**Money Mistakes Made by Millennials**

It’s natural to have uncertainties when it comes to money, especially when you’re young, but how are Millennials doing with financial management? Most of this group, born roughly between [1981 and 1997](http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/04/25/millennials-overtake-baby-boomers/), doesn’t feel financially secure now but believe they will be in the future, [according to a TD Ameritrade study](http://www.amtd.com/newsroom/research-and-story-ideas/research-and-story-ideas-details/2016/Millennials-and-Money-Survey/default.aspx). If you’re a Millennial, what can you do to keep on course and reach your financial goals? The\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Society of CPAs offers some sound advice.

**Don’t Get Tangled Up in Debt**

According to a [recent survey by the AICPA](http://www.aicpa.org/press/pressreleases/2017/pages/less-than-half-of-non-retired-americans-confident-theyll-reach-financial-goals-by-retirement-aicpa-survey.aspx), less than half of non-retired Americans are confident they will reach their retirement goals. In order to be better off during retirement, paying off that debt should be a priority. Missed payments can lead to a lower credit rating, which can make it difficult to take out other loans—such as for a car or home—and will likely increase the interest rates you have to pay on other debt. Minimizing your overall outstanding debt is always a good idea. It can be tempting to put purchases on a credit card when you’re first starting out, but spending no more than what you can afford can help save you money on interest payments and make it easier to reach your financial goals, especially if you also have a large student loan balance.

**Don’t Miss Growth Opportunities**

Even if you consider yourself a saver, it can be difficult to know the best way to invest to help your money grow. If you’re hiding it under your mattress or parking it in a low-interest-rate savings account, you could be missing out on the chance for potential investment growth opportunities. Of course, you should be fully informed about all the possible risks of an investment, including the chance for losses as well as profits. And you should also consider your own comfort level—or risk tolerance—when making any investment. But if you are setting aside money for long-term goals, such as retirement or a child’s college education, you’ll want to select an investment strategy that allows for potential growth. Your CPA can help you determine your goals and offer advice on the kinds of investments that can best help you achieve them.

**Do Have an Emergency Fund**

Millennials have grown up in a time of economic uncertainty. Are you financially prepared for job loss, illness or other emergencies that could have an impact on your financial life? CPAs generally recommend putting aside enough to cover three to six months of household expenses. If that sounds like a lot, remember, saving a few dollars a week will get you there eventually, every little bit helps. The most important step is simply to get started.

**Don’t Leave Money on the Table**

If you’re out in the workforce, are you contributing to a tax-advantaged [retirement plan](http://www.360financialliteracy.org/Topics/Retirement-Planning)? If you aren’t, you’re missing out on the chance to potentially lower your taxes while building up your retirement account. If you’re eligible to contribute to an employer-sponsored retirement plan, are you chipping in enough to qualify for the maximum retirement contribution match from your employer? If not, you’re passing up free money that will help pump up your retirement nest egg even more!

**Do Get Expert Help**

As you chart your financial future, there’s no reason to go it alone. Your local CPA works with people at all stages of their financial lives, helping them make the best decisions for their unique needs. Be sure to contact your CPA with all your financial questions and visit [360finlit.org](http://www.360financialliteracy.org/) to learn more about how to manage your personal finances.