



**START
YOUR
JOURNEY**



**GOAL:
FINANCIAL
FREEDOM**

April is Financial Literacy Month – The Path to Financial Freedom

What is financial literacy?

Financial literacy describes the skills, knowledge and tools that help equip people to make the best individual financial decisions and actions to attain money goals.

Why it matters

A lack of knowledge on managing your personal finances can carry a high cost. Financial illiteracy not only has personal impact on multiple aspects of an individual's life, but also extends far beyond – reaching into people's families, social networks, employers, communities, and the country as a whole.

According to the NFEC (National Financial Education Council), financial illiteracy is “Lacking the skills and knowledge on financial matters to confidently take effective action that best fulfills an individual's personal, family, and global community goals.” Lacking financial literacy and not knowing how to manage one's personal finances carried a high cost in 2023. The NFEC conducted a survey asking American adults to estimate how much money they had lost during the year due to lack of financial knowledge. Among this diverse group of respondents, the estimated average amount of money that lacking knowledge about personal finances cost people was \$1,506 in 2023.

Here are steps you can take to get on the road to financial freedom.

Savings

Saving will help you on the road to financial freedom. If you're not yet saving, get started now. The sooner you start saving, the more time your money has to grow.

Budgeting

Living within a budget, also known as a spending plan, is a major step forward. A budget can help you determine where you may be overspending and help you identify and adjust unhealthy spending habits. By making even small adjustments to your budget, you may be able to save more or make larger payments to dig out of debt.

Building and maintaining your credit score

Credit scores range from 300 to 850. The best credit score is 850. In the United States, the average FICO Score is 715 and the average VantageScore is 701.

To build and keep a strong credit score, do the following:

- Pay your loans on time, every time.
- Keep your balances low compared to your total credit limit.
- Pay off your balance each month if possible.
- Only apply for credit that you need.
- Check your credit report regularly. If you spot errors, dispute them. You can use SavvyMoney Credit Score to review your score and report.
- Don't cancel long-standing accounts if possible. A long credit history will help your score.



Credit Union 1 Merger

Discover the latest updates on the proposed merger with Credit Union 1, including exciting new benefits, important dates you need to know and more. Just scan the code below for all the details.



<https://www.creditunion1.org/fafcu/>

AROUND THE BRANCH

Lobby Hours	Drive-Thru Hours
Monday 8 am - 4:30 pm	8 am - 4:30 pm
Tuesday 9 am - 4:30 pm	8 am - 4:30 pm
Wednesday 9 am - 4:30 pm	9 am - 4:30 pm
Thursday 9 am - 5:00 pm	8 am - 5:00 pm
Friday 8 am - 5:00 pm	8 am - 5:30 pm

FAFCU Closed	Holiday Observed
Memorial Day	MON May 27
Juneteenth National Independence Day	WED June 19
Independence Day	THUR July 4
Labor Day	MON Sept 2



5 Steps to Reach Your Financial GOALS

- Step #1 Identify Your Goal**
 Brainstorm goals you want to achieve.
- Step #2 Get Specific**
 Define an Amount, Timeframe & Purpose.
"I will deposit \$3,000 into my Emergency Fund by December 31st."
- Step #3 Break Down Your Goal**
 \$3,000 per year =
 \$750 per quarter,
 \$250 per month,
 or \$116 per paycheck (paid biweekly).
\$116 per paycheck is more manageable.
- Step #4 Schedule Your Actions**
 - Open a Separate Savings Account for My Emergency Fund
 - Enroll in Payroll Deduction to Automate My Savings
- Step #5 Hold Yourself Accountable**
 - Set Reminders for Yourself
 - Schedule Appointments to Review Progress