

MAKE IT COMPOUND

RETIREMENT

Retirement Readiness Checklist

Run through these 15 checkpoints to find out exactly where you stand — and what to do next.

Use this checklist at any age. Each item is a concrete action or number to verify. The goal isn't to check every box today — it's to know your gaps so you can close them.

The Basics

■ Know your "retirement number"

25x your expected annual expenses. If you plan to spend \$60k/year, aim for \$1.5M. This comes from the 4% safe withdrawal rate.

■ Know your current savings rate

Total monthly savings ÷ gross income. Aim for 15–20% including employer match. Under 10%? That's your first fix.

■ Have an emergency fund

3–6 months of expenses in a high-yield savings account before investing more aggressively.

■ Eliminated high-interest debt

Any debt above ~7% APR should be paid off before prioritizing retirement investing.

Your Accounts

■ Contributing to employer plan

At minimum, contributing enough to capture the full employer match. Not doing this is leaving free money behind.

■ Max out tax-advantaged accounts

If affordable: max your IRA (\$7,000/yr) and push 401(k) as high as possible (\$23,500/yr in 2025).

■ Know where all your accounts are

List every 401(k) from past employers. Consider rolling them into your current plan or a single IRA for simplicity.

■ Named beneficiaries on all accounts

Retirement accounts pass outside your will — confirm beneficiaries are current on every account.

Your Investments

■ Asset allocation matches your timeline

Rule of thumb: subtract your age from 110 to get your stock percentage. 35 years old → ~75% stocks, 25% bonds.

■ Using low-cost index funds

Total expense ratio under 0.20%. If you're in actively managed funds, check the fees — most don't beat the index.

■ Rebalancing at least annually

When stocks outperform, they become a larger slice than intended. Rebalance to stay at your target allocation.

■ Not checking balance more than quarterly

Frequent checking leads to emotional decisions. Set it, automate it, check it less.

Planning Ahead

■ Estimated Social Security benefit

Create a my Social Security account at ssa.gov to see your projected benefit. Factor this into your retirement income plan.

■ Have a plan for healthcare before Medicare

Medicare starts at 65. If you retire earlier, you need a bridge plan — ACA marketplace, spouse's plan, or COBRA.

■ Know your target retirement age

The earlier you want to retire, the larger your nest egg needs to be. Retiring at 55 vs 65 requires roughly 2x the savings.

Scoring Guide

Boxes Checked	Where You Stand	Priority Action
0–4	Just getting started	Start with emergency fund + employer match
5–8	Building momentum	Max IRA, check asset allocation
9–12	On solid footing	Optimize fees, review beneficiaries
13–15	Retirement ready	Fine-tune Social Security strategy