

Regent Financial Services

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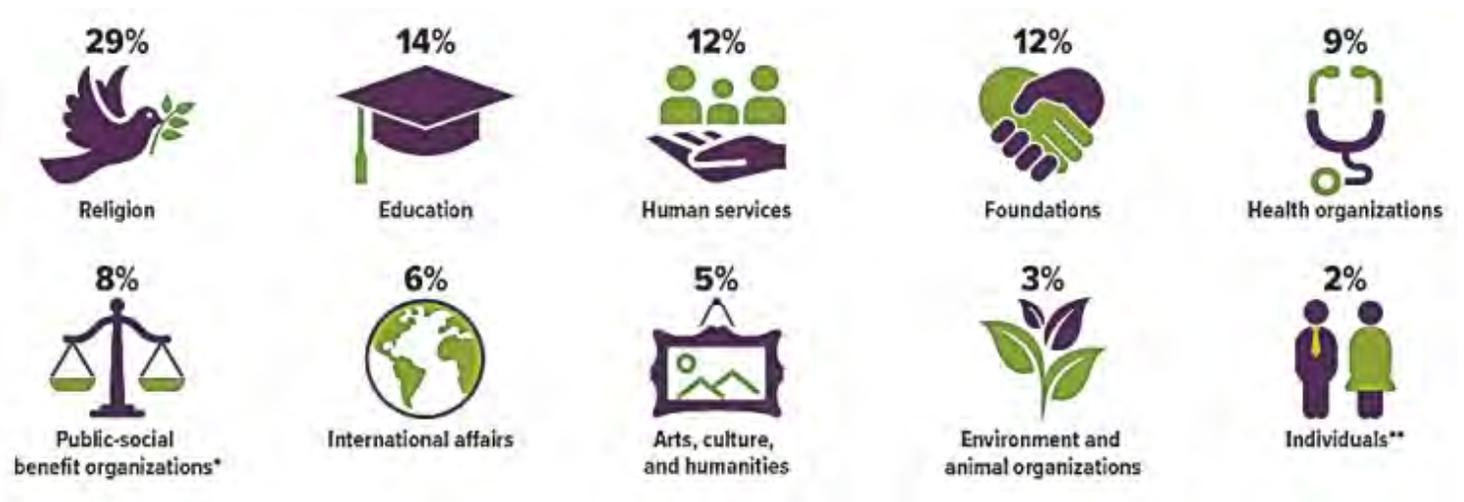
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Spreading Generosity

Americans gave almost \$450 billion to charity in 2019, an increase of 4.2% over the previous year. Individuals accounted for more than two-thirds of this amount, followed by contributions from foundations, bequests, and corporations. Here is a breakdown of the recipients of this generosity, by percentage of total charitable contributions.



*Focus on issues such as civil rights, community improvement, volunteerism, and voter education

**Primarily donations of medications from pharmaceutical company foundations

Source: *Giving USA 2020*

Five Tips to Regain Your Retirement Savings Focus in 2021

In early 2020, 61% of U.S. workers surveyed said that retirement planning makes them feel stressed.¹ Investor confidence was continually tested as the year wore on, and it's likely that this percentage rose — perhaps even substantially. If you find yourself among those feeling stressed heading into the new year, these tips may help you focus and enhance your retirement savings strategy in 2021.

1. Consider increasing your savings by just 1%. If you participate in a retirement savings plan at work, try to increase your contribution rate by just 1% now, and then again whenever possible until you reach the maximum amount allowed. The accompanying chart illustrates the powerful difference contributing just 1% more each year can make over time.

2. Review your tax situation. It makes sense to review your retirement savings strategy periodically in light of your current tax situation. That's because retirement savings plans and IRAs not only help you accumulate savings for the future, they can help lower your income taxes now.

Every dollar you contribute to a traditional (non-Roth) retirement savings plan at work reduces the amount of your current taxable income. If neither you nor your spouse is covered by a work-based plan, contributions to a traditional IRA are fully deductible up to annual limits. If you, your spouse, or both of you participate in a work-based plan, your IRA contributions may still be deductible unless your income exceeds certain limits.

Note that you will have to pay taxes on contributions and earnings when you withdraw the money. In addition, withdrawals prior to age 59½ may be subject to a 10% penalty tax unless an exception applies.

3. Rebalance, if necessary. Market turbulence throughout the past year may have caused your target asset allocation to shift toward a more aggressive or conservative profile than is appropriate for your circumstances. If your portfolio is not rebalanced automatically, now might be a good time to see if adjustments need to be made.

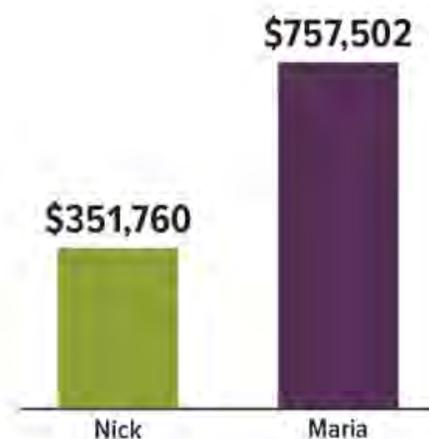
Typically, there are two ways to rebalance: (1) you can do so quickly by selling securities or shares in the overweighted asset class(es) and shifting the proceeds to the underweighted one(s), or (2) you can rebalance gradually by directing new investments into the underweighted class(es) until the target allocation is reached. Keep in mind that selling investments in a taxable account could result in a tax liability. Asset allocation is a method used to help manage investment risk; it does not guarantee a profit or protect against investment loss.

4. Revisit your savings goal. When you first started saving in your retirement plan or IRA, you may have estimated how much you might need to accumulate to

retire comfortably. If you experienced any major life changes during the past year — for example, a change in job or marital status, an inheritance, or a new family member — you may want to take a fresh look at your overall savings goal as well as the assumptions used to generate it. As circumstances in your life change, your savings strategy will likely evolve as well.

The Power of 1%

Maria and Nick are hired at the same time at a \$50,000 annual salary. Both contribute 6% of their salaries to their retirement accounts and receive a 3% raise each year. Nick maintains the 6% rate throughout his career, while Maria increases her rate by 1% each year until she hits 15%. After 30 years, Maria would have accumulated more than double the amount that Nick has.



Assumes a 6% average annual rate of return. This hypothetical example of mathematical compounding is used for illustrative purposes only and does not represent the performance of any specific investment. It assumes a monthly contribution and monthly compounding. Fees, expenses, and taxes were not considered and would reduce the performance shown if included. Actual results will vary.

5. Understand all your plan's features. Work-based retirement savings plans can vary from employer to employer. How familiar are you with your plan's specific features? Does your employer offer a matching and/or profit-sharing contribution? Do you know how it works? Are company contributions and earnings subject to a vesting schedule (i.e., a waiting period before they become fully yours) and, if so, do you understand the parameters? Does your plan offer loans or hardship withdrawals? Under what circumstances might you access the money? Can you make Roth or after-tax contributions, which can provide a source of tax-free income in retirement? Review your plan's Summary Plan Description to ensure you take maximum advantage of all your plan has to offer.

All investing involves risk, including the possible loss of principal, and there is no guarantee that any investment strategy will be successful.

1) Employee Benefit Research Institute, 2020

99 Interesting Facts About Christmas

By Editorial Staff

Christmas is celebrated in many countries all over the world and in a wide variety of ways. Many of the customs and decorations we use to make the holiday special have developed in interesting ways and their origins may be hidden in history. **With these interesting facts about Christmas, test your knowledge of Christmas trivia as you read through.**

99 facts about Christmas!

1. The **image of Santa Claus flying his sleigh** began in 1819 and was created by Washington Irving, the same author who dreamt up the Headless Horseman.

2. The Montgomery Ward department store created Rudolph the **Reindeer** as a marketing gimmick **to encourage children** to buy their Christmas coloring books.

3. The original Rudolph **did not have a red nose**. In that day and age, red noses were seen as an indicator of chronic alcoholism and Montgomery Ward didn't want him to look like a drunkard. To complete the original picture, he was almost named Reginald or Rollo.

4. Clement Moore's poem introduced **eight more reindeer for Santa's sleigh and their names were Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Duner and Blixem** (for the German words for thunder and lightning). These later evolved into Donner and Blitzen.

5. Most of these names are male-sounding names. Male reindeer shed their antlers in winter, however, so the reindeer pulling Santa's sleigh are more than likely female.

6. Some **leave food out for Santa Claus' reindeer** as Norse children did, leaving hay and treats for Odin's eight-legged horse Sleipnir hoping they would stop by during their hunting adventures. Dutch children adopted this same tradition, leaving food in their wooden shoes for St. Nicholas' horse.

7. Dutch children also left out food and drink for St. Nicholas himself to honor him on his feast day. Today **we leave milk and cookies out for Santa**, continuing this very old tradition.

8. **America's first batch of eggnog** was made in the Jamestown settlement in 1607. Its name comes from the word "grog", meaning any drink made with rum. Non-alcoholic eggnog is popular as well.

9. Want to **know a useful way to recycle your Christmas tree?** Some zoos take donated Christmas trees and use them as food for the animals.

10. Between the 16th and 19th centuries global temperatures were significantly lower than normal in what was known as a "little ice age." **Charles Dickens** grew up during this period and experienced snow for his first eight Christmases. This "**White Christmas**" experience influenced his writing and began a tradition of expectation for the holidays.

11. The **Christmas tree in Trafalgar Square** is donated to the people of London every year by the people of Oslo, Norway in thanks for their assistance during World War II.

12. Since 1918 **the city of Boston has received a giant Christmas tree as a gift** from the Canadian province of Nova Scotia. Boston lent considerable support to the city of Halifax during their 1917 explosion and subsequent fire disaster.

13. In 1914 during World War I there was a **now famous Christmas truce in the trenches** between the British and the Germans. They exchanged gifts across a neutral no man's land, played football together, and decorated their shelters. (Read more about it in the book "Silent Night: The Story of the World War I Christmas Truce" by Stanley Weintraub.)

14. In 2010 during the Christmas season, the Colombian government decorated jungle trees with lights. **The trees lit up when the guerrillas (terrorists) walked by and banners appeared asking them to surrender their arms.** The campaign convinced 331 guerillas to re-enter society and also won an award for strategic marketing excellence.

15. Bicycle, the U.S. playing card company, manufactured cards to give all the POWS in Germany during World War II as Christmas presents. These **cards, when soaked in water, revealed an escape route for POWs.** The Nazis never knew.

16. The **Christmas wreath** was originally hung as a symbol of Jesus. The holly represents his crown of thorns and the red berries the blood he shed.

17. The **three traditional colors of most Christmas decorations** are red, green and gold. Red symbolizes the blood of Christ, green symbolized life and rebirth, and gold represents light, royalty and wealth.

for 18 - 99 go to:

<https://thefactfile.org/interesting-facts-christmas/>

Healthy Leftover Creamy Ham Pasta with Peas



Prep Time:

10

Mins

Cook Time:

20

Mins

Servings:

6

People

foodmeanderings.com



This creative leftover Christmas ham recipe is the perfect way to repurpose those baked ham leftovers so that none of it goes to waste!

Ingredients:

- 1 375 g - box of pasta (spiral, rigatoni, etc.)
- 2 cups leftover ham, chopped into 1/2 inch cubes
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 tsp chicken bouillon base (powder)
- 1/2 cup boiling water
- 1 28 oz - can diced tomatoes and juices
- 1 1/2 tsp minced garlic
- 1/2 cup mascarpone cheese - can substitute cream cheese
- 1 500 g - bag of frozen green peas about 2 cups
- 1 284 ml can of mushrooms

Garnish

- Parmesan cheese
- Basil sprinkles for garnish

Directions:

1. Cook pasta in large pot until done.
2. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, fry ham with onions until onions are soft. Add chicken bouillon powder mixed with boiling water, then add tomatoes and garlic.
3. Whisk in mascarpone cheese and mix until incorporated. Cook for 10 more minutes, then add frozen peas and canned mushrooms.
4. Drain pasta and add to pan. Then add basil and oregano.
5. Garnish - sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and basil.

The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and are not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations for any individual. To determine which investment(s) may be appropriate for you, consult your financial advisor prior to investing. All performance referenced is historical and is no guarantee of future results. All indices are unmanaged and cannot be invested into directly.

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