

Building savings habits

Students discuss useful savings habits and then write captions for a comic strip about saving money.

Learning goals

Big idea

Savings habits can help us save money.

Essential questions

- What are some habits that can help us save money?
- What savings habits can I develop?

Objectives

- Identify savings habits
- Understand how savings habits can help us save money

What students will do



- Discuss savings habits.
- Write comic-strip captions about savings habits.

NOTE

Please remember to consider your students' accommodations and special needs to ensure that all students are able to participate in a meaningful way.

KEY INFORMATION

Building block:

-  Financial habits and norms
-  Financial knowledge and decision-making skills

Grade level: Elementary school (4-5)

Age range: 9-11

Topic: Save and invest (Choosing how to save), Spend (Buying things)

School subject: English or language arts, Fine arts and performing arts

Teaching strategy: Direct instruction, Project-based learning

Bloom's Taxonomy level: Understand, Apply, Create

Activity duration: 45-60 minutes

National Standards for Personal Financial Education, 2021

Spending: 4-1, 4-3, 8-1

Saving: 4-2, 4-3, 4-4

These standards are cumulative, and topics are not repeated in each grade level. This activity may include information students need to understand before exploring this topic in more detail.

Preparing for this activity

- While it's not necessary, having students complete the "[Understanding our money choices](#)" activity first may make this activity more meaningful.
- Print copies of the student materials for each student, or prepare for students to access them electronically.

What you'll need

THIS TEACHER GUIDE

- [Building savings habits \(guide\)](#)
[cfpb_building_block_activities_building-savings-habits_guide.pdf](#)

STUDENT MATERIALS

- [Building savings habits \(worksheet\)](#)
[cfpb_building_block_activities_building-savings-habits_worksheet.pdf](#)

Exploring key financial concepts

Building savings habits can help you save money. One savings habit is called comparison shopping. When you want to buy something, it's a good idea to look at all of your options before you spend money. Compare each item's features and price and think about what's most important to you. Whether you're buying something big or small, comparison shopping can help you save money. Another savings habit is to spend less money so that you can save more. Some people also have the savings habit of paying themselves first. This means that when they get money, they put some into their savings before they're tempted to spend it. Most adults also have the habit of saving money in an account at a bank or a credit union to keep it safe. As you learn about using money, it's a good idea to develop your own helpful savings habits.

Teaching this activity

Whole-class introduction

- Ask students why it's a good idea to save money.
 - Be sure they explore how saving money helps you reach financial goals.

- For example, sometimes adults save money so they can take a nice vacation or buy a new car.
- Explain that people can create savings habits to help them save money.
- Share some examples of savings habits, such as:
 - Setting goals for saving money
 - Spending less money so you can save more
 - Having a savings account at a bank or credit union to keep your money safe
 - “Paying yourself first,” or saving some of the money you get before you’re tempted to spend it
 - Comparison shopping to find the best choice for you
- Tell students that they’ll write comic-strip captions about Money Monsters who are learning some savings habits.
- Be sure students understand key vocabulary:
 - **Comparison shopping:** The practice of comparing prices, features, benefits, risks, and other characteristics of two or more similar products or services.
 - **Savings:** Money you have set aside in a secure place, such as in a bank account, that you can use for future emergencies or to make specific purchases.
 - **Savings account:** An account at a bank (sometimes called a share savings account at a credit union) used to set aside money and that pays you interest.

TIP

Visit CFPB’s financial education glossary at consumerfinance.gov/financial-education-glossary/.

Individual work

- Distribute the “Building savings habits” worksheet to each student.
- Students will complete the worksheet independently.
- Students will write the captions for the “Money Monsters learn about savings habits” comic strip.
- Students will then answer the reflection questions.

Wrap-up

- Bring the class back together and ask for volunteers to discuss their choices.
- Ask volunteers to share their answers to the reflection questions.

Suggested next steps

Consider searching for other [CFPB activities](#) that address the topics of saving, including choosing how to save, and spending, including buying things. Suggested activities include ["Bringing your own bag"](#) and ["Choosing the perfect trip."](#)

Measuring student learning

Students' answers on their worksheets and during discussion can give you a sense of their understanding. **Keep in mind that students' answers may vary, as there may not be only one right answer.** The important thing is for students to have reasonable justification for their answers.