

10 Tips: Make the Most of Your Retirement Savings

Where do you see yourself in retirement? On a mountaintop? Under a beach umbrella? Well, wherever you'd like to be, getting there will take more than wishful thinking. You'll have to use your head—and your retirement account. Plan for your golden years with these gems.

1. Save enough! Check out the calculators at valic.com to get a good idea of how much cash you'll need to feather your nest egg. Hey, you don't want to come up short in retirement.
2. Max out. Put as much as you can in your plan—at least as much as the company matches
3. Strategize wisely. Keep your asset allocation in line with your age, years until retirement and tolerance for risk.
4. Don't count on Social Security—it may not be there when you retire; and if it is, it may not be enough. *Another* reason to take full advantage of your employer's retirement plan.
5. Diversify. When you spread your money across a variety of stock and bond funds, you may reduce your risk of loss. (And who wouldn't want that?)
6. Think globally. Adding international investments to the mix adds diversification to your portfolio.
7. Stick to your long-term strategy. Try not to be influenced by short-term market volatility.
8. Rebalance once a year—bring your investments back in line with your original asset allocation.
9. Don't crack your nest egg. It's not a line of credit. If you need a loan, look elsewhere.
10. Once you have your employer-sponsored retirement plan in order, go for more tax-deferred growth with an Individual Retirement Account (IRA).

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