

Ben Franklin's 7 Steps to Financial Success

Americans are strong and confident about many things. But when it comes to money and financial security, that confidence is thrown out the window.

According to a 2015 [Pew report](#):

"Only half of Americans (51 percent) said their households are financially secure, and more than half (56 percent) reported worrying about their finances over the past year, citing everything from short-term bills to retirement. A majority (57 percent) also said they are not prepared for financial emergencies."

In 1748, Benjamin Franklin addressed this issue of money management in a piece entitled [Advice to a Young Tradesman](#). Franklin listed a variety of "hints" he had found helpful in his own monetary affairs, seven of which are listed below:

1. Avoid Idleness

"Remember that Time is Money. He that can earn Ten Shillings a Day by his Labour, and goes abroad, or sits idle one half of that Day, tho' he spends but Sixpence during his Diversion or Idleness, ought not to reckon That the only Expence...."

2. Avoid Debt

"Remember that Credit is Money. If a Man lets his Money lie in my Hands after it is due, he gives me the Interest, or so much as I can make of it during that Time."

3. Don't Underestimate the Value of Interest

“Remember that Money is of a prolific generating Nature. Money can beget Money, and its Offspring can beget more, and so on.”

4. Maintain a Budget

“[K]eep an exact Account for some Time of both your Expences and your Incomes. If you take the Pains at first to mention Particulars, it will have this good Effect; you will discover how wonderfully small trifling Expences mount up to large Sums...”

5. Pay Promptly

“He that is known to pay punctually and exactly to the Time he promises, may at any Time, and on any Occasion, raise all the Money his Friends can spare.”

6. Save Frequently

“He that gets all he can honestly, and saves all he gets (necessary Expences excepted) will certainly become Rich...”

7. Character is Key

“In short, the Way to Wealth, if you desire it, is as plain as the Way to Market. It depends chiefly on two Words, Industry and Frugality...”