



For the Week of December 28, 2020

THE MARKETS

All three major indices ended a shortened holiday week on an up note as investors digested surging virus cases, the ongoing vaccine rollout, uncertainty over the Georgia runoff, a fall in unemployment claims, and new hurdles to the stimulus bills. For the week, the Dow lost 0.34 percent to close at 30,199.87. The S&P lost 0.49 percent to finish at 3,703.06, and the NASDAQ gained 0.32 percent to end the week at 12,804.73.

Returns Through 12/25/20	1 Week	YTD	1 Year	3 Year	5 Year
Dow Jones Industrials (TR)	-0.34	8.27	8.35	9.36	14.18
NASDAQ Composite (TR)	0.32	43.97	44.30	23.79	21.77
S&P 500 (TR)	-0.49	16.71	17.01	13.51	14.70
Barclays US Agg Bond (TR)	0.08	7.27	7.38	5.44	4.38
MSCI EAFE (TR)	-0.60	6.33	6.83	4.11	7.12

Source: Morningstar.com. *Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Indexes are unmanaged and cannot be invested into directly. Three- and five-year returns are annualized. The Dow Jones Industrials, MSCI EAFE, Barclays US Agg Bond, NASDAQ and S&P, excluding "1 Week" returns, are based on total return, which is a reflection of return to an investor by reinvesting dividends after the deduction of withholding tax. (TR) indicates total return. MSCI EAFE returns stated in U.S. dollars.

All the Other Stuff

Administrative costs make up 34 percent of total U.S. health care expenditures (i.e., expenses not related to direct patient care) including medical billing, the scheduling of appointments, and hiring of office staff (source: Annals of Internal Medicine, BTN Research).

Help for College Students

The Department of Education announced on Friday, Dec. 4, a second extension through Jan. 31, 2021, of the forbearance period on federal student loans. The forbearance plan, a pause in required principal and interest payments, began March 13 and was set to expire Sept. 30 but was previously extended on Aug. 21 through the end of 2020. 92 percent of all student loans (by dollar) are federal loans. The remaining 8 percent are loans originated by a private lender (source: Department of Education, BTN Research).

Advantage: Sellers

The number of existing single-family homes for sale has been tracked nationally since July 1982. The total peaked in July 2007 at 3.4 million but has now fallen to match its all-time low of 1.22 million in December 2019 (source: National Association of Realtors, BTN Research).



WEEKLY FOCUS



Financial Resolutions for 2021

Despite a crazy year or perhaps because of it, over half of Americans are expected to make at least one financial resolution for 2021.¹ If you haven't identified yours, here are a few to consider.

Pad your retirement savings.

You probably spent less on travel, restaurants, movies, gas, or sporting events in 2020. Why not maintain some of those cuts after things normalize and add the savings to your retirement account?

Increase your emergency fund.

According to FINRA, almost half of Americans don't have a rainy day fund. If you don't have an emergency fund equal to six months of income, start one. If you do, why not add enough to cover an additional month or two of expenses?

Reduce debt, safeguard credit.

Automate account payments to avoid missing any. Plan to eliminate debts before retiring. Thwart identity thieves with credit monitoring, which notifies you when key information on your file changes.

Create a long-range plan.

If you're married, project future expenses if you both live to 95 or either of you dies and the other lives to 95. Then go to ssa.gov/myaccount to estimate Social Security benefits you'd receive when claiming at different ages. Determine how much more you'll need to maintain your lifestyle.

Review your insurance and estate plan.

Make sure your insurance coverage is adequate and beneficiaries are up to date. If you haven't reviewed your estate plan recently, you've moved, or your assets or family has changed, schedule a meeting with your estate planning attorney.

Invest in yourself.

Health care is expensive. Studies indicate the average 65-year-old couple retiring in 2020 can expect to pay \$295,000 for out-of-pocket health care and medical expenses (not including potential long-term care). Taking steps to stay fit now may help you enjoy retirement and save money.

Work with a coach.

Your odds of successfully implementing goals increase when you have an objective, knowledgeable partner. Make an appointment to discuss your financial resolutions and how we can work together to make 2021 a happy and prosperous new year

¹<https://www.maanifvmonev.com/bloa/bankina/monev-resolution-survey/>

²monev.usnews.com/monev/retirement/agina/articles/preparing-for-medical-expenses-in-retirement



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*The Standard & Poor's 500 (S&P 500) is an unmanaged group of securities considered to be representative of the stock market in general. The Dow Jones Industrial Average is a price-weighted index of 30 actively traded blue-chip stocks. NASDAQ Composite Index is an unmanaged, market-weighted index of all over-the-counter common stocks traded on the National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotation System. The Morgan Stanley Capital International Europe, Australia and Far East Index (MSCI EAFE Index) is a widely recognized benchmark of non-U.S. stock markets. It is an unmanaged index composed of a sample of companies representative of the market structure of 20 European and Pacific Basin countries and includes reinvestment of all dividends. Barclays Capital Aggregate Bond Index is an unmanaged index comprised of U.S. investment-grade, fixed-rate bond market securities, including government, government agency, corporate and mortgage-backed securities between one and 10 years. Written by Securities America, Copyright December 2020. All rights reserved. Securities offered through Securities America, Inc., Member FINRA/SIPC. SAI#3383589.1