
Women & Money

Resources for Women Planning for Their Financial Security

A POWERCenter Publication
from the National Center on Women & Aging

About this booklet

All women want financial security now and in the future. Becoming well informed is the first step.

Americans have traditionally relied on the “3 -legged stool” – Social Security, pensions, and savings – for their retirement security. However, women in particular, cannot take for granted that their stool will have three strong legs. For example, not every woman has access to a pension and it can be very difficult to save. Even for women who have pensions and/or who can save, there are still questions about whether or not they are making the right choices.

With so much available, it can be difficult to find the information that is helpful for the average working woman who earns \$30,000 a year or less. This booklet, produced by the **POWERCenter**, highlights materials that are easy to understand, concise, and relevant to the specific needs of women at all stages of life. The information in this booklet can make it easier for you to get started and get moving on a plan. A number of the publications provide basic information for the beginner, and others have more advanced information.

How to use this booklet

Before you use this booklet you should know that:

- ◆ We reviewed hundreds of publications. We have listed only publications that are well written, well designed, and useful. These are some of the best of what is available now. More good material is constantly being developed.
- ◆ These materials are all either free or cost less than \$1 each. A few of the publications have a small processing charge. Most can be ordered by phone and/or are on the Internet.
- ◆ A few of the publications are available from companies that sell financial products or services. You do not need to be a customer to request free materials and your request will not make you a target for sales calls.

Contents

1. General Information to Get You Started
2. Savings and Investments
3. Social Security
4. Pensions and Employer-Sponsored Savings Plans
5. Questions to Ask if You Decide to Hire a Professional
6. Ordering Information

❖ *Variable Annuities: What You Should Know*

The fees and sales practices involved in variable annuities can be confusing. This booklet provides important information that investors considering variable annuities should read and understand before they buy.

To order a free copy, call the Securities and Exchange Commission: 1-800-732-0330.

Website: <http://www.sec.gov/investor/pubs/varannty.htm>

❖ *Invest Wisely: Advice From Your Securities Industry Regulators*

You need to select a brokerage firm or make initial investment decisions, but you're not familiar with the process and you don't know the right questions to ask. This document provides basic information to help you through this process.

To order a free copy, call the Securities and Exchange Commission: 1-800-732-0330.

Website: <http://www.sec.gov/investor/pubs/inws.htm>

❖ *Plain Talk®: Women and Investing*

This is another good general resource. It focuses on the differences between men and women as investors, giving facts, and examples, and drawing practical conclusions. Organized around five basic steps to follow in financial planning, it includes worksheets on net worth, budgeting, allocation preferences, and taking a financial inventory. It provides a detailed yet understandable description of mutual funds. Unfortunately, this piece ignores all other forms of investment and does not discuss how to assess how mutual funds might function as part of your retirement plan.

For a free copy call The Vanguard Group: 1-866-734-4524.

Website: <http://victory.vanguard.com/educ/lib/plain/women/ptwomeninvest.html>

Ordering Information

For a complete copy of any publication listed here, use the telephone number to order or download the article from the indicated website.

If ordering from the Consumer Information Center at 1-888-878-3256:

While there is no charge for individual free publications, there is a \$2.00 service fee to help defray program costs. That \$2.00 allows you to order as many of the free publications as you wish. Payment can be charged to VISA, MasterCard or Discover Card. Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery.

All of these resources are available as of January 2003. Continued availability is not guaranteed.

Copies of this *Women and Money* booklet are free and available from the POWERCenter. The POWERCenter is a joint project of the Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement (WISER) and the National Center on Women & Aging (NCWA) and is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Aging. This brochure was written by Arnaa Alcon, Ph.D., Associate Director, NCWA.

For more information, please contact the POWERCenter at 1-800-929-1995.

Your Feedback:

Please let us know in what ways this information has been useful to you.
Did you order and use any of the publications listed in this issue?
Were there references that you wanted that were not included in this list?

Write us at:

The National Center on Women & Aging
The Heller School for Social Policy and Management
MS 35
Brandeis University
Waltham, MA 02454-9110

E-mail any comments to: natwomctr@brandeis.edu

For more information on the POWERCenter: <http://www.wiser.heinz.org>

For more information on the National Center on Women & Aging:

<http://www.heller.brandeis.edu/national>