

Your Financial Notebook

A financial notebook is your personal financial blueprint. It's a road map for loved ones—in case you are seriously ill, are injured, or die—saving them countless hours trying to figure out your financial affairs. Keep it in a safe place. Here are **some** of the items (copies, not originals) you may wish to include in your financial notebook.

Account information

- Credit union account numbers and contact information
- Brokerage account numbers and contact information
- Financial advisers and contact information of agent and company

Estate planning/legal documents

- Wills, trusts
- Advance directives
- Powers of attorney
- Letters of instruction, funeral instructions

Family information

- Family members and contact information
- Education records
- Employment records

Financial documents

- Cash-flow statement
- Net-worth statement
- Spending plan (budget)
- Loans
- Tax records, including copies of tax returns



Insurance and health records

- Copies of all policies (agent name, company, contact information) for auto, homeowners/renters, health, life, disability, long-term care)

Inventories

- Personal property/household inventory
- Safe deposit box contents
- Wallet contents

Personal records

- Certificates: birth, adoption, citizenship, marriage, divorce, death
- Financial goals
- Location of important documents

Property records

- Vehicles
- Real estate
- Investments (stocks, mutual funds, bonds, other investments)

Retirement planning documents

- Pension benefit statements
- Social Security Earnings and Benefits Estimate Statements (review for accuracy)
- Tax-deferred and individual retirement plans (IRAs)

Where to Keep Financial Records

Home active files

- Bills to pay
- Important papers before transferring to permanent file
- Spending plan (budget)

Carry with you

- Credit, debit, ATM cards
- Driver's license
- Identification
- Insurance cards (auto, health)
- Medical cards (allergies, diseases, donor)
- Membership cards (example: auto clubs)

Home permanent files

Automobile records

- Maintenance/repair records
- Registration receipts

Credit card records

- Cardholder agreements
- Contact information if card is lost or stolen
- Statements that document deductions, warranties, large purchases

Educational records

- Transcripts, diplomas, certificates

Employment records

- Contracts
- Employee handbook and benefits manuals
- Pay stubs (compare with W-2 forms, then shred)
- Résumé

Financial accounts

- Brokerage and other accounts
- Share draft/checking (cancelled checks, statements, registers, transfer information)
- Share/savings (statements, deposit slips, share book)

Housing records

- Deposit records (security, utility)
- Equipment serial/model numbers, warranties
- Instruction manuals
- Lease or rental agreements
- Mortgage payment records
- Property tax records
- Utilities (gas/electric, phone, water, sewer)

Insurance records

- Claim forms
- Household inventory (for claims process)
- Policies

Investments

- Earnings statements
- Reference information/documents
- Transaction receipts

Keys

- Car, house, safe deposit box

Legal documents/estate planning (copies only)

- Advance directives
- Powers of attorney
- Wills, trusts

Medical records

- Vaccinations, immunizations, surgeries

Memberships

- Organizations, road service, frequent traveler programs
- Renewal information

Military records

- Benefits, service records

Pets

- Health, microchip, and license records

Retirement

- Pension and annuity records
- Retirement account information

Social Security records

- Cards (copies)
- Earnings and Benefit Estimate Statements

Subscriptions

- Names, renewal information

Tax-related information

- Deductible expenses for current year
- Past returns (keep the past two years in permanent files)

Home inactive file

- Cancelled checks/receipts (for tax purposes, large purchases, warranties)
- Debt repayment receipts/proof of payment
- Home improvement receipts/records
- Mortgage refinance records
- Medical/health records (3+ years old)
- Tax returns—(3+ years old, 1099s, W-2s)

Safe deposit box or fireproof safe

- Certificates (birth, death, marriage, adoption, citizenship, divorce)
- Contracts/leases
- Guardianship agreements
- Household inventory (lists, photos, videotape)
- Licenses (professional)
- Passport
- Stock, bond, and securities certificates
- Titles/deeds
- Valuables (jewelry, silver, rare coins)
- Wills, trusts (copies)

What's Your Record Keeping IQ?

To get your financial house in order, close loopholes in your current record keeping system. Ask yourself these questions, and tally your score to see how organized you really are.

		Yes	No
1.	Do I have a well-labeled record keeping system that someone else could easily follow?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Do I review my active records annually and discard or update information?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Do I have another family member or close friend who can access my electronic records—or find hard copies—in case of an emergency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Do I have a list of important contacts and data, such as credit union and insurance representatives, brokers, tax preparers, creditors, employers, and credit card account numbers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Do I know where all my legal documents are located, and would my loved ones be able to find them quickly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Do I have a back-up plan if my electronic files are erased, or my hard copies are stolen or destroyed by a fire or flood?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Do I have a safe deposit box for legal papers, contracts, deeds, wills, and so on?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Do I have an updated household inventory of major possessions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Are my home office files updated, and do they include hard copies or software for important financial documents related to tax returns, net-worth statement, spending plan, and so on?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Tally your score by adding the number of “yes” answers:

- 8 – 9: Excellent! You're very well organized. Go to the head of the class, but make sure you *stay* organized.
- 6 – 7: Not bad, but you need to identify two or three areas of improvement and fine-tune your system.
- 4 – 5: You're on the edge. Figure out where you want to start, and “bite off” one improvement at a time.
- 1 – 3: OK, so organization isn't one of your strengths. Take a deep breath, be open to ideas, try different systems, and find strength in the fact that you can only go up from here!

Resources

- **Safeguarding Your Valuables**

https://emilms.fema.gov/is909/assets/11_safeguardingvaluable_s.pdf

- **Home Inventory Checklist**

http://www.dfs.ny.gov/consumer/homeown/home_invchklst.pdf

- **What my Family Needs to Know**

<https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/154946.pdf>

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How To Choose A Safe

Not sure where to start? Here are some guidelines you can follow to find the best safe for you.

Protection

When considering a safe, there are three main things you want to protect your items from — fire, water, and theft. Whether you live somewhere that is prone to flooding or you're worried about a break-in, be sure to select a safe that offers the types of protection most appropriate to your needs.

Lock Style

Mechanical locks require periodic maintenance, whereas electronic locks typically don't. You'll get the highest level of protection from redundant locks—two different kinds of locks on the same safe.

Size

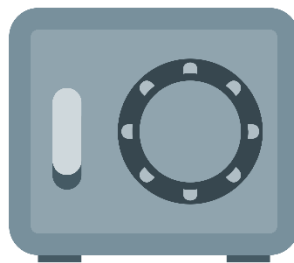
The more documents and valuables you'd like to protect, the larger the safe needs to be. Before purchasing your safe, gather everything you're planning on putting in there. See how much space you'll need for those items. This is a great gauge for minimum safe sizing, as you'll also likely add things to the safe as time passes.

Portability

Home safes come in portable, wall-mounted, and anchored varieties. A recent "U.S. News & World Report" article strongly cautions against portable safes because they're easily moved, making them more susceptible to theft.

Budget

When choosing your safe, you want to go with the most protection you can afford. You are making this investment to help protect some of your most valuable items, so it's important to choose a safe that will get the job done. Also, when you don't go with the lowest grade safe, it'll be something you can use for years to come.



Be Prepared With A Home Inventory



Having an up-to-date home inventory will help you:

- Purchase enough insurance to replace the things you own.
- Get your insurance claims settled faster.
- Substantiate losses for your income tax return.

You can always simply make a list in a notebook and save receipts and photos in a file.

GETTING STARTED

There are many ways to create a home inventory. It may seem hard at first to record information about everything you have in your house, but don't let that put you off. First, decide on a way to make an inventory that works for you. You can do it room by room, category by category (furniture, electronics, etc.), from newest items to oldest or from most expensive purchases to less expensive ones.

TAKING INVENTORY

There are different ways to making your list. You can write everything down in a notebook, for example. Or you can take pictures, writing information on the back of the photos or put information on your computer. If you have a video camera, you can walk through your house filming and describing the contents at the same time. If you have a personal computer, you can sign-up for free online software that makes creating and keeping a home inventory easy at www.KNOWYOURSTUFF.org

Keep receipts when they are available and note the cost for the item, when you bought it and other information about the make and model.

Expensive items like jewelry and art work may need to be insured separately. Ask your insurance agent whether you need a floater for your homeowners policy.

Store a copy of your inventory in a safe place outside of you home—with a friend or in a safe deposit box. (If your inventory is electronic, store it on a disk.) That way you'll be sure to have something to give your insurance representative if your home is damaged. Also, whenever you make a significant purchase, remember to add the information to your inventory while the details are fresh in your mind.

BIG TICKET ITEMS

Make note of expensive items, such as jewelry, furs, and collectibles. Valuable items may need separate insurance. But, don't forget more commonplace items such as toys, CD's and clothing.

TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS

Along with the written information, consider adding photographs of your possessions, which can be done easily with a digital camera. Those with film cameras can scan printed photographs or have their film developer save the images to a disk. You can always simply store your print photographs with a copy of your inventory.

VIDEOTAPE IT

Walk through your house or apartment videotaping the contents. Remember to open drawers and closets. One advantage of videotape is that you can narrate what you are filming.

MAKING LISTS

In some case, items below are listed by the room in which they are most likely to be found. In other cases, they are grouped together by category. For many items like books, CDs, sheets or pots and pans, you can make a general estimate of how many you have and their estimated value.

HOME INVENTORY

You can refer to the following lists to help create your inventories. Write a brief description of the item including when and where it was bought and its make or model number.

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GENERAL APPLIANCES

- Televisions
- VCR/DVD player
- Video camera
- CD player
- Stereo equipment
- CDs, records
- Radios
- Sewing machine
- Cameras
- Answering machine
- Phones
- Washer/Dryer
- Air conditioners
- Heaters
- Fans
- Vacuum cleaner
- Exercise equipment

GENERAL HOUSEHOLD

- Carpet/rugs
- Window treatments
- Bookcases
- Chairs
- Lamps/light fixtures
- Clocks
- Mirrors
- Vases
- Collections (coin, stamp, etc.)
- Pictures/wall hangings

LIVING ROOM

- Sofa
- Chairs
- Coffee table
- End tables
- Entertainment center/wall units
- Piano/other musical instruments

DINING ROOM

- Buffet
- Table
- Chairs
- China cabinet
- China
- Silverware
- Crystal
- Table linens
- Tea/coffee sets
- Serving table/cart

BEDROOMS

- Beds
- Bed Linens
- Dressers/Chests
- Dressing Tables
- Night tables

CLOTHING

- Shoes
- Coats
- Furs
- Suits
- Dresses
- Sweaters
- Sports Apparel
- Shirts
- Skirts
- Jewelry

KITCHEN

- Table
- Chairs
- Refrigerator
- Freezer
- Stove
- Microwave Oven
- Oven
- Dishwasher
- Coffee makers/other small appliances
- Pots/Pans
- Dishes
- Glasses
- Kitchen Utensils

BATHROOMS

- Hair dryer/other electrical appliances
- Scale
- Shower Curtains
- Towels

HOME OFFICE/STUDY/DEN

- Desk
- Chairs
- Sofa
- Computer
- Printer
- Scanner
- Fax Machine
- Books
- Tables
- Business Supplies

GARAGE/BASEMENT/ATTIC/S HED

- Furniture
- Luggage/Trunks
- Sports Equipment
- Toys/Outdoor Games
- Bicycles
- Small Boats
- Trailers
- Lawn Mower
- Snow Blower
- Shovels
- Sprinkler/Hoses
- Wheelbarrel/Other Garden Tools and Supplies
- Ladders
- Work Bench
- Carpentry Tools/Supplies
- Holiday Decorations

PORCH/PATIO

- Garden Chairs
- Garden Tables
- Umbrellas
- Outdoor Cooking Equipment
- Planters
- Jacuzzi

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- Licenses (professional)
- Passport
- Stock, bond, and securities certificates
- Titles/deeds
- Valuables (jewelry, silver, rare coins)
- Wills, trusts (copies)

Travis Credit Union

What to Keep

and what to throw away



What to Keep

and for how long

Credit Card Receipts and Statements



Keep receipts until your monthly statement arrives; if that's correct, shred the receipts. **Exceptions:** Keep a receipt if you're disputing a bill or to cover a warranty or return period. Keep the statements for seven years if they contain tax-related expenses.

Retirement/Savings Plan Statements



Keep quarterly statements until you receive your annual summary; if everything is correct on the annual summary, shred the quarterlies. It's best to hold on to annual statements until you retire or close the account. Keep important notices and contacts for retirement plans and pensions permanently.

House Records



Keep purchase price information and the cost of permanent improvements to your property, such as remodeling. Also, if you buy or sell property, keep records of legal fees and your real estate agent's commission for six years after you sell your house. Keeping these records, especially home improvements records, is a good idea and could potentially assist you in lower capital gains tax should you decide to sell.

Miscellaneous



Also keep these permanently: updated household inventory, birth and death certificates, marriage license, divorce papers, military records, insurance claims, accident reports and claims, proof of ownership and major debt repayment, and legal correspondence.

45 Days

One Year

Six Years

Seven Years

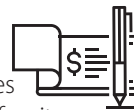
Permanently

Paycheck Stubs



Make sure the information on your paycheck stub matches your annual W-2 when you receive it, then shred the stubs. If your employer lists vacation/sick leave carryover on your paycheck stub, keep the last one of the year. Notify your employer if the information doesn't match.

Bills



Keep bills for major purchases – cars, jewelry, furniture, computers, and so on – to show proof of their value in the event of loss or damage. For other bills, once you know payment has cleared your credit union for a particular bill and the return/refund period has expired, shred that bill.

Credit Union Records



At the end of each year, go through your share draft carbons or statements and only keep those related to taxes, business expenses, and housing or mortgage payments.

Tax Records



The IRS has three years to audit your return, and you have three years to file an amended return to claim a refund if you made a mistake. If you made the mistake of underreporting your gross income by 25% or more on a return, the IRS has six years to challenge it. If you filed a fraudulent return or didn't file one at all, the IRS can catch you on it at any time. Keep a copy of all 1040 tax forms permanently.

IRA Contributions



Keep nondeductible contribution records permanently in case you need to prove you paid tax on the money when you want to withdraw it.

Being Prepared

It is essential to organize your important documents and know where they are located. Visit *Ready.gov* to learn how to get organized.

Keep copies of important financial documents, including: wills, deeds, Social Security cards, credit union/credit card account information, medical insurance information, family, medical and tax records.

Tax Tip

When reconciling statements,* sort check carbons by tax category and store them that way. Keep the rest for a year then shred. You'll get a head start on taxes and reduce volume of paper stored.

All important documents should be cross-cut shredded to protect you from identity theft.

Free Shred Events

Travis offers free shredding events in several locations throughout the year. This is a great opportunity to properly dispose of personal and financial information you no longer need to keep. Generally, participants are invited to bring up to three boxes, or box equivalents, of personal and business documents to be professionally shredded. Please no e-waste. Look for one close to you at traviscu.org/calendar.

*Travis Credit Union does not offer tax advice. Please consult your tax advisor for more information.

Mailing & Shipping

Mailing Address

Travis Credit Union
P.O. Box 2069
Vacaville, CA 95696

Deposits & Loan Payments Only

Travis Credit Union
P.O. Box 8000
Travis AFB, CA 94535

Shipping & Overnight Mail

Travis Credit Union
One Travis Way
Vacaville, CA 95696

Account Access & Information

Web Site Address

www.traviscu.org

Call-24 Phone Banking

(707) 449-4700 or (800) 578-3282

Member Service Center

Account Assistance and Information

(707) 449-4000 or (800) 877-8328

PhoneLoan™

(707) 451-5350 or (800) 877-8328

Home Loan Center

One Travis Way, Vacaville, CA 95687
(707) 469-2000 or (888) 698-0000

Check Fraud Information

(707) 469-4384 or
(800) 877-8328, ext. 4384#

Debit/Credit Card Fraud Information

(707) 449-4000 or (800) 877-8328

Everyone who lives, works, worships or attends school in Alameda, Colusa, Contra Costa, Merced, Napa, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Sonoma, Solano, Stanislaus or Yolo County is eligible to join. Certain membership eligibility requirements may apply.

Federally insured by NCUA.

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