Super health check

Use this checklist to review the health of your super in 5 easy steps.

Why you should review your super

Your super is one of the biggest assets you'll accumulate in your lifetime.

However, many Australians think they don't need to worry about their super until retirement. Some don't think about it at all.

It's never too early to think about your super and the earlier you get on top of it, the better. It's a good idea to regularly review and manage your super. At the very least, make sure you:

- are getting the super you are entitled to from your employer
- know where it is.

Small decisions you make today can have big impacts on your final super outcomes.

For instance, missing out on some employer contributions today, could have a huge impact on your super balance in retirement due to the compounding effect of earnings. The same can happen if you have lost or unclaimed super.

Benefits of a super health check

A super health check consists of 5 simple and important things you can do to get on top of your super today. It will help you:

- manage your super
- understand your entitlements
- make better choices for when you retire.

You can check on your super at any time. However, we suggest you get into the habit of doing a health check each year when you prepare your tax return.

Get started

To start, follow the prompts below.

The best way to perform these checks is either on ATO online services through myGov or by contacting your super fund directly. You just need a myGov account linked to the ATO.

Once you link your myGov account, you can also use the ATO app.

Check 1: Check your contact details

Check your contact details, tax file number (TFN) and bank account are up to date with us and your super fund. This helps prevent lost super and assists us in matching any unclaimed super to you.

Log on to ATO online services through myGovExternal Link. In the top menu, select **My profile**. From the drop-down options, select either:

- **Personal details** to update your name, contact number, email and home address
- **Financial institution details** to update your bank account and
    - under the **Account** heading, you will see **Income Tax** and **Superannuation**

    - select either **Add** or **Update**.

To update your contact details, bank account and TFN with your super fund, see their website or contact them directly.

Check 2: Check your super balance and employer contributions

It's important to check your super balance each year to see how much you have and keep track of your employer contributions. You can do this anytime on ATO online services or through your super fund.

Your employer should pay your super at least every 3 months. They may choose to do it more frequently, such as your regular pay cycle. From 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, your employer should pay at least 10.5% of your salary into your super. From 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, the rate increases to 11%. If you're under 18, you need to work more than 30 hours a week to be eligible for super.

Funds report account balances to us at certain times of the year. Balances shown in ATO online services may be different to your actual current balances.

Log on to ATO online services through myGovExternal Link. From the top menu, select **Super** and then either:

- **Fund Details** to see all your super accounts and balances (including those held in funds or with us) and the most recent date reported by your fund
- **Information** then **Employer contributions** to see the total year-to-date employer contributions in a selected year – select **Transactions** to see each contribution separately.

For help calculating the amount of super your employer should be paying, use our Estimate my super tool. If you do not receive super contributions or the amounts are incorrect:

- contact your employer and request an update
- report it to us.

Check 3: Check for lost and unclaimed super

You may have lost track of some of your super when you changed your name, address or job, for example. This is why it's important to ensure your fund has your current details.

Lost super is when your fund has lost touch with you, or your account is inactive. This money is held by your fund. Unclaimed super is when your fund transfers lost super to us.

All your super accounts including lost and ATO held super are displayed on ATO online services.

Log on to ATO online services through myGovExternal Link. From the top menu, select **Super**. Then select either:

- **Fund details** to check for lost super – if you want to keep your super with the same fund, contact them directly to update your details
- **Manage** and then **Transfer super** to transfer this lost super to an eligible super account – or ask your fund to complete the transfer for you
- **Manage** and then **Transfer super** to transfer ATO held super to an eligible super account
- **Manage** then **Withdraw ATO-held super** to have your super paid directly to you if the amount is less than $200 or you are over 65.

Check 4: Check if you have multiple super accounts and consider consolidating

If you've had more than one job, you may have more than one super account. It's important to know how many super accounts you have. Combing your super may reduce fees and make it easier to manage.

If you decide to consolidate your super, it's important to choose the fund that's right for you. You should check that it provides better value, and the insurance cover suits your needs, which may change throughout your life. To see which fund is the best option for you, visit MoneySmartExternal Link. If you are unsure of what to do, contact your super fund or seek independent financial advice.

Log on to ATO online services through myGovExternal Link. From the top menu, select **Super** then either:

- **Fund details** to see all your super accounts and balances
- **Manage** and then **Transfer super** to consolidate your accounts, then
    - select the fund you want to close (transfer)
    - select the fund you want your money

    transferred to from the accounts listed
  - confirm your selection and submit request.

Check 5: Check your nominated beneficiary

Take the time to ensure you have a valid death beneficiary nomination in place in your super fund as this isn't covered by your will. This means your loved ones will not be put through unnecessary difficulties to finalise your estate.

Most binding nominations expire every 3 years. Some super funds have an option where nominations do not expire and remain in place until they are revoked.

If you don't nominate a beneficiary, your fund may not know who your benefit should be paid to. In these cases, they will follow the law. This usually means they pay it to one or more of your dependents or your legal personal representative.

To check or nominate your death beneficiary:

- Refer to your super fund's website or contact them to check if you already have a valid nomination in place.
- To update it, complete the form from your super fund, sign and date in the presence of 2 witnesses.
- If you are unsure, contact your super fund or seek independent financial or legal advice from a qualified estate planner.

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Striking a Balance: How to Achieve Financial Independence and Enjoy It Too

Striving for financial independence is an important goal for many people, as it helps them focus and create concrete plans for their desired outcomes.

However, what happens after you achieve financial independence or FI?

Some actually find it difficult to transition from the achievement phase to the enjoyment phase.

To ensure you make the most out of your newfound freedom, consider the following discussion on achieving and enjoying financial independence.

Achievement vs. enjoyment

Human nature drives people to pursue new achievements and improvements constantly. While this has been essential for humanity's progress, it can hinder one's ability to feel content and happy.

When you reach a significant goal like FI, you may struggle to slow down and enjoy the rewards because your mind is still stuck in goal-setting mode.

Transitioning from achievement to enjoyment

The key to enjoying financial independence lies in undergoing a mental transition.

You need to shift your mindset from constant goal-chasing to embracing the freedom and opportunities that FI provides. This doesn't mean completely abandoning your goals, but rather finding a healthy balance between achievement and enjoyment.

The reality of financial independence

Contrary to what you may expect, early retirement might not be as exciting as it seems.

After an initial adjustment period, you may find yourself restless and searching for new goals or projects. This is normal, as our minds and bodies need time to recalibrate to a new way of living.

Embrace this period of transition and understand that the satisfaction of achieving FI may gradually evolve into a comforting sense of contentment.

Moving from achievement to enjoyment

To shift your focus successfully from achievement to enjoyment, consider the following:

- Recognise and appreciate your unique position as someone who has achieved FI.
- Give yourself permission to do whatever you want, whether that's working or relaxing.
- Cultivate mindfulness in your daily activities to appreciate the present.

Practising gratitude is also essential in making this mental transition. With more time and mental space available after achieving financial independence, you can work on cultivating gratitude and enhancing your overall sense of well-being.

Embracing a new way of life

After achieving financial independence, you may still yearn for a sense of purpose and usefulness. This means that even as you transition towards the enjoyment phase, further achievements are likely to follow. The key is to find a balance that allows you to enjoy a satisfying life, combining both achievement and enjoyment.

By approaching life with a new mindset, you can focus on meaningful activities and projects that genuinely interest you rather than solely pursuing new goals for the sake of filling your schedule or avoiding boredom. Doing this will allow you to enjoy your life more and make the most out of your financial freedom.

If this article has inspired you to think about your own unique situation and, more importantly, what you, your family or your business are going through right now, please contact your advice professional.

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(Feedsy Exclusive)

Navigating the Emotional Stages of Retirement: A Comprehensive Guide

Retirement is a significant milestone in anyone's life, often accompanied by a wide range of emotions.

While retirement is considered a time to relax and enjoy the fruits of your labour, it can also be challenging to navigate the emotional roller coaster that accompanies this new phase in your life.

If you're considering retirement or wondering what it would be like, this article could help. Here, we discuss the emotional stages of retirement and offer useful tips for managing each stage successfully.

1. Anticipation

The first stage of retirement is anticipation, characterised by excitement and optimism about the future. You may feel a sense of relief, knowing that your working days are behind you. However, it's essential to prepare for this transition.

Tip: Develop a retirement plan that outlines the financial goals, hobbies, and interests you'd like to pursue. This plan will provide a roadmap for your retirement years and help you maintain a sense of purpose.

2. Liberation

The second stage of retirement is liberation, which typically occurs within the first few months of retirement. You may feel a renewed sense of freedom, no longer constrained by a routine or daily work schedule. It's the perfect time to explore new hobbies, travel, or spend time with loved ones.

Tip: Create a balanced routine that includes physical activity, social interaction, and intellectual stimulation. This will help you maintain your overall well-being and make the most of your newfound freedom.

3. Disenchantment

After the initial euphoria of liberation, you may enter the stage of disenchantment. This period is characterised by feelings of boredom, loneliness, or even depression. It's common for retirees to question their decision to retire and struggle to find a new sense of identity.

Tip: Stay connected with friends, family, and former colleagues, and consider joining clubs or organisations to meet new people. Volunteering can also provide you with a sense of purpose and help you combat feelings of disenchantment.

4. Reorientation

The fourth stage, reorientation, involves redefining your identity and adjusting to your new lifestyle. You may start to develop new routines and goals, which will help you feel more settled and content in your retirement.

Tip: Reflect on your values, interests, and passions to help guide your decision-making during this stage. Set new goals, both short-term and long-term, and track your progress to maintain motivation.

5. Stability

Finally, the last stage of retirement is stability, where you would have successfully adjusted to your new life and feel a sense of satisfaction and fulfilment. This stage can last for the remainder of your retirement as long as you continue to maintain balance and prioritise your well-being.
Tip: Regularly reassess your goals and interests to ensure they align with your current situation. Stay adaptable and open to change, as this will help you continue to grow and enjoy a fulfilling retirement.

Have a happy retirement

The emotional stages of retirement are not linear, and you may find yourself experiencing them in different orders or even revisiting certain stages.

By understanding these stages and implementing the tips provided, you can navigate the emotional landscape of retirement and make the most of this new chapter in your life.

If this article has inspired you to think about your own unique situation and, more importantly, what you and your family are going through right now, please contact your advice professional.

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