can change year-over-year from an investment perspective. This could be a good time to re-evaluate your plan and make sure it still aligns with your long-term goals.

- ☐ Schedule a meeting with your investment consultant to discuss the current economic climate and your investment plan. Review your investment results over the past year and rebalance your portfolio if needed.
 - ☐ If you have a 401(k) plan from a former employer, plan to roll it over into a new retirement account.
 - ☐ Set up an online Social Security account to estimate your expected retirement benefits and help with retirement planning.
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Review Credit Cards

The credit card industry is extremely competitive with several card options and programs to choose from. Review how you are using your cards and where you spend your money – there might be better options available.

- ☐ Maybe you could benefit from a reward or cash back card? If you're looking into cards that provide extra perks, make sure you'll be able to pay off the balance each month—otherwise, you could pay more in interest charges than the rewards could earn you.
 - ☐ Try to utilize less than 30% of your available credit for each card at all times. Anything higher could possibly hurt your credit score.
 - ☐ Think about keeping existing credit card accounts open even if you aren't using them; closing them may negatively affect your credit score.
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Make or Update Your Estate Plan

An estate plan may include a will, living trust, health care plan or financial power of attorney.

- ☐ Make sure your estate plan lists the correct beneficiaries and that your documents are in a safe place.
 - ☐ If you've had major life changes since creating your plan, update accordingly.
 - ☐ If you don't have an estate plan, think about creating one.
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Check Your Credit

Get copies of your credit score and your credit reports from all three consumer credit bureaus (Experian, TransUnion and Equifax) to review for accuracy.

- ☐ If your credit score needs help, take these steps to improve it: pay all your bills on time; pay down credit card balances to keep your credit utilization rate at 30% or less; avoid opening new credit accounts unless necessary and keep existing credit accounts open, even if you don't use them.
 - ☐ Sign up for free services that can help increase your credit score by giving you credit for on-time utility, cellphone, and streaming service payments.
 - ☐ Set up credit monitoring to protect your credit. Free credit monitoring services will alert you of changes and inquiries on your credit report.
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Organize Your Finances

If you'd like professional help with your finances and investments, consider using a financial planner.

- ☐ Go through your financial records, tax documents and financial account statements, destroying anything you don't need.
 - ☐ Consider digitizing financial records to save space, paper and reduce your carbon footprint.
 - ☐ eStatements, eBills and Internet Banking are great ways to stay organized and keep important paperwork more secure.
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