

Money Calendar

Twelve months to take charge of your finances



My Goal

Tips

- ▶ Download worksheets & link to other tools at karenchanfinancial.com/resources/12months/. Worksheets with page #s are from *Savings Fitness*. All others should be downloaded from Karen's webpage.
- ▶ Work with a buddy to keep each other motivated.

Month 1: Expenses



Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn where my money goes•
What you'll need	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bills, checking & credit card statements, receipts• <i>Monthly Expenses</i> worksheet•
Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review records to list all expenses for one month• Total and categorize expenses•
What you learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••

Example Month 1: Expenses



As you work through the Calendar, remember this:
You may not know all the answers, but knowing the questions is half the battle.

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn where my money goes• <i>How much do I pay for phone, TV, internet?</i>
What you'll need	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bills, checking & credit card statements, receipts• <i>Monthly Expenses</i> worksheet
Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review records to list all expenses for one month• Total and categorize expenses
What you learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>I spend \$195 a month on TV, internet and phone.</i>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Call provider. When is my contract up?</i>• <i>Ask about my options.</i>• <i>Compare with other providers.</i>

Month 2: Spending Plan



Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have a plan to guide spending decisions• Compare actual expenses with the plan
What you'll need	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cash Flow Spending Plan, <i>Savings Fitness</i>, pp. 40-43• Record of expenses from Month #1• 4 copies of <i>Weekly Expense Tracker</i> worksheet
Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On the Cash Flow Spending Plan worksheet:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a spending plan based on last month's expenses• List income & planned expenses in "Monthly" & "Annual" columns• Are expenses more or less than income?• Track expenses for a month, using the 4 <i>Weekly Expenses</i> worksheets• At the end of the month, total and enter expenses on Cash Flow Spending Plan under "Actual spending"• Compare actual expenses to planned expenses
What you learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none">••
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••

Month 3: What Do You Owe?



Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have a realistic picture of my debts• Develop a plan for paying down debt•
What you'll need	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Debt Reduction</i> worksheet, <i>Savings Fitness</i>, p. 44• Statement or document from each debt• PowerPay.org•
Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• List information from each debt• Develop a plan to pay off debt using PowerPay•
What you learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none">••
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••

Month 4: Credit History



Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn what information is in my credit report• Make a plan for improving my credit history•
What you'll need	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• AnnualCreditReport.com or 877-322-8228•
Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Obtain your report from one or more of the major credit reporting agencies• Dispute incorrect, incomplete, or out-of-date info• Freeze or add fraud alert if desired•
What you learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none">••
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••

Month 5: What Do You Own?



Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify all of your financial assets• Tally their value• Know size of emergency fund, retirement fund•
What you'll need	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Account statements or online access to accounts• <i>What Do I Own?</i> Worksheet•
Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• List details of each account or asset• Set up files &/or online access for each account•
What you learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none">••
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••

Month 6: Net Worth



Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assess overall financial situation• Provide a baseline to measure progress•
What you'll need	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Debt Reduction</i> worksheet, Month 3• <i>What Do I Own?</i> Worksheet, Month 5• Balance Sheet to Calculate Net Worth, <i>Savings Fitness</i>, p. 33
Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transfer debt and asset info onto Balance Sheet• Calculate your net worth• Repeat annually to evaluate progress•
What you learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none">••
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••

Month 7: Retirement Income



Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre-retirees: Learn how much you need to save• Retirees: Know how much you can spend•
What you'll need	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Everyone: T. Rowe Price http://bit.ly/TRowePrice_Retirement_Calculator• Pre-retirees: Vanguard http://bit.ly/Vanguard_How_Much<ul style="list-style-type: none">• >20 yrs to retire: Retirement Savings, <i>Savings Fitness</i>, pp. 34 – 39• Retirees: Vanguard http://bit.ly/Vanguard_How_Long• Social Security benefits calculators http://bit.ly/SocSecCalc
Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use calculators to see how small changes can affect the outcome. Examples: Work 1 year longer. Save a little more each year. Reduce spending in retirement.• Estimate Social Security benefits
What you learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none">••
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••

Month 8: Insurance



Purpose

- Learn what policies and limits you have
- Determine whether they match your needs
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What you'll need

- *Insurance Inventory* worksheet
- Insurance documents or online access

Tasks

- List details about your insurance policies
- Compare current coverage with your needs:
 - Talk with your agent
 - Use the interactive tool at <http://extension.illinois.edu/risk/>
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What you learned

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Next steps

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Month 9: Estate Plan



Purpose

- Identify what estate planning is already done
- Identify gaps or conflicts
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What you'll need

- *Estate Plan* worksheet
- Estate planning documents: will, trust, powers of attorney
- Titling & beneficiary info from *What Do I Own?*, month 5

Tasks

- List details about your estate planning documents
- Compare will & beneficiaries/POD/TOD for conflicts
- Decide what documents need to be revised

What you learned

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Next steps

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Month 10: Income Taxes



Purpose

- Become familiar with your income tax return
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What you'll need

- *Income Tax* worksheet
- Most recent tax return, W2s, final paystub for last year, current paystub
- Employee benefit guide

Tasks

- List details from your tax return.
- Determine what expenses you were able to deduct, and what employee benefits reduced your reported income (were deducted before tax)
- Choose which employee benefits to use and how much to contribute
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What you learned

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Next steps

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Month 11: Life Events



Purpose

- Identify life changes that could occur
- Evaluate the financial impact of those events
- Prepare and have a plan

What you'll need

- *Life Events* worksheet
- Worksheets from previous months for reference

Tasks

- Complete the *Life Events* checklist
 - Project impact on income, expenses, etc. for each life event
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What you learned

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Next steps

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Month 12: Get help



Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify areas where professional advice is needed• Learn reliable sources for advice•
What you'll need	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Finding Advice</i> worksheet• <i>Choosing a Financial Professional</i>, Univ of IL Extension, http://bit.ly/FinancialPro
Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decide what areas you want help with• Choose questions or an interview guide to use•
What you learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none">••
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••

Stay motivated

- ▶ Find a buddy
 - ▶ They can access the worksheets from my website
- ▶ Put it on your calendar
- ▶ Pick a particular day/time that you will do this.
- ▶ Keep all your info in one place
 - ▶ Decide where to keep this file folder

Visit <http://KarenChanFinancialEd.com/> to sign up for quarterly notices of upcoming workshops.

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