Newsletter

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In this edition

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Keep time working for you

Can you recall a time when a kilogram of ground beef cost just $3.63? It may seem inconceivable today, but that was in 1996, just 30 years ago.[1] This spring, when the price of a cucumber made headlines after rising 28 percent year over year, it was another sobering reminder of inflation's impact on everyday costs.[2]

For a brief moment, there appeared to be signs of moderation. To start 2026, markets had largely priced in the prospect of rate cuts. Fast forward to today, and elevated energy prices, protectionism, tariffs and global conflict have complicated the inflation outlook. The escalation in Canada–U.S. trade tensions at the end of the summer has added another layer of uncertainty. While the headlines may be unsettling, many economists expect the broader economic impact to remain relatively contained, though tariffs are likely to add to near-term price pressures.

The extent to which today's inflationary pressures prove temporary or persistent continues to be debated. What is increasingly clear is that the structural backdrop has changed considerably from the decades-long era of disinflation. For central banks, persistent inflation complicates the balancing act between achieving price stability and supporting economic growth.

At the same time, investors are keeping record amounts of capital on the sidelines. More than $3 trillion is held in retail money-market funds alone, alongside another $4.8 trillion in institutional funds — pools of capital that have roughly doubled since the pandemic.[3]

There are understandable reasons for holding cash, of course, particularly when interest rates are elevated or uncertainty persists. But over longer periods, cash carries a less visible cost: the erosion of purchasing power. This is where time works against us. Even modest inflation has an insidious effect when compounded over many years.

Consider the past 30 years. Inflation averaged 2.16 percent annually over that period, modest by recent standards. Yet cumulatively, prices rose almost 90 percent, meaning that $1 million held in cash since 1996 may have maintained its nominal value, but its real purchasing power would have fallen to only about $526,600 in 1996 dollars.[4]

Put another way, at 4 percent inflation, you would need around $219 in 20 years to match the purchasing power of $100 today. While 4 percent may seem high, consider that certain expenses have risen much faster. Ground beef, for example, has increased by an average of 5.2 percent annually over the past 30 years.[1] For retirees relying on fixed sources of income, the cumulative effect can be particularly consequential, especially as retirement can span three decades or more.

History offers an important counterpoint. Over the same 30-year period, the S&P/TSX Composite Index rose more than 591 percent, meaning that $100,000 invested in the S&P/TSX Composite Index 30 years ago would have grown to roughly $691,000 today — and that's before reinvested dividends.[5] It is a powerful reminder of the value of staying invested over time.

Keeping capital productive can be one of the most effective ways to preserve purchasing power and participate in the growth that lies ahead. A disciplined investment program can harness one of an investor's most powerful forces: time. Keep it working for you.

1. Average ground beef price: $3.63/kg June 1996; $16.61/kg June 2026. StatCan T-18-10-0002-01 & T-18-10-0245-01; 2. www.cbc.ca/news/canada/vegetable-prices-canada-9.7173027; 3. www.ici.org/research/stats/mmf; 4. June figures. www.bankofcanada.ca/rates/related/inflation-calculator/; 5. S&P/TSX Composite Index, 5,044.07 at 6/28/96; 34,857 at 6/30/26.

Back to school: Your RESP withdrawal questions answered

With kids back in school, it is also the season for questions about Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) withdrawals.

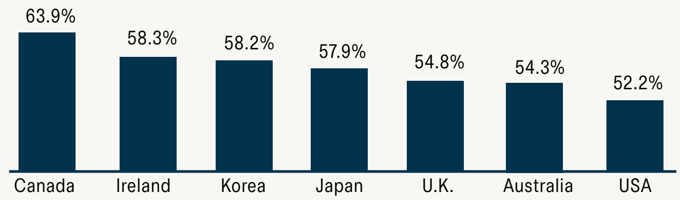
This may sound familiar: when children were young, you opened the RESP and began setting aside funds for their future education. Over the years, those contributions, together with government grants and investment growth, have helped build a meaningful source of education funding. Now, the focus shifts from saving to withdrawing. Perhaps you're asking: What's the most effective way to withdraw the funds? Here are answers to some withdrawal questions:

1. What is taxable? It's important to distinguish between two types of RESP withdrawals for educational purposes. The educational assistance payment (EAP) consists of any income earned or grants accumulated in the plan and is taxable in the hands of the beneficiary attending a qualifying program. The post-secondary education (PSE) payment represents funds that the subscriber contributed and is not subject to tax. When you withdraw from the RESP, you need to specify the type of withdrawal you wish to make. Please call the office if you need help identifying each component.

2. How can RESP withdrawals be structured tax-efficiently? Students often don't have significant income, so it generally makes sense to prioritize EAPs when a beneficiary has a lower marginal tax rate. If they have meaningful income, perhaps from part-time employment, and expect lower income in future school years, it may make sense to defer a portion of the EAP. If the RESP is large, consider spreading EAPs over several years to reduce the potential tax liability in any one year. A student may be able to use non-refundable tax credits, including the basic personal amount and tuition tax credit, to offset some or all of the tax otherwise payable on EAP income. For 2026, the federal basic personal amount is $16,452. Assuming eligible tuition fees of $7,734 (based on average Canadian undergrad tuition), a student with no other income could potentially receive $24,186 in EAPs without incurring federal income tax.

Did you know? Canada Is the "most educated" nation globally

According to the OECD, in 2025 Canada had the highest proportion of post-secondary educated adults globally.



Source: www.oecd.org/en/data/indicators/population-with-tertiary-education.html

3. Should market conditions affect withdrawal timing? In volatile markets, it may be prudent to wait for investment values to rebound. However, tax and other considerations should also guide the timing. The basic personal amount must be used in the current tax year, while unused tuition credits can be carried forward. If the student has other income, a larger EAP may also result in a higher marginal tax rate. There may also be risks to delaying withdrawals if the student does not complete their studies.

4. What happens if the beneficiary doesn't attend post-secondary school? While original contributions (PSEs) can be withdrawn without tax consequences, unused government grants may need to be repaid and accumulated investment income may be taxable to the subscriber and subject to additional tax. There may be an opportunity to transfer eligible funds to a sibling's RESP or transfer accumulated income to a subscriber's Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP), subject to available contribution room and a lifetime maximum of $50,000. Remember also that the RESP can stay open for up to 36 years in the event a beneficiary changes their mind.

Year-end tax planning: Benefit from your losses & gains

If you are thinking of making portfolio adjustments, there may be a way to gain from your losses — or further benefit from your gains:

Gain from your losses through tax-loss harvesting — Using losses to offset capital gains may be an opportunity from a tax perspective. In general, when you sell an investment in a non-registered account, you must calculate the resulting capital gain or loss, based on the difference between the proceeds from the sale and the investment's adjusted cost base. For tax purposes, only a prescribed portion of a capital gain is included in taxable income (the "inclusion rate," currently 50 percent), while the corresponding portion of capital losses is generally deductible against taxable capital gains.

Benefit from your gains: Donating securities in kind — Donating publicly-traded securities "in kind" that have appreciated in value may eliminate tax on the resulting capital gain and allow for a donation tax credit for the fair market value of the securities. Do not sell securities and donate the proceeds, as part of the tax benefit will be lost. If securities have declined, simply sell them to claim the capital loss and donate cash to entitle you to a donation tax credit. If you're subject to the alternative minimum tax (AMT), there may be tax implications. Remember to make charitable donations well in advance of the December 31, 2026, deadline to count towards your 2026 taxes.

Here are a handful of other year-end tax-planning ideas:

› **Split income.** This may include electing to split eligible pension income with a spouse or paying reasonable salaries to family members for services provided to your self-employed business.

› **Contribute to your RRSP.** You still have 60 days after the calendar year-end to make contributions for the 2026 tax year, but the earlier you contribute, the greater the opportunity for tax-deferred growth.

› **Plan for the pension income tax credit.** If you're 65 or older and don't have eligible pension income, consider opening a small Registered Retirement Income Fund (RRIF) or purchasing an annuity.

› **Consider tax-free savings account (TFSA) withdrawal timing.** If you plan to withdraw, consider doing so before year-end. Contribution room resets at the start of the calendar year, so withdrawals made after December 31, 2026, won't restore contribution room until January 1, 2028.

For more information or ideas, please contact the office.

Carry it forward: A tax-planning reminder

Given our increasing tax burden, tax planning has never been more important. As you plan for year-end, remember that the tax rules allow you to carry forward certain unused credits or deductions. Here are some reminders, along with some tips.

Capital losses — If you sell investments in a non-registered account for less than the original cost, the capital loss can be used to offset capital gains realized during the year (see page 2). If you don't have sufficient capital gains, the net capital loss can be carried back three taxation years or carried forward indefinitely to use against net capital gains. Tip: Be aware of the superficial loss rules, which may deny the loss if you or an affiliated person acquires the same security within 30 days before or after the sale and still holds it 30 days after.

RRSP — Both unused RRSP contribution room and deductions can be carried forward. Tip: Contribute by the March 1, 2027, deadline to maximize potential tax-deferred growth. You may defer claiming the deduction to a higher-income year to offset a larger tax bill.

TFSA — Unused TFSA contribution room can be carried forward indefinitely. Tip: Keep good records of TFSA contributions and withdrawals. CRA account information may not reflect current-year transactions, especially early in the year, so relying on the contribution room shown on "My Account" can lead to an overcontribution.

RESP — While the Canada Education Savings Grant (CESG) pays an annual maximum of $500, unused CESG entitlement can be carried forward, allowing up to $1,000 per year ($500 current year + $500 carryforward). Tip: If you missed a prior year contribution, consider an annual contribution of $5,000 to achieve the maximum grant.

First Home Savings Account (FHSA) — FHSA holders can contribute $8,000 annually in participation room. Unused amounts can be carried forward to the following year, but only to a maximum of $8,000 and subject to a lifetime limit of $40,000. Tip: The FHSA generally closes at the end of the year of its 15th anniversary, the year the holder turns 71 or the year after the first qualifying withdrawal. Not contributing the full $8,000 per year from the outset could cause you to miss out on the full lifetime contribution amount and valuable tax-deductible benefits.

Charitable donations — Eligible donations unused in the current year can be carried forward for up to five tax years. This may be helpful for donations made to U.S. charities, which can typically only be claimed against U.S.-source income earned in the year the credit is claimed. Tip: Donating shares "in kind" to an eligible Canadian charity allows you to receive a donation receipt for their fair market value. If the shares in a non-registered account have appreciated, this strategy can also help eliminate the capital gains tax liability.

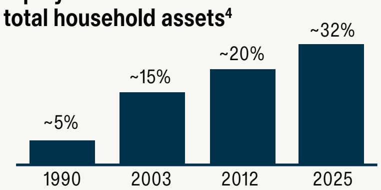
Student in the family? Tuition tax credit — Many students don't use their tuition tax credit to reduce taxes because they have limited income at school. Any remaining amount can be carried forward indefinitely to future years. However, once a student has federal tax payable, they must generally use available carried-forward tuition amounts to reduce that tax before claiming certain other non-refundable credits. Tip: After applying the tuition credit to their own taxes, any remaining current-year amount can be transferred to a spouse/partner, parent or grandparent, to a maximum of $5,000 less the amount used by the student.

What is driving household wealth?

A recent *Reuters* report highlighted that in the U.S., equities have surpassed real estate as a share of net financial wealth for the first time since World War II.[1] Over recent years, strong equity market gains have made the stock market a significant source of wealth accumulation. In Canada, a similar pattern may be emerging as equities continue to comprise a growing share of total household assets.

It may be more than just market performance. As rising housing costs have pushed homeownership out of reach for many, Gen Z is increasingly putting money into the stock market instead.[2] Among younger Canadians, nearly 74 percent report having at least one type of investment.[3]

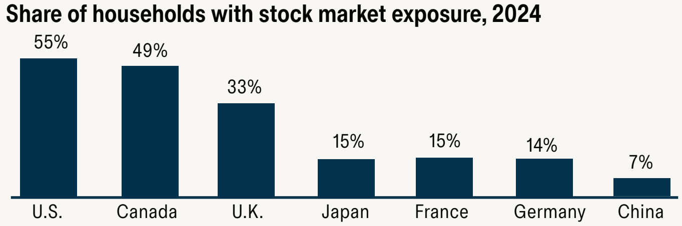
Equity & investment funds share of total household assets[4]



What has enabled these shifts? It may be difficult to recall a time when investing was largely reserved for the wealthy. Yet as recently as the 1990s, before widespread internet access, high trading commissions and fewer low-cost investment options meant that building a diversified equity portfolio required considerably more capital. At that time, equities represented just 5 percent of Canadian household assets.

Today, technological advances, lower costs and fewer barriers to entry have democratized equity ownership. Notably, while participation rates in Canada and the U.S. are comparatively high, global equity ownership remains uneven. As barriers to entry continue to decline, what happens when the rest of the world catches up? The implications for global capital flows — and perhaps even valuation multiples — could be meaningful.

Share of households with stock market exposure, 2024



Source: www.visualcapitalist.com/ranked-top-countries-by-stock-market-ownership/

More broadly, the expansion of equity market participation has allowed a larger share of the population to benefit from one of the most powerful wealth-creation systems in modern economic history.

1. https://www.reuters.com/business/finance/equities-surpass-real-estate-top-us-wealth-driver-first-time-since-ww2-goldman-2026-07-23/; 2. https://www.wsj.com/personal-finance/gen-z-investments-home-ownership-ecobbe98; 3. https://www.finra.org/media-center/;4.CANSIM Table 378-0121; www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3610058001

HNW estates: Be cautious when naming children as joint executors

If you have children and are planning your estate, you've likely considered appointing one of them as your estate executor ("liquidator" or "estate administrator"*). Because you are able to name more than one person to serve in this role, some parents choose multiple children to act as joint executors. The reasons are many: a desire to treat children fairly, to avoid the appearance of favouritism or to share the responsibilities and workload among them. While the intention may be positive, appointing more than one executor can sometimes create more challenges than it resolves.

For many high-net-worth (HNW) estates, these decisions carry additional complexity. Larger and more sophisticated estates often involve multiple asset classes, corporate structures, tax exposure or cross-border considerations. In that context, even well-intentioned executor arrangements can become significantly more difficult to manage. Here are three reasons to exercise particular caution:

1. Joint decision-making can slow estate administration. Executors generally must act together.[1] When multiple executors are appointed jointly, they typically share equal legal authority and responsibility for administering the estate. In most cases, no single executor can act independently. As a result, decisions must be made collectively, which can slow administration while agreement is reached. For HNW estates, this dynamic is heightened by structural complexity, as decisions involving private companies, investment portfolios, trusts or real estate holdings may require careful consideration and consensus.

2. Higher-value assets may increase the likelihood and stakes of disagreement. Reaching consensus within any group can be difficult, and matters involving money or emotion often intensify those challenges. Even siblings who get along well may have differing perspectives on valuation, liquidity events, business succession or the treatment of sentimental assets. In HNW estates, these disagreements can carry materially higher consequences. Delays or disputes can affect asset values, tax outcomes or the orderly management of complex holdings. Conflicts between co-executors may also lead to prolonged tension or resentment, creating the very family strain you intended to avoid by appointing multiple executors.

3. Administrative and logistical complexity scales with estate size. Coordinating joint action is already challenging in practical terms, particularly given existing obligations such as careers and parenting responsibilities. Co-executors are typically required to act together in performing their duties, including signing estate documents and meeting with legal or financial professionals. In many HNW estates, this is further amplified by the need to coordinate with lawyers, accountants, trustees, financial advisors or corporate directors. Where executors live in different jurisdictions or assets span multiple regions, coordination challenges may further increase.

Structuring alternatives for HNW estates

Instead of naming co-executors, many families benefit from structured approaches. One child may serve as the primary executor, and others can be named as alternates, with the choice based on objective considerations such as financial literacy, proximity and experience with complex assets. For larger or more complex estates, a professional or corporate executor is frequently considered. This can provide neutrality, continuity and technical expertise in managing complex assets, while reducing emotional pressure on family members during an already difficult time. In some cases, a hybrid structure combining a professional executor with family oversight can balance objectivity with family perspective.

Whatever structure you choose, communication becomes more important as estate complexity increases. HNW estates can carry more moving parts, stakeholders and opportunities for misunderstanding. Discussing your intentions with your children while you are still living can help align expectations, reduce uncertainty and support family harmony into the future.

**The names vary by province. This article uses the generic term "executor."*

1. This may not apply in the case where the will provides dispute resolution mechanisms.

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