The editorial team at ETF Reference surveyed 57 ETF investing experts in search of the best tips for exchange-traded fund investors. The response we received was incredible. Our panel sent us hundreds of amazing tips! We winnowed that list down to 101, which are presented below. Whether you're a beginner or a veteran ETF investor, there are likely dozens of valuable tips in here for you.

Tips for First-Time Investors Building a Long-Term Portfolio

We asked our panel, "What is the one piece of advice you'd give to an investor just starting to build a long-term portfolio?"

1. The most important thing an investor can do is make a written investment plan and follow it through thick and thin. The very act of writing it down not only encourages staying the course, but eliminates 90% of common investing mistakes. — *James M. Dahle, MD, White Coat Investor*

2. Investing can be as simple or as complicated as you want to make it. Do yourself a favor and keep it simple, simple, simple.
— *Roger Nusbaum, Random Roger*

Investing can be as simple or as complicated as you want to make it.
~ **Roger Nusbaum**

3. Keep expenses and fees as low as possible. Management fees and brokerage commissions eat directly into investor returns so keeping costs down is the best way to keep more of your money in your own pocket.
— *David Dierking, Get Smart Get Wealthy*

4. Allocate your age as your percentage in fixed income, via leading treasury bond ETFs, with the balance in Vanguard or Schwab risk asset index ETFs for global equity and REITs.
— *David Kreinces, ETF Portfolio Management*

5. Save at least 10% of pay into a target date fund and don't stop no matter what happens in the markets or your income.
— *Kristi Sullivan, Sullivan Financial Planning*

6. Once you have a solid plan in place, don't tinker! Most likely, you'll make the wrong changes at the wrong time.
— *James Osborne, Bason Asset Management*

7. Continue to add to your portfolio on a regular basis.
— *David Bettencourt, ETF Daily News*

8. Don’t watch the ticker! One of the worst things someone investing for retirement can do is watch their investments too closely. The better job we can do removing our emotions from the equation, the better we will do as investors.
   — Bob Lotich, SeedTime

9. Find out if you’re eligible for a retirement plan through work and if you get a company match. If so, make sure you contribute at least enough to get your full company match otherwise you’re leaving free money on the table. We don’t have many opportunities in life for free money; take advantage of it!
   — Sophia Bera, CFP, Gen Y Planning

10. Don’t assume bonds will continue their historic role of going up when stocks go down. The 60 / 40 stock-bond split no longer makes sense with bond yields as low as they are.
   — Vance Harwood, Six Figure Investing

11. Align your investing process with your time frame. Create a set of rules and stick to them! They don’t need to be complicated. There are plenty of investment strategies that work over time, but changing strategies every time you get uncomfortable is not one of them.
   — Brendan T. Mullooly, Mullooly Asset Management

12. Investors need to understand that all markets are inherently volatile. They must be able to stand back from that and not let it affect their long-term plan which should be built around their own unique circumstances. With more and more financial and social media available minute-by-minute, that is a tall order and most people, unfortunately, succumb to the moment.
    — *Ted Theodore, CFA, TrimTabs Asset Management*

13. Remember the three areas that most impact investment returns: market participation, investment allocation, and fees. Market Participation – are you prepared for the risks, returns and volatility of the investment markets. Asset Allocation – are you prudently invested in the corrects areas that match your risk appetite and investment horizon. Fees: It is important to get the correct advice and guidance on your investments, but keep an eye on fees. High fees are often hidden in places in which it is difficult to see.
    — *Robert Kuftinec, Auour Advisory*

The three areas that most impact investment returns: market participation, investment allocation, and fees.
~ Robert Kuftinec

14. Dollar cost average into the market over time and understand that sometimes you will get great values, sometimes you will be buying when stocks are expensive and sometimes you will be buying when stocks are reasonably priced, but don't worry about that. The important thing is to set up a disciplined saving strategy and start early. If you do that, you will be well on your way to building a good portfolio if you

invest in the broader markets.
— *John P. Reese, Validea*

15. You should factor in your time to retirement as well as your risk tolerance when you manage your retirement portfolio. The popular target-date retirement funds have the potential for large declines (more than -30%) that could last a long time (more than 3 years). So balance both aspects for a successful retirement planning.
— *Tushar Chande, ETFmeter.com*

16. When using ETFs, embrace the transparency of the structure. Most investors assume that the name of an ETF accurately describes the holdings. Due diligence is still required because many firms use different definitions, but all are required to disclose that information. For example VB Vanguard Small Cap is about 75% mid caps. This information is readily available but investors have to look for it.
— *Michael Venuto, Toroso Investments*

17. Use low-cost well-diversified ETFs to serve as a core to your portfolio and add in others in moderation to take on greater risk. Regularly review your ETF investments to see if they have changed or your investment goals/risk tolerance have changed.
— *Todd Rosenbluth, S&P Capital IQ*

18. Focus more on the quiet, long-term evidence — not loud, short-term predictions. The evidence suggests that stocks make more money than bonds; that small company stocks make more than large company stocks; that value stocks make more than growth stocks; and that international exposure helps reduce volatility. This should be taken into account when constructing a portfolio.
— *Tim Maurer*

Avoiding Common Mistakes

We asked our panel, “What is one mistake you see investors make over and over?”

19. Most investors put an overemphasis on expense ratio while ignoring bid/ask spread, securities lending, commission free availability and internal trading cost. The latter four components can have a much bigger effect on the cost of an ETF than a 10 basis point difference in the stated expense ratio.
— Michael Venuto, Toroso Investments

20. Investors often get emotional about random short-term performance swings. One-year and three-year trailing investment returns are too random to be used for making long-term decisions. Even 10-year returns can be misleading at times. Investors should focus on efficient passive diversification, such as the Investable Benchmarks, in addition to tactical trend following.
— David Kreinces, ETF Portfolio Management

21. Be cognizant when harvesting losses from an ETF that to avoid the wash sale rules, you need to avoid a "substantially identical" ETF. Which means you need to be certain to buy an ETF that tracks a substantively different index, or risk running afoul of the rules!
— Michael Kitces, Nerd's Eye View

22. Stop comparing your investment returns to your neighbors or that of a specific index; you'll always get the wrong comparison. Instead, compare it to your specific goals. Make sure you're investing to complete your life goals, and not to beat a benchmark.
— Dave Grant, Finance for Teachers

23. The biggest mistake is simply not saving enough. Saving 5% of your gross income isn't adequate to provide a reasonable retirement, no matter what you invest it in. Over 80% of my first million came from brute force saving. Work hard to get a high income, save a big chunk of it, and invest it in some reasonable manner.
— James M. Dahle, MD, White Coat Investor

The biggest mistake is simply not saving enough.

~ James M. Dahle, MD

24. Investors need to be sure their ETF is adequately tracking the index or investment they mean to. Many do not realize that ETFs can trade at premiums or discounts to the underlying investments. New and less popular ETFs can trade at prices that are significantly different than the stocks and bonds they own.
    — *Rob Schmansky, Clear Financial Advisors*

25. Overestimating their risk tolerance.
    — *Dirk Cotton, The Retirement Café*

26. Paying way too much in fees.
    — *Meb Faber, Cambria Investment Management*

27. Thinking they can make a lot of money in the short term. Investing is not about making money in the short term but growing and compounding our money for the long term.
    — *SG Young Investment*

28. Selling when the market is down and buying back when the market has recovered. When the entire stock market falls one of the worst things an investor can do is sell.
    — *Michael Kerins, CFA, FRM, Robustwealth*

29. Chasing past performance.
    — *Ben Carlson, A Wealth of Common Sense*

30. Focusing too much on security selection and not nearly enough on asset allocation.
    — *Stoyan Bojinov, Arro Financial Communications*

31. They don't have a goal. Without knowing what they are trying to get to, they have no idea what the key steps are to take to get there with confidence.
    — *Gary Brooks, The Money Architects Blog*

32. Gambling with their investing money. [Investing is not gambling](). If you want action go to a casino. Investing should be boring, not exciting. You have to be an investor to win in the stock market.
    — *Kirk Chisholm, Innovative Advisory Group Wealth Management*

33. Putting too much emphasis on the investment portfolio. It can't make up for not saving enough or starting too late. Investors get in trouble when they try to make it up by "beating the market".
    — *Denis Smirnov, Gordian Advisors*

34. Thinking that trading is the same as investing. Trading is speculating which is very different from investing. "If you are a speculator, your decision to buy or sell is based on what you believe about the near-term direction of price. If you are an investor, your decision to buy and sell is based on the underlying economics of the stock you own." — Ben Graham
    — *David Trainer, New Constructs*

35. Excessive market timing — trying to guess short-term moves and making big changes in allocation. Often related to excessive media focus.
— *Jeffrey A. Miller, NewArc Investments*

36. Extrapolation of returns! We get many calls to "get more aggressive" after markets have moved higher. We also get calls from people who want to do "de-risk" after markets have fallen. This is the investment equivalent to assuming todays weather will repeat for the next 365 days. It won't of course, unless you live in San Diego.
— *Herb Morgan, Efficient Market Advisors*

37. The biggest mistake I see investors make is over confidence. This is especially true after a multi-year bull market. Investors see the market has been going up over the last several years without too much volatility and they think it's as easy as throwing a dart. These are the first people to have their money taken by the market in a downturn. The over confidence is built on a week foundation that will at some point be tested. Understanding that losses are part of investing and learning the ability to handle and manage losses is a critical component to being a successful investor.
— *Andrew Thrasher, Financial Enhancement Group*

38. They think investment markets are magic. They don't save/invest anywhere near enough, and they think that somehow magically the markets will bail out their woeful lack of planning. They also panic and get greedy at the wrong times.
— *David Merkel, The Aleph Blog*

Buy-and-Hold Investing

We asked our panel to finish this sentence: "Buy-and-hold investing is ..."

39. Dead. Buy and hold investing only works in bull markets where inflation is a constant. Look at a chart of the last 15 year for the S&P 500. The first 13 years were a wash, with no return if you were a buy and hold investor.
— *Kirk Chisholm, Innovative Advisory Group Wealth Management*

40. Not dead! The margins just got small, so Wall Street is on a campaign to convince investors that market-timing works. Oy Vey.

— *Herb Morgan, Efficient Market Advisors*

41. Not such a great idea in the year 2015! Back in 1982, absolutely — but right now — no thank you.

— *Tim Knight, Slope of Hope*

42. Better than the alternative.

— *Scott Krisiloff, Avondale Asset Management*

43. The worst way to invest, except all the other methods that have been tried so far.

— *James M. Dahle, MD, White Coat Investor*

44. Boring. And the only proven long term winner.

— *Dave Nadig, FactSet Research Systems*

45. Meaningless if you don't re-balance regularly and have a goal for those funds.

— *Dave Grant, Finance for Teachers*

46. A simple yet effective strategy for long-term investment success. Just remember to keep your investment costs low and your portfolio broadly diversified.
    — *Michael D. Bodman, Portfolio Economics Co.*

47. Not without flaws, but beats most active investors over the long-term, which is the only time horizon that truly matters.
    — *Michael Batnick, The Irrelevant Investor*

48. A great way to minimize taxes and simultaneously maintain an opportunity to eat a 50%+ drawdown.
    — *Wes Gray, Alpha Architect*

49. Suitable for those who can actually buy and hold. Put another way, buy it and close your eyes until you retire. Buy and hold investors usually buy high and sell low.
    — *Dan Nyaradi, TradingGods.net*

50. Something that can be improved upon. There isn't necessarily a need for every investor to be moving in and out of their positions on a short-term basis. However, there are methods and strategies that provide a better approach that studies have shown can reduce risk without sacrificing a great deal of return. Long-term trend following is an example of this and is something Mebane Faber has written extensively on with respect to broad asset classes.
    — *Andrew Thrasher, Financial Enhancement Group*

51. The next best thing to momentum based investing.
    — *Gary Antonacci, Dual Momentum*

52. Only beneficial if you buy the right investments. A strategically diversified portfolio is worth holding, while your grandfather's 10 "blue-chip" stocks and municipal bonds may not be.
    — *Tim Maurer*

53. OK as long as your thesis doesn't change — and as long as it doesn't involve leveraged (i.e., double and/or triple performance) ETFs!
    — *Kid Dynamite*

54. Easier said than done. Learn to tune out the market's noises.
    — *Kevin L., Turtle Investor*

55. Maybe a better way to look at this is not buy and hold but rather implement and hold. Implement meaning to implement a thoughtful diversified policy and stick with it. This would result in rational rebalancing between a short menu of diversified index funds.
    — *Jim Winkelmann, Blue Ocean Portfolios*

ETF Investing Misconceptions

We asked our panel to finish this sentence: "The biggest misconception about investing via ETFs is ..."

56. ETFs are inherently lower cost and more tax-efficient than traditional mutual funds. The ETF vs mutual fund question matters far less than actually picking low-cost, broadly diversified, index funds in the first place. I use both, making the ETF versus traditional mutual fund decision based on cost and hassle for any particular account and investment within the account.
    — *James M. Dahle, MD, White Coat Investor*

57. They are "dangerous." Like most tools, ETFs can be used well or used poorly. That decision is in the hands of every investor.
    — *James Osborne, Bason Asset Management*

58. They are all safe. With so many ETFs there are many different objectives with each fund. It is very important to understand how the underlying index will perform and how the fund will perform in relation to that index.
    — *Nathan Buehler, All About Volatility*

59. Just because they're easier to trade means that you should be trading them more.

— *Ben Carlson, A Wealth of Common Sense*

60. Leverage is a good idea. Unless you are a day trader, stay away from 2-4x leverage EFTs. They just because they provide 2-4x the returns, they will also provide 2-4x the losses. Don't make this mistake.

— *Kirk Chisholm, Innovative Advisory Group Wealth Management*

61. They are all "good" investments. Out of 1,800 exchange-traded products on the market today, I personally wouldn't come near 1,500 of them.

— *Denis Smirnov, Gordian Advisors*

Out of 1,800 exchange-traded products on the market today, I personally wouldn't come near 1,500 of them.
~ Denis Smirnov

62. Volume equals liquidity.

— *Eric Balchunas, Bloomberg*

63. They are all indexed based. Investors need to understand that fees are buried inside the ETF share. Know and understand the expense ratios and also — if there are any securities lending activities that come into the fund — revenue ratios.

— *Jim Winkelmann, Blue Ocean Portfolios*

64. All ETFs are passive. There are a lot of 'smart beta' ETFs which are close to active investing. Be sure what that means before you invest in this specific type of ETFs.

— *Christiaan van der Meer, Reward the Risk*

65. Bond ETFs will behave like bonds. Bonds have a set coupon and a set maturity. Bond ETFs follow an index, where the coupon can change and maturity is perpetual, but they are still subject to duration. Bond ETFs that lose principal due to an interest rate move may never regain that value. Bond ETFs are very useful but they are not a replacement for purchasing individual Bonds.
— *Michael Venuto, Toroso Investments*

66. All ETFs that sound the same are the same. Vanguard Emerging Markets and iShares Emerging Markets perform differently because their holdings are not the same.
— *Todd Rosenbluth, S&P Capital IQ*

In 20 Years ...

67. The Dow will be above 70,000. If history holds, the stock market should double every decade. If earnings can grow at about 7% annually, and the P/E ratio of the market remains relatively constant, then Dow 70k here we come.
— *Wade W. Slome, CFA, CFP, Sidoxia Capital Management*

In 20 years, the Dow will be above 70,000.

~ **Wade W. Slome, CFA, CFP**

68. Financial services will be more transparent, lower cost, and accessible by investors with limited capital.
— *Wes Gray, Alpha Architect*

69. We are going to witness global economic changes that boggle the imagination.
— *Tim Knight, Slope of Hope*

70. We'll look back at a couple of bear markets and maybe even a crisis but the equity market will be higher than it is today.
— *Roger Nusbaum, Random Roger*

71. My kids will look back at our idea of "global" and think it quaint. The distinction between countries and specific markets is eroding rapidly. Some of the most exciting companies outside the US now trade only in the US. I think this trend accelerates, and the whole idea of "international" investing will be moribund, as every company is an international investment.
— *Dave Nadig, FactSet Research Systems*

72. Human psychology will not have changed one bit and we'll still see the same narratives in the media driving the fear-greed cycle in the market.
— *Stoyan Bojinov, Arro Financial Communications*

73. You will be happy you signed up for your 401(k) and maxed out a Roth IRA every year.
— *Sophia Bera, CFP, Gen Y Planning*

74. Commissions for the sale of investment products will be gone — but Oreo cookies will still be here!
— *Tim Maurer*

75. The ratio of assets in mutual funds versus ETFs will flip flop, with ETFs retaining the lion's share of the pie. This is the result of an inevitable trend that has been developing for decades. Investors want to own funds that are easy to understand and don't eat into their profits like an actively managed mutual fund does. This process will likely be sped up once ETFs become widely accepted in retirement plans as well.
— *David Fabian, FMD Capital Management*

76. There will be new products, opportunities, and jobs that we cannot even imagine now. (See the [Beloit College mindset list]() to illustrate.) But I will guess that health care will be a winning field for investing and employment
— *Jeffrey A. Miller, NewArc Investments*

77. There will likely be a major shortage of housing given many years of under-investment, excessive renting, and a growing population (largely due to immigration).
— *N. Duru Ahanotu, Dr. Duru*

78. The quality of life of the typical human being on the planet will be even better than today. Mankind has made great achievements in longevity, health, food and more, but the best is yet to come!
— *Herb Morgan, Efficient Market Advisors*

79. Vanguard and ETFs will each have over $10 trillion in assets.
— *Eric Balchunas, Bloomberg*

80. Mutual funds will have ceased to exist due to superiority of ETFs. ETFs are more efficient (lower costs) and there is no yield wasted on illusions about beating the market.
— *Christiaan van der Meer, Reward the Risk*

81. Most long-term public entitlement and private employee benefit schemes that promised fixed payments/reimbursement will be scaled back dramatically, and most retirees will be very disappointed. The investment math doesn't work here; if anything, the politicians were more prone to magical thinking than naïve investors.
— *David Merkel, The Aleph Blog*

Over a 20-Year Time Horizon, I'm Bullish On …

82. The Nasdaq 100 (QQQ), Amazon (AMZN), Alphabet (GOOGL), Facebook (FB), and Tesla (TSLA) because of their respective leadership positions in technology and innovation.

    — *David Kreinces, ETF Portfolio Management*

83. Human capital. If everyone knows they can earn millions over their career, but only needs to invest a small portion of that to have a great retirement, then the fear surrounding retirement should disappear.

    — *Dave Grant, Finance for Teachers*

84. Healthcare. The fact that people will continue aging and dying is about the only sure thing!

    — *David Dierking, Get Smart Get Wealthy*

85. Cheap equity markets as measured by long term valuation metrics (GVAL ETF)

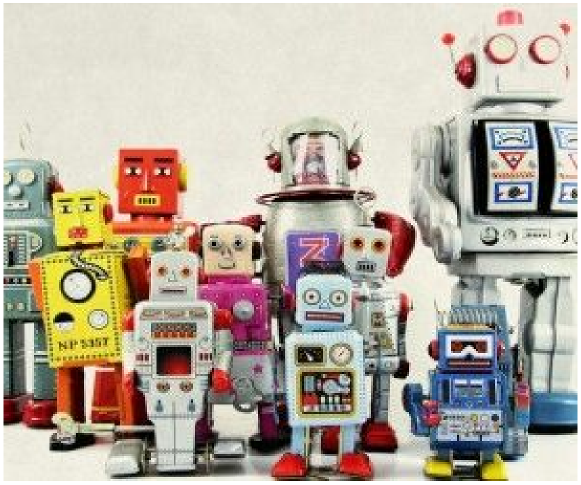
    — *Meb Faber, Cambria Investment Management*

86. Emerging Markets and Commodities. Both are extremely cheap today, and value wins in the long-term.

    — *Michael Kerins, CFA, FRM, Robustwealth*

87. Innovation. Over the long haul, I believe small, technology driven companies will end up doing amazing things. The issue, of course, is most of them will fail!

    — *Dave Nadig, FactSet Research Systems*



88. U.S. manufacturing via 100% robot factories.

    — *Max Osbon, Osbon Capital Management*

89. Human progress. In the future we will be more productive, we will invest in and invent new technologies and new services. Global wealth will grow. Global poverty

will continue to fall, we will conquer more diseases. Do not bet against us.

— *James Osborne, Bason Asset Management*

90. Technology providing transparency into corporate performance by analyzing the voluminous annual and quarterly filings for us.

— *David Trainer, New Constructs*

91. Regime-based investing. This method of investing moves away from static asset allocations and adjusts asset class exposures as growth, inflation, risk and other economic expectations shift. Significant research shows that this investment style can increase returns, dampen drawdowns and reduce investment risk.

— *Robert Kuftinec, Auour Advisory*

92. The stock market because over all 20-year rolling periods stocks have never lost money.

— *John P. Reese, Validea*

93. The 99.9% probability that caca will hit the fan. Busts happen. And when a bust happens, having planned for it, in fact, you get your best opportunity to improve your financial standing. Whether it is purchasing a home when prices are extremely low/bank foreclosed/short sale. Or whether it is Amazon shares for 70% discount to current prices, be bullish when everyone else is running scared. But you can't do that unless you prepared for the eventuality.

— *Gary Gordon, Pacific Park Financial*

94. Discipline and grit. They are the successful investor's best friends.

— *Tim Maurer*

Parting Thoughts

95. Keep it simple! Choose an appropriate asset allocation, buy good low cost ETFs, and stick to the plan. Rebalance when positions move 10% or more from your target weights. Remember that there is no free lunch when it comes to risk and return. If something had a great return recently, don't assume that its outperformance will

continue indefinitely.

— *Scott Stratton, CFP, CFA, Good Life Wealth Management*

96. ETF investing principles: 1) Understand what you're investing in: that's why you should prefer ETFs that track underlying benchmarks vs active ETFs that do not. 2) All else equal, minimize your costs: understand the value proposition that comes with higher priced ETFs. 3) Avoid leveraged ETFs: the financing costs and intra-day frictional tracking costs eat away at total return.

    — *Benjamin M. Lavine, CFA, 3D Asset Management*

97. ETFs are companies too. In fact, they are conglomerates. They own a wide variety of businesses in a wide variety of industries. The difference is that those businesses are assembled by an algorithm rather than a person. There is an additional management fee charged too. Berkshire Hathaway is like an ETF that is managed by a person rather than an algorithm. This gives it some important advantages. It has the same liquidity profile as an ETF, but it has also been assembled by the greatest investor of all time. It also charges no management fee and the management team is a fellow shareholder (i.e. perfectly aligned incentives).

    — *Scott Krisiloff, Avondale Asset Management*

98. It's not the returns you make. It's the returns you keep. ETFs help you lower expenses and keep more of the market's return. But regardless of the investment vehicle, it's most important to determine your investment objective and be disciplined about your investment approach. Regardless of whether you are conservative or aggressive, the best investment strategy for you is the one you can stick with at market peaks and valleys, resisting common behavioral tugs and short-term noise on the way to long-term success.

    — *Gary Brooks, The Money Architects Blog*

It’s not the returns you make. It’s the returns you keep.

~ Gary Brooks

99. On anything other than the highest volume ETFs compare the indicative value to the bid / ask prices before you trade and always use limit orders (not market orders)

    — *Vance Harwood, Six Figure Investing*

100. Build a solid core of low-cost ETFs and try to do nothing but add to these. Include a healthy stream of dividends in the mix which you can then add to any asset class you wish. With your core established, and if you desire a little adventure, make a small bet or two, perhaps on a country or sector-specific ETF or a few individual stocks. Don’t ignore your area of expertise. If you work in a certain field, you likely understand it better than most. Use that to your advantage. At the same time, never “put all your eggs in one basket.” Finally, remember that money is not the most important thing in life. Be a good husband/wife to your spouse. A good father/mother to your children. Get involved in your community. Remember the less fortunate. Be a force for good in the lives of all you meet.

    — *ETF Monkey*

101. Be wary of “experts.”

    — *Eric Balchunas, Bloomberg*

Bonus Section: Recommended Sites and Twitter Accounts

We asked our panel to finish the sentence: “The one site / Twitter account / newsletter that I can’t do without is …”

- The MSB Cheat Sheet.

  — *Dave Grant, Finance for Teachers*

- @zerohedge.

  — *Tim Knight, Slope of Hope*

- Seeking Alpha Earnings Transcripts.

  — *Scott Krisiloff, Avondale Asset Management*

- Bogleheads is head and shoulders above any other investing forum on the internet.

  — *James M. Dahle, MD, White Coat Investor*

- Wade Pfau's Retirement Researcher.

  — *Dirk Cotton, The Retirement Café*

- Bespoke, Seeking Alpha, Abnormal Returns

  — *Roger Nusbaum, Random Roger*

- I learn a lot from Bloomberg Businessweek (yes, a paper magazine!).

  — *Kristi Sullivan, Sullivan Financial Planning*

- Seeking Alpha. I love the diversity of opinions and perspectives. The discussion that is generated is beneficial to investors of any sophistication level.

  — *David Dierking, Get Smart Get Wealthy*

- abnormalreturns

  — *Meb Faber, Cambria Investment Management*

- Bloomberg Business is where I do most of my research on investing.

  — *SG Young Investment*

- ZeroHedge.com. I may not always agree with them, but they're always entertaining.

  — *Dave Nadig, FactSet Research Systems*

- Morningstar.com.

  — *Michael D. Bodman, Portfolio Economics Co.*

- Finance Twitter. Thoughtful discussions, new ideas, new takes on old ideas and a surprisingly rational community are a big part of my daily ritual.

  — *James Osborne, Bason Asset Management*

- Abnormal Returns.

  — *Michael Batnick, The Irrelevant Investor*

- Abnormal Returns.

  — *Ben Carlson, A Wealth of Common Sense*

- A Wealth of Common Sense.

  — *Stoyan Bojinov, Arro Financial Communications*

- Bloomberg View columnist @Matt_Levine.

  — *Max Osbon, Osbon Capital Management*

- I think the work Ben Carlson does at the Wealth of Common Sense blog is very good.

  — *Gary Brooks, The Money Architects Blog*

- Briefing.com

  — *N. Duru Ahanotu, Dr. Duru*

- StockTwits.

  — *David Bettencourt, ETF Daily News*

- @michaelkitces and his blog Nerd's Eye View. He's an expert in financial planning and is one of the most humble guys I know.

  — *Sophia Bera, CFP, Gen Y Planning*

- @abnormalreturns

  — *Wes Gray, Alpha Architect*

- Josh Brown's The Reformed Broker.
  — *Denis Smirnov, Gordian Advisors*

- Abnormal Returns. Tadas Viskanta does a terrific job aggregating content. His site makes it easy for me to catch up on any important posts I may have missed. It also helps me discover new bloggers who are writing awesome stuff. Visiting the site every day is a great way to immerse yourself in quality financial content.
  — *Brendan T. Mullooly, Mullooly Asset Management*

- The one site I can't do without is Morningstar.com. It's amazing how much good information on funds and ETF's is available to everyone on this site. Do not, however, just look at the ratings. Much of the good information is in the details within this site.
  — *Robert Kuftinec, Auour Advisory*

- My own research site, Validea.com, because it's the core of my investing system and I use it daily in writing, research and more.
  — *John P. Reese, Validea*

- Stocktwits.com. The social finance community that has been developed at Stocktwits is perfect for those that want to understand individual stocks or ETFs. You can follow a number of vetted experts in the investment world and learn alongside many successful investors and traders. The one caveat is that you do your own research and make your own independent decisions in your portfolio.
  — *David Fabian, FMD Capital Management*

- FastGraphs.net.
  — *Jeffrey A. Miller, NewArc Investments*

- Barron's Magazine. Read it every Saturday and you can hold your own in any conversation about investing.
  — *Herb Morgan, Efficient Market Advisors*

- Bloomberg.com. Information with less hype/clickbait and more intelligent articles than the alternatives.
  — Kid Dynamite

- One site that I think is very useful for both new and professional investors is one run Tadas Viskanta,abnormalreturns.com. Each day Tadas compiles some of the best articles from around the financial web, decreasing your time needed to find what you should be reading and opening your eyes to things you may not have come across. Broadening your horizons to different points of views, techniques, and changes that are impacting both domestic and foreign economies and markets can have a positive impact in helping you become a better investor and/or trader.
  — Andrew Thrasher, Financial Enhancement Group

- Bloomberg News. I make it a habit of doing a little bit of casual reading on it everyday. Don't be fixated on only finance related news! There is plenty of learning to be done and knowledge to be gained!
  — Kevin L., Turtle Investor

- ETF.com.
  — Eric Balchunas, Bloomberg

- Seeking Alpha
  — Jim Winkelmann, Blue Ocean Portfolios

- SeekingAlpha.com. Great site to get a pulse on the views of a broad range of market participants (professionals and private investors).
  — Christiaan van der Meer, Reward the Risk

- Vixcentral.com. The visualization of the VIX curve is extremely helpful in my daily investing decisions.
  — Michael Venuto, Toroso Investments

- WSJ.com.
  — Gary Gordon, Pacific Park Financial

- Barry Ritholtz compiles a daily must read list. It is an eclectic list of articles, mostly about investing and current events, but also about the psychology of investing. Barry is well versed in both the underlying academics where needed and the cultural flow as well.
  — Ted Theodore, CFA, TrimTabs Asset Management

- Calafia Beach Pundit blog written by Scott Grannis.
  — Wade W. Slome, CFA, CFP, Sidoxia Capital Management

- Seth Godin's daily email.
  — Tim Maurer

- Abnormal Returns provides the best summary of the top writing on finance and investing every day. There is no better place to get your information each day, and it comes from a wide array of sources that you could not find on your own. Credit Tadas Viskanta for his excellent work.
  — David Merkel, The Aleph Blog

Bonus Section: Recommended Books

We asked our panel to finish the sentence: "One book I wish every investor would read is ..."

- Unconventional Success by Yale CIO David Swensen.
  — David Kreinces, ETF Portfolio Management

- The Great Deformation by David Stockman
  — Tim Knight, Slope of Hope

- The Alchemist by Paul Coehlo
  — Scott Krisiloff, Avondale Asset Management

- The Millionaire Next Door, because far too many people are fixated on the investing (offensive) side of the equation when there is usually far more bang for your buck on the personal finance (defensive) side. If you can cut your needed

retirement income from $120,000 per year to $60,000 per year you can either save half as much or retire seven years sooner. You can either spend like a millionaire or actually be a millionaire.
— *James M. Dahle, MD, White Coat Investor*

- Against the Gods: The Remarkable Story of Risk by Peter Bernstein.
  — *Dirk Cotton, The Retirement Café*

- The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable by Nassim Taleb
  — *Roger Nusbaum, Random Roger*

- Die Broke by Stephen Pollan and Mark Levine
  — *Kristi Sullivan, Sullivan Financial Planning*

- The Intelligent Investor by Benjamin Graham.
  — *David Dierking, Get Smart Get Wealthy*

- Global Asset Allocation
  — *Meb Faber, Cambria Investment Management*

- The Five Rules of Successful Investing by Pat Dorsey
  — *SG Young Investment*

- Portfolio Selection: Efficient Diversification of Investments by Harry M. Markowitz
  — *Michael Kerins, CFA, FRM, Robustwealth*
- A Random Walk Down Wall Street
  — *Bob Lotich, SeedTime*
- The Intelligent Investor (Ben Graham/Jason Zweig)
  — *Dave Nadig, FactSet Research Systems*
- A Random Walk Down Wall Street by Burton Malkiel
  — *Michael D. Bodman, Portfolio Economics Co.*
- I'm sure I won't be the only one to say: Thinking, Fast & Slow by Kahneman. Any book that helps you better understand your own brain's dysfunctional operations is mandatory – Your Money & Your Brain(Zweig); The Psychology of Investing (Nofsinger); The Behavior Gap (Richards)
  — *James Osborne, Bason Asset Management*
- The Intelligent Investor
  — *Michael Batnick, The Irrelevant Investor*
- Thinking, Fast and Slow
  — *Ben Carlson, A Wealth of Common Sense*
- Think and Grow Rich by Napoleon Hill
  — *Stoyan Bojinov, Arro Financial Communications*
- Against the Gods: The Remarkable Story of Risk
  — *Max Osbon, Osbon Capital Management*
- Being widely read is helpful but if you've got to start with one, read The Most Important Thing: Uncommon Sense for the Thoughtful Investor by Howard Marks.
  — *Gary Brooks, The Money Architects Blog*

- Dual Momentum Investing: An Innovative Approach for Higher Returns with Less Risk
  — *Gary Antonacci, Dual Momentum*
- The Probability of Fortune
  — *N. Duru Ahanotu, Dr. Duru*
- Rich Dad, Poor Dad
  — *David Bettencourt, ETF Daily News*
- Stop reading books on investing and focus on increasing your income! If you could grow your income by $500 a month you're going to have more money to invest. Stop worrying about losing or making a few hundred bucks and go out and make more smackers and pay down debt! This leads to financial freedom.
  — *Sophia Bera, CFP, Gen Y Planning*
- Hedge Fund Market Wizards by Jack Schwager
  — *Vance Harwood, Six Figure Investing*
- I have a couple of suggestions. Learn To Earn, by Peter Lynch. A great, common-sense book. Also, any of Warren Buffett's letters to shareholders. Listen to what he says about genuine business returns vs. financial machinations that generally provide a benefit to the ones devising the machinations and a loss to pretty much everyone else.
  — *ETF Monkey*
- The Outsiders: Eight Unconventional CEOs and Their Radically Rational Blueprint for Success. This book is one of the best books about finding good investments by finding great CEOs. It is a must read for any aspiring investor.
  — *Kirk Chisholm, Innovative Advisory Group Wealth Management*
- DIY Financial Advisor and Quantitative Value, of course. Joking aside, Thinking Fast and Slow is incredible.
  — *Wes Gray, Alpha Architect*

- Anything by William J. Bernstein
  — *Denis Smirnov, Gordian Advisors*

- The Fountainhead
  — *David Trainer, New Constructs*

- Tom Dorsey's Point and Figure Charting. Measuring supply and demand through point and figure charts is one of my favorite ways to get an unbiased opinion on a security. This book will teach you everything you need to know about point and figure charting and relative strength investing.
  — *Brendan T. Mullooly, Mullooly Asset Management*

- The Warren Buffet Way. This book is both entertaining and gives someone some investing insight.
  — *Robert Kuftinec, Auour Advisory*

- There isn't just one, but the most influential for me were Ben Graham's The Intelligent Investor, James P. O'Shaughnessy's What Works On Wall Street, Peter Lynch's One Up on Wall Street and Joel Greenblatt's The Little Book That Beats the Market.
  — *John P. Reese, Validea*

- The Little Red Hen, Oh The Places You'll Go, and finally........The Age of Declining Turbulence (Douglas N Thompson)
  — *Herb Morgan, Efficient Market Advisors*

- Reminiscences of a Stock Operator
  — *Kid Dynamite*

- Whenever anyone asks me what book they should read to learn about investing, the answer is always the same: The Elements of Investing by Burton Malkiel and Charles Ellis. This is an easy to read primer that clearly explains saving, indexing, diversification, how to avoid mistakes, and how to save on taxes. You can read it in

just a few hours, and yet it covers virtually everything that investors need to know.
— *Scott Stratton, CFP, CFA, Good Life Wealth Management*

- The Razor's Edge, to put perspective in your life. And All The Devils Are Here, which will convince you that the system is rigged against you.
  — *Dan Nyaradi, TradingGods.net*

- Nation of Deadbeats
  — *Benjamin M. Lavine, CFA, 3D Asset Management*

- The Four Pillars of Investing by William J. Bernstein. Filled with practical and sensible advice without being too technical, it is perfect for the novice investor.
  — *Kevin L., Turtle Investor*

- The Intelligent Asset Allocator by Bill Bernstein.
  — *Eric Balchunas, Bloomberg*

- Fooled by Randomness: The Hidden Role of Chance in Life and in the Markets by Nassim Taleb. Chance plays a much larger role than any of us want to believe, a very good concept to accept.
  — *Jim Winkelmann, Blue Ocean Portfolios*

- One book I wish every investor would read is Reminiscences of a Stock Operator by Edwin Lefèvre. Classic on how markets, speculators and investors work. Although it's dated almost a century ago, the story is still surprisingly fresh.
  — *Christiaan van der Meer, Reward the Risk*

- Fail Safe Investing from Harry Browne. Ok, I know some of his rhetoric is just ideology and the concepts are not terribly sophisticated. The value is in the simplistic way he sets the expectations for investing. The text clearly explains that investing is about not losing and the wins come from compounding and time. The book can be read in about an hour and all investors will come away with a realistic understanding of risk.
  — *Michael Venuto, Toroso Investments*

- Fooled By Randomness (Taleb)
  — *Gary Gordon, Pacific Park Financial*

- As they set out to invest, most will quickly learn that investors are working very hard to build up their own wealth at the expense of others. There is a book that I read over and over again: The Battle for Investment Survival by Gerald Loeb, first published in 1935.
  — *Ted Theodore, CFA, TrimTabs Asset Management*

- One book I wish every investor would read is the Bible. The Bible eliminates magical thinking, commends hard work and saving, and tells people that their treasure should be in Heaven, and not on Earth. If you are placing your future hope in a worry-free, well-off retirement, the odds are high that you will be disappointed. But if you trust in Jesus, He will never leave you nor forsake you
  — *David Merkel, The Aleph Blog*

- Common Stocks and Uncommon Profits by Phil Fisher
  — *Wade W. Slome, CFA, CFP, Sidoxia Capital Management*

- Daniel Kahneman's Thinking, Fast and Slow
  — *Tim Maurer*

Thanks for Reading! Now Come Join the Discussion.

Do you have questions or feedback on any of these 101 tips? Or do you have some tips of your own to share? Join the discussion on our Facebook page.