

# Saving and investing card game

Students play a game to learn the difference between saving and investing and explore when to save or invest.

## Learning goals

### Big idea

Understanding the difference between saving and investing can help you manage your money.

### Essential questions

- What's the difference between saving and investing?
- What do people think about when they're deciding whether to save or invest?

### Objectives

- Learn the difference between saving and investing
- Consider which option might be useful in different scenarios

### What students will do



- Explore the difference between saving and investing.
- Play a game to decide when to save and when to invest.

#### NOTE

Please remember to consider your students' accommodations and special needs to ensure that all students are able to participate in a meaningful way.

#### KEY INFORMATION

Building block:

-  Executive function
-  Financial knowledge and decision-making skills

Grade level: Middle school (6-8)

Age range: 11-14

Topic: Save and invest (Choosing how to save, Investing, Saving for long-term goals, Saving for short-term goals)

School subject: CTE (Career and technical education), Social studies or history

Teaching strategy: Cooperative learning, Gamification

Bloom's Taxonomy level: Remember, Understand

Activity duration: 45-60 minutes

#### National Standards for Personal Financial Education, 2021

Spending: 4-1, 8-1

Saving: 4-2, 8-1, 8-3, 8-4, 8-5, 8-6

Investing: 4-1, 4-2, 8-2, 8-4, 8-6, 8-7

These standards are cumulative, and topics are not repeated in each grade level. This activity may include information students need to understand before exploring this topic in more detail.

## Preparing for this activity

- While it's not necessary, completing the "[Exploring savings habits](#)" activity first may make this one more meaningful.
- You'll divide your class into teams of three to five students each. For each team, print one copy of the answer cards at the end of this guide.
- Cut each sheet in half so that each team will have one card that says "Save" and one that says "Invest."
- Prepare the scenarios and answer guide listed at the end of this guide in a way that lets you display them one at a time to the class without showing the answers.
  - You can project the scenarios on a screen, write them on a board, or read them aloud.

### What you'll need

#### THIS TEACHER GUIDE

- [Saving and investing card game](#) (guide)  
[cfpb\\_building\\_block\\_activities\\_saving-investing-card-game\\_guide.pdf](#)
- [Scenarios and answer guide](#) (in this guide)

#### STUDENT MATERIALS

- [Sets of answer cards](#) (in this guide)

## Exploring key financial concepts

There are important differences between saving and investing. Generally, people use savings for shorter-term financial goals such as vacations or expensive purchases. They often put the money they want to save in a savings account. In many cases, money put into savings accounts is insured by the federal government. Also, people usually can easily access the money in their savings accounts. But you don't usually make very much money from savings accounts.

For longer-term financial goals that may take five or more years to reach, people often choose to invest their money. Generally, investing will earn more over the long term than a savings account. Money in investments can be harder to access than

### NOTE

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It's important to emphasize that all investments have some level of risk.

### TIP

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Because savings and investment products, terms, and laws change, students should be encouraged to always look for the most up-to-date information.

money in savings accounts. Investing also comes with higher risks. Sometimes people make investments and lose money.

Understanding the difference between saving and investing can help you create a financial plan that works for you now and in the future.

## Teaching this activity

### Whole-class introduction

- Be sure students understand key vocabulary:
  - **Invest:** To commit money to earn a financial return; the strategic purchase or sale of assets to produce income or capital gains. (An asset is an item with economic value, such as stock or real estate.)
  - **Investment:** Something you spend your money on that you expect will earn a financial return.
  - **Long-term goals:** Goals that can take more than five years to achieve.
  - **Return:** The profit or loss on an investment.
  - **Risk:** Exposure to danger, harm, or loss.
  - **Savings:** Money you have set aside in a secure place, such as in a bank account, that you can use for future emergencies or to make specific purchases.
  - **Short-term goals:** Goals that can take a short time, or up to five years, to reach.
- Ask students to give you examples of short-term goals and long-term goals.
- Tell students that they'll play a game where you'll give them a scenario and they'll work together to decide if saving or investing is a better option.
  - You can read the "Key financial concepts" section of this guide to help students understand the difference between saving and investing.
- Divide the class into teams of three to five students each and give each team one card that says "Save" and one that says "Invest."
- Ask for a volunteer to keep score for the class.

#### TIP

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Visit CFPB's financial education glossary at [consumerfinance.gov/financial-education-glossary/](https://consumerfinance.gov/financial-education-glossary/).

## Group work

- Display a scenario so the entire class can see it or read it aloud. Make sure the answer doesn't show.
- Team members will talk with one another to decide whether the scenario calls for saving or investing.
- Once they have picked their option, they'll put the card they chose face down in front of them (so the answer can't be seen).
- After each team has placed their card face down, ask one student from each team to hold up the card to reveal their answer.
- Tell the students the correct answer.
- The scorekeeper will give one point to each team with the correct answer.
- Continue to play until you've completed all the scenarios.
- The team with the most points at the end of the game wins.

## Wrap-up

Address any questions students may have about the difference between saving and investing.

## Suggested next steps

Consider searching for other [CFPB activities](#) that address the topics of saving and investing, including choosing how to save, saving for long-term goals, or saving for short-term goals. Suggested activities include ["Making a good business investment"](#) and ["Contrasting long-term and short-term savings goals."](#)

## Measuring student learning

Students' responses during the game and the discussion can give you a sense of their understanding.

This answer guide provides possible answers for the game. **Keep in mind that students' answers may vary.** The important thing is for students to have reasonable justification for their answers.

## Scenarios and answer guide

Scenario	Answer
Davina wants a new scooter. Should she save or invest?	<b>Save</b>
Eli is trying to have enough money to buy a house in 10 years. Should he save or invest?	<b>Invest</b>
Emma wants to set aside money for a rainy day. Should she save or invest?	<b>Save</b>
Roberto wants to buy a new car in three years. Should he save or invest?	<b>Save</b>
Caleb wants to put money away for his retirement. Should he save or invest?	<b>Invest</b>
Zoe wants to buy a new guitar. Should she save or invest?	<b>Save</b>
Felix is planning to buy a boat in six years. Should he save or invest?	<b>Invest</b>
Olivia wants to go to college in eight years. Should she save or invest?	<b>Invest</b>

# Save and invest answer cards

Print one copy of these cards single-sided for each team. Cut apart the cards and give one pair of cards to each team.



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# Save



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# Invest