

Assess Your Finances



Where is your money? Don't be a person who doesn't know the answer. While survey show that one in four couples don't talk about money before marriage, encouraging evidence shows that over 60% of younger adults (age 18-29) do communicate about and make plans for joining finances before marriage.ⁱ Unfortunately, this may be because of the increased education debt of this generation. Regardless of your age, it's critical to know your assets, debts, and that you share that information with your partner.

For this worksheet, gather up anything relevant – bank statements, legal documents, credit card statements, paychecks – and sit down together to figure out where your money is.

Financial planner suggest that you come up with a joint system for your finances. This can be as simple as getting a bunch of manila folders and some hanging files and putting them in categories (a lot like the ones below)ⁱⁱ or creating similar digital folders on your desktop or a shared cloud. Include a copy of this worksheet – printed or digital – along with your folders, and keep it updated.

Creating these folders will save yourself the trouble of having to find all the paperwork again later when you're thinking about how much of a loan you need to pay off or how much your retirement account has in it.

Also, remember, this is not an algebra problem, a comparison, or a competition, it is simply a worksheet to get it all out in the open.

Asset and Debt Worksheet

Date:

Partner's Name:

Partner's Name:

ASSETS

Real Estate:

Securities:

Cash in Bank:

Life Insurance (face value):

Retirement (pension, IRA, 401K, 403B):

ASSETS

Real Estate:

Securities:

Cash in Bank:

Life Insurance (face value):

Retirement (pension, IRA, 401K, 403B):

DEBTS

Credit Cards:

Loans (school, personal, car):

DEBTS

Credit Cards:

Loans (school, personal, car):

INCOME

Annual Income:

Expectation of Gifts/Inheritance:

INCOME

Annual Income:

Expectation of Gifts/Inheritance:

Get Your Credit Report!

Knowledge is power, and when it comes to money, a little bit of basic knowledge can do you a ton of good. Do this one quick thing: *Get your credit report*. Know your score. It's a favorite refrain for Suze Ormanⁱⁱⁱ and other financial gurus: Find out your FICO score (the gold standard of credit scores, developed by the Fair Isaac Corporation) that's based on whether you pay your bills on time, your credit card balance compared to your credit limit, the length of your credit history, your recent applications for credit, and your mix of credit cards and loans. You can get your credit reports online from Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion—and you can get one free credit report from each, every year.

CREDIT SCORE:

CREDIT SCORE:

ⁱ Country Financial Security. (2013). Love is blind, even with dollar signs [Blog post]. Retrieved from: <http://www.countryfinancialsecurityblog.com/cfsi-full-may-2013/>

ⁱⁱ Bach, D. (2002). *Smart Couples Finish Rich*. New York, NY: Broadway Books.

ⁱⁱⁱ Orman, S. (2010). Managing debt. Retrieved from:

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