



I'M GRADUATING: Now What?

As graduation nears, don't forget to prepare for the financial opportunities and challenges former students often face after graduating.



Career

Don't have a job lined up quite yet? The Career Center can help you with the following and more:

- Updating your résumé and creating cover letters
- Job search assistance through the HireAggies job board
- Mock interviewing
- Salary evaluation and negotiation

Texas A&M Career Center
209 Koldus Building
(979) 845-5139
cc_advisor@tamu.edu

Student Loans

Have student loans? Make sure to do the following:

Determine what loans you owe, who you owe them to (your servicers), and how to contact them.

- Federal: nslds.ed.gov
- Alternative: Contact each of your private loan lenders
- State of Texas: hhloans.com
- Institutional (Texas A&M): myaggieloans.tamu.edu

Contact each of your servicers to:

- Update your contact information
- Set up online access to your loans and automatic payments for a possible interest rate discount
- Find out when repayment will begin and what your required payments will be
- Ask about interest capitalization
- If you are ever having trouble making payments, ask about your repayment options, including other repayment plans, as well as deferment and forbearance.



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Budgeting

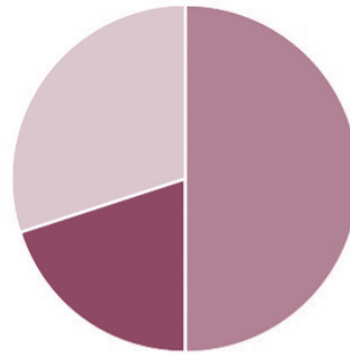
Make a professional budget that includes your expected after-tax salary (paycheckcity.com), required loan payments, planned savings, and more.

Financial Goals: Establishing your financial goals is the first step in creating a budget. Decide what your short, medium, and long term goals are and how much you want to save toward each goal.

50-20-30 Budget: One popular professional budgeting method is the 50-20-30 budget. This divides your monthly after-tax income into 3 sections. 50% towards your needs (including minimum debt repayment), 20% towards extra debt repayment and savings and 30% towards your wants.

Cost of Living: Moving away from College Station? There are some things you should consider with the cost of living in your new city. Keep in mind housing will probably be your biggest expense and can be your biggest way to save! Check out a cost of living calculator to compare price differences in groceries, housing, utilities, transportation, and health care.

Moving Expenses: According to the American Moving and Storage Association, the average cost of a total move is \$2,300 and the average cost of a long distance move is \$4,300. Factors that will affect this cost include: distance of move, amount & weight of items being moved, the time of year, labor costs, and any insurance coverage.



YOUR MONTHLY INCOME:

- 50% = ESSENTIAL MONTHLY EXPENSES (RENT, UTILITIES, TRANSPORTATION, GROCERIES, ETC.)
- 20% = FINANCIAL PRIORITIES (SAVINGS, STUDENT LOANS, ETC.)
- 30% = LIFESTYLE CHOICES (EATING OUT, GYM MEMBERSHIPS, SHOPPING, ETC.)

Employee Benefits

Paid Leave Benefits: Most companies will offer paid time off for sickness, vacation, and bereavement.

Health Benefits: Typically people rely on their employer for health care coverage. Most new employees are offered a health insurance package when they are first employed and then annually during an open enrollment period. There should also be separate plans for Dental/Vision insurance. If you do not sign up for health insurance right away, you will need a "qualifying life event" to enroll outside of open enrollment. With insurance, the higher the premium, the lower the out-of-pocket cost.

Traditional 401(k)

- Comes from your Pre-Tax income
- Withdrawals ARE taxed
- Contributions often matched by employer - always contribute enough to get this match
- Employer provides investment options
- Max Annual Contribution = \$18,500

Roth IRA

- Comes from your Post-Tax income
- Withdrawals are NOT taxed
- This is an individual retirement account, so you are on your own to find the investment options or brokerage firm that you will work with
- Max Annual Contribution = \$5,500