

Principles of successful investing



Investors today are faced with ever-changing market conditions, an often overwhelming amount of information from the media and an increasing number of investment choices. It's not surprising that the world of investing can seem complex.

But the principles of successful investing are quite simple. The five investment principles outlined in this guide can collectively serve as a blueprint for building an effective long-term portfolio designed to achieve your financial goals.

- 1 Invest early
- 2 Invest regularly
- 3 Invest enough
- 4 Have a plan
- 5 Diversify your portfolio

1 Invest early

Getting an early start on investing is one of the best ways to build wealth.

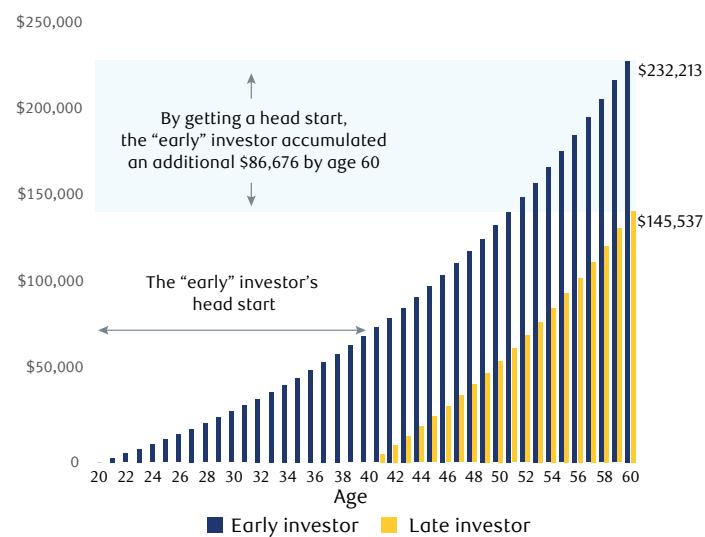
Investing for a longer period of time is largely recognized as a more effective strategy than waiting until you have a large amount of savings or cash flow to invest. This is due to the power of compounding.

Compounding investment returns is the snowball effect that occurs when your earnings generate even more earnings. Essentially, your investments grow not only on the original amount invested, but also on any accumulated interest, dividends and capital gains.

The longer you are invested, the more time there is for your investment returns to compound. Time has historically enabled investors to take advantage of long-term market returns to effectively grow portfolios over the long run.

With investment minimums starting at \$500, it is easy to get started today.

Investing early can pay off over the long term



The chart represents an early investor who invests \$200 per month for 40 years and a late investor who invests \$400 per month for 20 years. Both have invested a total of \$96,000 by age 60. Assumes a 4% annualized rate of return. Used only to illustrate the effects of the compound growth rate and is not intended to reflect future values of any particular investment. Source: RBC Global Asset Management Inc.

2 Invest regularly

Investing often is just as important as investing early. A regular investment plan allows you to choose when and how often you make contributions to ensure that investing remains a priority throughout the year, not just during certain periods – like the yearly RRSP contribution deadline. This enables you to apply a disciplined savings approach to help successfully build wealth over time.

Investing regularly also allows you the opportunity to ease into any type of market (rising, falling, flat) and reduce long-term portfolio volatility. This is the case because investing a fixed dollar amount on a regular basis gives you a chance to buy more investment units when prices are low and fewer units when prices are high, thereby potentially reducing the average cost of your investment over the long term.

Investing small amounts of money on an ongoing basis can help smooth out returns over time and reduce overall portfolio volatility.

Your monthly savings can really add up

Number of years invested	Monthly contribution amount			
	\$50	\$100	\$250	\$500
5	\$3,309	\$6,618	\$16,545	\$33,090
10	\$7,335	\$14,670	\$36,674	\$73,348
15	\$12,233	\$24,466	\$61,164	\$122,329
20	\$18,192	\$36,384	\$90,960	\$181,921
25	\$25,442	\$50,885	\$127,212	\$254,424

Source: RBC Global Asset Management Inc. Assumes a 4% annualized rate of return. Used only to illustrate the effects of the compound growth rate and is not intended to reflect future values of any particular investment.

3 Invest enough

Achieving your long-term financial goals begins with saving enough today.

Saving for a major goal like a house, post-secondary education or retirement requires considerable thought and decision making – but that is only half the battle. It is vital to know how much you need to begin saving today in order to have a large enough investment portfolio to support your future goal.

Generally, the more you save today, the less you will need to save in the future to achieve the same goal as someone who invested more over a shorter period of time. Your current income is a useful starting point for calculating certain long-term goals – like your retirement savings needs – since the more you make today, the more savings you will likely need to fund your lifestyle in retirement.

HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?

Going through various questions with your advisor, such as the ones listed below, will help you determine how much savings you will need to fund your goal.

- What is your goal (e.g. retirement lifestyle, cottage)?
- How much will you need to attain your goal?
- What savings do you currently have in place to meet your goal?
- What is the time horizon required to reach your goal?

Your advisor can help you create an investment plan that helps ensure you are saving enough today to reach your future goals.

4 Have a plan

Don't let your emotions influence your investment decisions.

When market volatility increases, even experienced investors can become overly focused on short-term movements. This can lead to hasty decisions, chief among them timing the markets – investing after markets have already risen and/or redeeming existing investments after markets have already fallen.

The key to avoid making rushed investment decisions is to maintain perspective and focus on the long term. With a well-structured plan in place, you can confidently remain committed to it, knowing that day-to-day market fluctuations are likely to have little impact on your longer-term objectives or on the investment strategy designed to get you there.

There will always be reasons not to invest

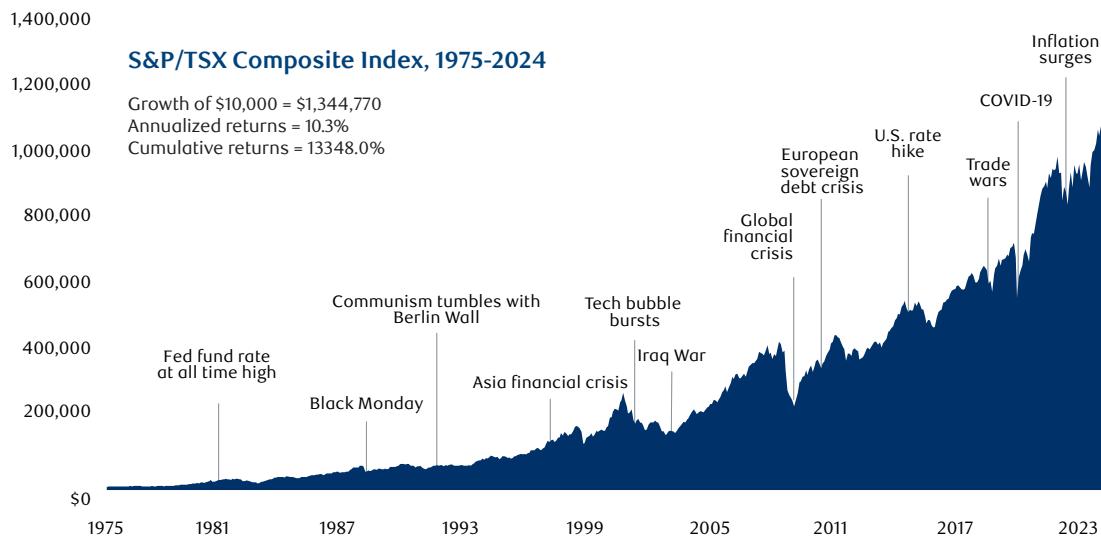


Chart illustrates the growth of \$10,000 in the S&P/TSX Composite Index (total returns) from January 1, 1975 to December 31, 2024. An investment cannot be made directly in an index. Graph does not reflect transaction costs, investment management fees or taxes. If such costs and fees were reflected, returns would be lower. Past performance is not a guarantee of future results. Source: Bloomberg, RBC Global Asset Management. Values and performance are in CAD.

There will always be events that affect equity markets in the short term; over the long term, however, markets have historically moved ahead.

5 Diversify your portfolio

It's important to spread your investments across different asset classes.

When it comes to investing, one of the easiest ways that you can manage risk and improve your probability of success is to take advantage of diversification opportunities through different asset classes, geographical markets and industries.

Financial markets do not move in step with one another. And at various points in the market cycle, different types of investments or asset classes – such as cash, fixed income and equities – will have varying performance. This performance varies because asset classes can respond differently to changes in environmental factors, including inflation, the outlook for corporate earnings and changes in interest rates.

By holding a combination of different asset classes in your portfolio, you can take the guesswork out of predicting winning and losing investments in any given year.

A strong case for diversifying your investment portfolio

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
EM Equities 16.6%	US Equities 27.6%	Cash 1.7%	US Equities 22.9%	US Equities 36.4%
US Equities 16.3%	CDN Equities 25.1%	CDN Equities -5.8%	INTL Equities 15.7%	CDN Equities 21.7%
Blanced 10.4%	INTL Equities 10.8%	INTL Equities -7.8%	Balanced 12.8%	EM Equities 17.9%
CDN Bonds 8.7%	Balanced 10.6%	Balanced -10.0%	CDN Equities 11.8%	Balanced 16.5%
INTL Equities 6.4%	US HY Bonds 4.5%	US HY Bonds -11.1%	US HY Bonds 11.6%	INTL Equities 13.8%
Global Bonds 6.0%	Cash 0.1%	CDN Bonds -11.7%	EM Equities 7.3%	US HY Bonds 5.9%
CDN Equities 5.6%	Global Bonds -2.3%	US Equities -12.2%	CDN Bonds 6.7%	Cash 4.7%
US HY Bonds 5.1%	CDN Bonds -2.5%	Global Bonds -13.2%	Global Bonds 5.6%	CDN Bonds 4.2%
Cash 0.6%	EM Equities -3.1%	EM Equities -13.9%	Cash 4.8%	Global Bonds 1.4%

Note: All returns are total returns in Canadian dollars, unless otherwise noted. Source: RBC GAM, Morningstar Direct

	Fixed income				Equities					Balanced Portfolio
	Cash	Global Bonds	Canadian Bonds	U.S. High-Yield Bonds	Canadian Equities	U.S. Equities	International Equities	Emerging Market Equities		
FTSE Canada 30 Day TBill Index	FTSE World Government Bond Index (CAD Hedged)	FTSE Canada Universe Bond Index	ICE BofA US High-Yield BB-B Index (CAD Hedged)	S&P/TSX Composite Index	S&P 500 Index	MSCI EAFE Index	MSCI Emerging Markets Index	60% Equity / 40% Fixed Income		

Balanced Portfolio represented by 2% Cash, 38% Canadian Bonds, 15% Canadian Equities, 25% U.S. Equities, 15% International Equities and 5% Emerging Market Equities.

TURNING THE PRINCIPLES INTO ACTION

Applying the five principles of successful investing can help ensure your portfolio:

Is well-positioned for the long term.

Successfully navigates temporary periods of market volatility.

Takes advantage of opportunities as market conditions evolve.

Your advisor can help you put these investment principles into practice and keep you focused on your long-term plan.

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