



## ADF FINANCIAL SERVICES CONSUMER CENTRE

By Defence. For Defence.



# INITIAL TRAINING WORKBOOK

Starting your ADF career

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# ABOUT THIS WORKBOOK

Using this workbook will help you lay the foundation for good money management and great financial habits.

This workbook can be used alone for self-directed learning or in conjunction with a personal finance brief, video presentation or the online resources available at [adfconsumer.gov.au](http://adfconsumer.gov.au)

## USING THIS WORKBOOK

- Read the information in each section
- Understand the suggested activities
- Write notes about things you want to remember or do
- Keep the workbook to come back to any time as a resource

## YOUR LEARNING OUTCOMES

You will learn more information about the following financial matters

- Remuneration
- Goal setting
- Budgeting and banking
- Credit and debt
- Tax
- Salary packaging
- Superannuation
- Death and invalidity cover
- Insurance
- Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme (DHOAS)
- Investing
- Common rip-offs
- Will & Power of Attorney
- Facts & fiction about financial advice
- Where to find us to get more information

Scan here for a full list of all the websites and references mentioned in this workbook.

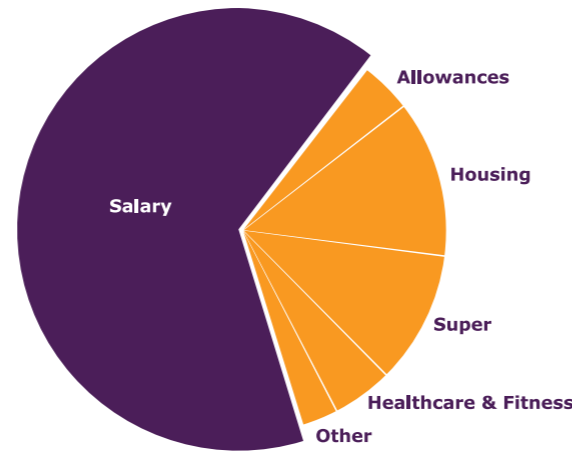


Helpful Links

# DEFENCE EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

A career in the ADF provides you with job security, interesting work, a broad range of opportunities and a fulfilling lifestyle.

There are additional benefits that you receive in the ADF that you do not receive from other employers.



## MILITARY SALARY

As a result of serving with the ADF you'll:

- Earn a regular, reliable, competitive salary that usually increases every year with an opportunity to progress through your career further increasing your pay
- Receive a comprehensive package to recognise the unique nature of military life, your posting location, the performance of certain tasks or specialised skills that you bring or have acquired

Everything you receive in your salary is identified on your payslip, available on PMKeys (the ADF's Human Resources system).

## SUPERANNUATION

It is compulsory for Australian employers to make superannuation contributions for every employee. ADF pays superannuation for its employees at a rate of 16.4% per annum which is well above the legislated amount.

If you joined the ADF for the first time after June 30, 2016, your superannuation is paid into an accumulation scheme of your choice. This means that your retirement benefit is a lump sum based on contributions and investment returns which have accumulated throughout your working life.

### TIP

Find out more about superannuation at [adfconsumer.gov.au/superannuation](http://adfconsumer.gov.au/superannuation)

## ADF COVER

If you are in the full-time permanent force or a reservist on continuous full-time service, you are automatically covered for death and invalidity through ADF Cover.

### TIP

Find out more about ADF cover at [csc.gov.au](http://csc.gov.au)

## HOUSING

During initial training you will generally live on base. When you move to a posting location, you may have an option to live on base or off base in a service residence or private rental. Either way, accommodation is usually subsidised.

The ADF also offers a subsidised home ownership scheme.

### TIP

Find out more at [dhoas.gov.au](http://dhoas.gov.au)

## SPORT AND FITNESS FACILITIES

Costly gym memberships can be a thing of the past as most bases have good sporting and fitness facilities, and some have special interest clubs for specific interests.

## MEDICAL AND DENTAL

Free medical and dental care is part of your employment package.

## UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

Uniforms and equipment are provided to do your job.

### TIP

Get onto the Employment Package Calculator [adfconsumer.gov.au/adfemploymentpackageestimator](http://adfconsumer.gov.au/adfemploymentpackageestimator) to understand your employment package.

## NOTES

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## MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR SALARY

With a better understanding of the benefits of your ADF employment package, you now have an opportunity to work out how to make the most of it.

### WORK OUT WHERE YOU SPLASH YOUR CASH

- Work out your spending honestly
- Collect receipts and look at your bank statements for every item you purchase
- If you use cash, start writing it down to track your spending. It's the best way to work out how much money is going out the door

If you do need to borrow money, for example when buying a home, look for a loan that can be repaid early without penalty should your circumstances change in the future, and make sure the repayments will still be manageable if interest rates go up or your income is reduced.

### DO A BUDGET

A budget must accurately reflect your income and expenses.

- Use our budget calculator found at [adfconsumer.gov.au/budget-calculator](https://adfconsumer.gov.au/budget-calculator)
- You can do it live online or download an excel spreadsheet. It's great to play with numbers and start to feel confident working out what your budget could look like
- Enter accurate income - check your payslip (on PMKeys) for full details of your gross and net income. Net income is used to work out the money available for you to use
- Enter a realistic amount in every item of the budget calculator
- You can choose fortnightly or monthly results. We recommend using the fortnightly setting to align with the ADF pay cycle
- Discretionary spending refers to things that you want, not necessarily need
- Always set aside money for bills that must be paid



# BUDGET CALCULATOR

Use this budget template to better understand your income and expenses to develop a money plan to meet your financial goals. Use the formula below and the notes section to help you calculate your payments into fortnightly amounts to coincide with your pay cycle.

## CALCULATING FORTNIGHTLY EXPENSES

Weekly expense x 2 = Fortnightly expense

Monthly expense x 12 ÷ 26 = Fortnightly expense

Quarterly expense x 4 ÷ 26 = Fortnightly expense

Annual expense ÷ 26 = Fortnightly expense

Enter income and expenses into the white boxes. Payment frequency is fortnightly.

Type of income		Fortnightly
Income	Salary or nett wage (after tax and deductions)	\$
	Bonuses, allowances and pensions (after tax, if applicable)	\$
	Partner salary or wages (after tax)	\$
	Investment income (e.g. interest, dividends, rent)	\$
	Centrelink benefits (e.g. family tax benefits, income support)	\$
	Child support received	\$
	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	\$
Financial commitments		Fortnightly
Expenses	Car loan	\$
	Personal loans	\$
	Credit and store cards	\$
	Buy-now-pay-later	\$
	<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	\$
	Household expenses	
Rent or mortgage	\$	
Food and groceries	\$	
Gas	\$	
Electricity	\$	
<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	\$	

Other regular expenses		Fortnightly
Expenses	Phone/mobile	\$
	Internet	\$
	Laundry and dry cleaning	\$
	Petrol	\$
	Parking and tolls	\$
	Vehicle registration	\$
	Vehicle insurance	\$
	Public transport	\$
	<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	\$
	Discretionary spending	
Pay TV and streaming services	\$	
Clothes and shoes	\$	
Restaurants and takeaway	\$	
Other	\$	
<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	\$	
<b>Total expenses</b>		<b>Fortnightly: \$</b>
Total	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b> = <b>NET RESULT</b>
	\$	\$
	\$	\$

## NOTES

## SET FINANCIAL GOALS

Write down your goals for each time period.

**1-2  
YEARS**  
(Short-term)

GOALS

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**3-6  
YEARS**  
(Medium-term)

GOALS

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**7+  
YEARS**  
(Long-term)

GOALS

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## CREATE A SAVINGS PLAN

- Writing down your savings plan makes things real and keeps you accountable
- Saving rather than using credit is also a way to save money by saving on interest
- Decide on at least one savings goal - aside from necessary expenses - just to get started
- The amount you want to save should match any left over money in your budget
- Once you get started, think about a short-term, medium-term and long-term goal
- Add your savings amount to your budget

### TIP

If you don't already have an emergency fund, a good short-term goal might be to open an online savings account and build a buffer of 3-6 months' worth of expenses to act as a safety net for when life does not go according to plan.

Try setting up a savings plan like the example below:

GOAL	AMOUNT	TIMEFRAME	HOW MUCH TO PUT ASIDE EACH FORTNIGHT
Holiday	\$5,000	1 year (26 fortnights)	\$192
Second hand car	\$20,000	2.5 years	\$308
New car	\$45,000	2 years	\$847.38
<b>Add up the total fortnightly savings you will need to make to reach your current goals</b>			<b>\$</b>

To create your savings plan, work out:

- 1. How much** you need to save: goal amount ÷ by the number of pay periods
- 2. How long** it will take: goal amount ÷ fortnightly savings

GOAL	AMOUNT	TIMEFRAME	HOW MUCH TO PUT ASIDE EACH FORTNIGHT
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
<b>Total fortnightly savings to reach current goals</b>			<b>\$</b>



## OPEN SEPARATE ACCOUNTS

Having separate bank accounts for essentials, spending and savings can really help you stay on top of your money.

### SEPARATE YOUR ACCOUNTS FOR



#### BILLS

Work out how much you need for regular bills using your budget; put this money into your bills account



#### SPENDING

Set an amount each pay for discretionary spending (wants) and put this money into a spending account



#### SAVINGS

Set an amount for saving based on your goals and income (what is left over)

You can open new accounts with your bank either using internet banking (click on 'new account') or go to the bank to arrange.

If you want to use other banks you will need to provide ID. Check the fees and charges of any new account including whether there are limits around taking money out e.g. term deposit accounts for saving have time limits.

A simple way to start is to use internet banking to set up low cost accounts and start the process. You can always change to higher interest accounts later.

Use internet banking to set up regular transfers to the new accounts according to your calculations.

#### TIP

- Remember to have enough money in the bills account
- Check your balance regularly to prevent being overdrawn
- Keep a record of any new account you open

	BANK	ACCOUNT NAME	BSB NUMBER	ACCOUNT NUMBER
1				
2				
3				

## CHANGE YOUR PAY DISTRIBUTION

A great way to pay rent or other essentials is to split your pay into separate accounts. There may be a limit to how your pay can be distributed.

See the example below:

BANK	BSB	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
My Bank (bills)	032-345	9876 5432	\$400.00
My Bank (spending)	032-345	2345 6789	\$300.00
My Bank (saving)	732-345	1598 7532	Balance
My Bank (other)			

#### TIP

Call **1800 DEFENCE** to find out how you can change your pay distribution to pay rent or mortgage.

## AUTOMATE BILL PAYMENTS

A great way to manage regular bills is to set up direct debits from your bills account.

This really helps you to avoid late payments and associated fees. There are different ways to set this up.

- Direct **debit**: register for online services via the provider's website and look for the direct debit option. To cancel a direct debit set up in this way means you also have to contact the provider directly to cancel
- Direct **credit**: log into your bank account and select 'make payment' or similar option. Enter the payment details and those of the payee. This can be set up as a regular or recurring payment. If the payment is for a limited time you can set an end date

#### TIP

It is usually better not to use a credit card for direct debits. It's difficult to cancel a direct debit set up this way and it can take more time. Meanwhile you could still be paying and incurring interest on the card.

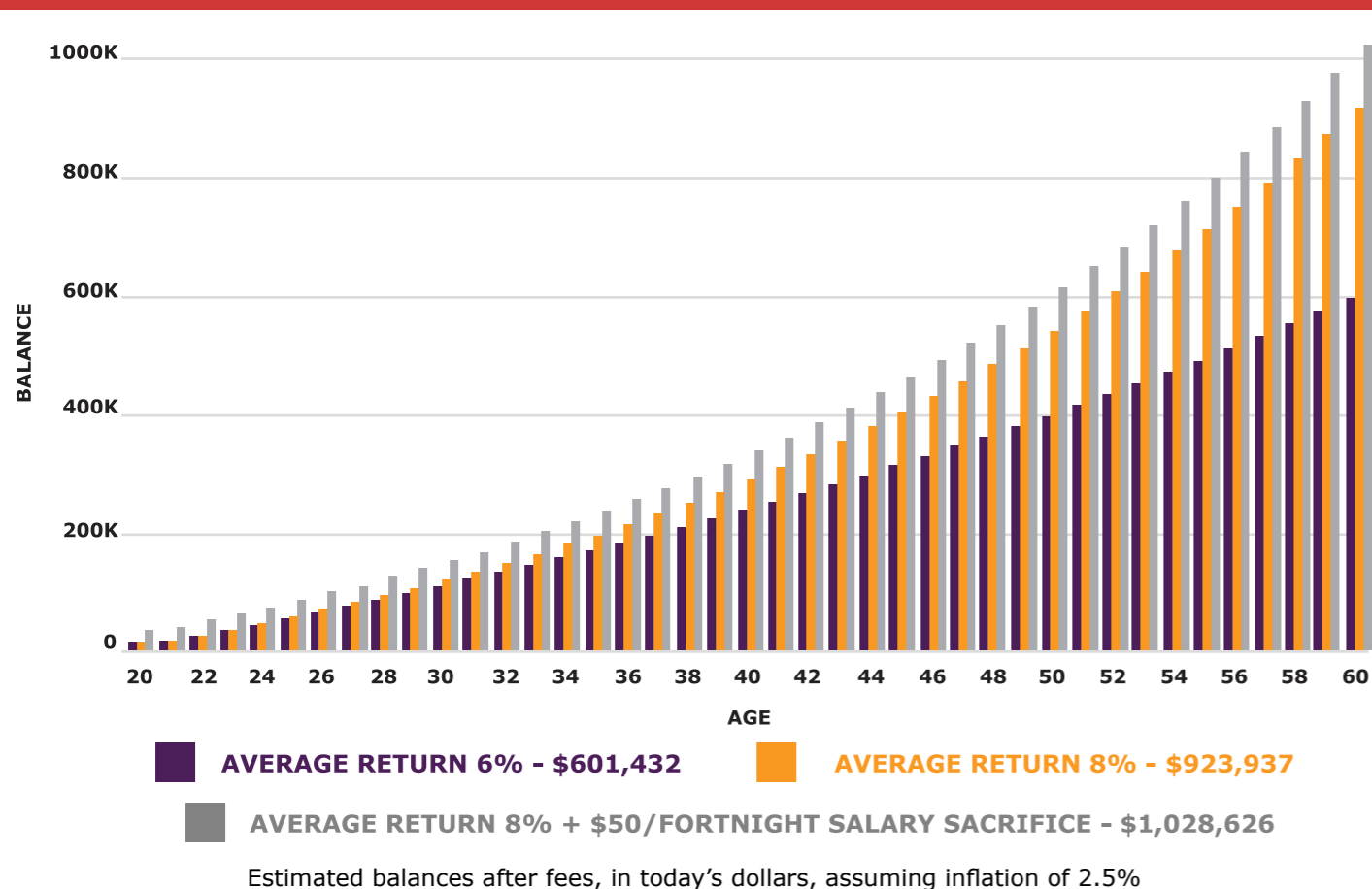
## OPTIMISE YOUR SUPERANNUATION

We mentioned superannuation previously, as part of your benefits in the Defence Employment Benefits Scheme.

### WHY YOU SHOULD CARE

Taking an interest in your superannuation now can mean that you will have a lot more resources and choices later.

#### EXAMPLE



For example, a 21-year-old ADF member with an income of \$65,000 per annum, employer contributions of 16.4% and a current super balance of \$15,000 estimates their super balance at retirement. The graph demonstrates the difference between getting 6% p.a. and 8% p.a.

The graph results show that compounding investment returns over the member's working life could increase their super balance at age 60 by more than \$320,000. If the member salary sacrificed \$50 each pay into super, their balance at age 60 could be around \$427,000 higher.

(note: estimate only at current dollars assuming inflation of 2.5%)

## MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR SUPER

You can make superannuation work harder for you so that you can have the best benefits later in life.

- If you have more than one super fund, consider consolidating into one so that you are not paying fees (which reduces your balance)
- Consider making personal contributions either before or after tax. While you are in training and your income is lower, making after tax contributions may mean you are eligible for a government co-contribution
- There are caps on how much you can contribute before or after tax within a tax year. Check the ATO website to get the most recent figures [ato.gov.au](https://ato.gov.au)
- Eligibility for co-contribution depends on your income and the maximum co-contribution payable is \$500.

#### TIP

To calculate how much you have to contribute to maximise your benefit, go to [ato.gov.au/Calculators-and-tools/Super-co-contribution-calculator](https://ato.gov.au/Calculators-and-tools/Super-co-contribution-calculator)

## SORT YOUR SUPER

The ADF makes generous contributions to its members. Now is the time to think about how you can maximise this even more to build a plan for your future. You can make contributions and get involved in deciding where your super is invested.

**Before tax contributions:** also known as salary sacrifice, reduces the tax you pay on your income. Contact Defence's contracted salary packaging provider for more information, Smart Salary [smartsalary.com.au](https://smartsalary.com.au)

**After tax contributions:** you can arrange to make contributions after tax at any time. To do this, log into your super account and look for the instructions about how to make contributions. You could consider choosing to set up automatic contributions from your primary account that coincide with your pay cycle using internet banking or make a BPAY arrangement.

**Consider your investment options:** Read information on your superannuation statement and on your superannuation fund website about different investment options on offer. Choose an option that you are comfortable with. You can log into your super account to notify of investment changes you might want to make. If you don't make any choices, your super is generally invested into 'balanced' options.

#### TIP

If you'd like to know more about the performance of superannuation funds, you can go to the ATO superannuation comparison tool at [ato.gov.au/Calculators-and-tools/YourSuper-comparison-tool](https://ato.gov.au/Calculators-and-tools/YourSuper-comparison-tool)



## KEEPING FINANCIALLY FIT

So far, we have given you information about the financial benefits and options of being in the ADF. Understanding some other aspects about money will help you to stay financially fit.

### UNDERSTAND CREDIT AND DEBT

As an ADF member, you are in secure employment, earn regular income and will become an attractive potential customer for lenders (creditor). Whilst credit is useful, it can also create unwanted debt.

### THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CREDIT

There are 2 types of credit:

- **Secured** - means that the credit (or loan) is attached to an asset - like a house or maybe a car secured by car-yard finance or a personal loan
- **Unsecured** - Unsecured credit is not directly attached to an asset and can include credit cards, store cards, payday loans, bank personal loans and other short-term loans

Short term credit always costs more - e.g. loans often have up to 48% interest and penalties (fees). Paying late compounds the cost of the credit. It can quickly get out of control.

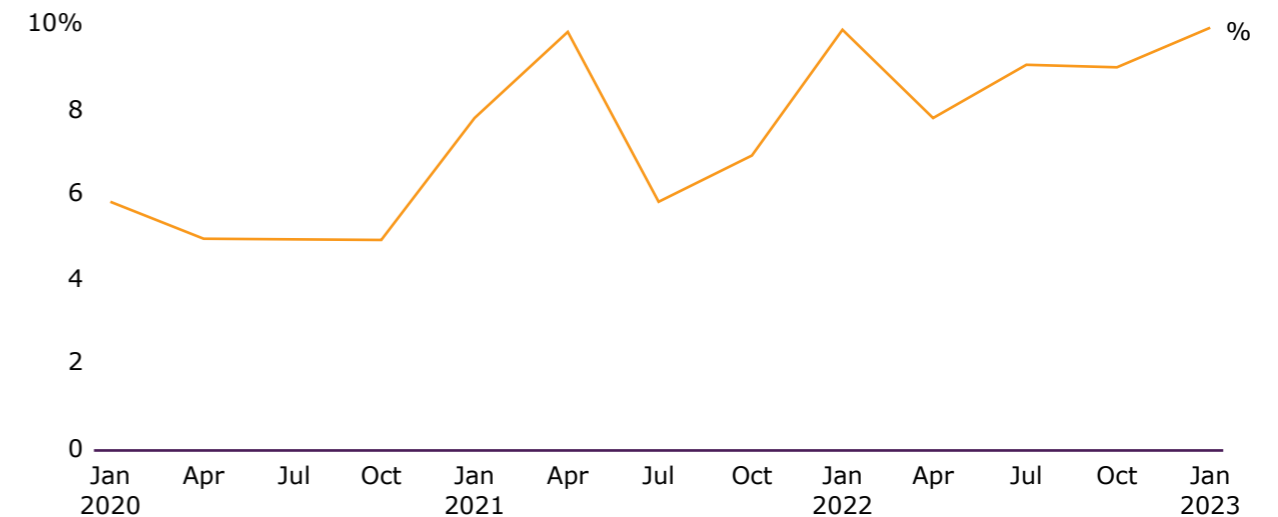
**Credit cards** usually have between 19% and 25% interest. Interest free periods apply and are different depending on the card, and cash advances attract interest from day one. Getting cash out of an ATM using a credit card attracts interest from day one.

Purchases at some stores that advertise interest free credit for furniture or whitegoods sign you up for a credit card, which, if you don't pay out by the due date, the interest charge is calculated back to day one.

#### Buy-Now-Pay-Later (BNPL)

- Many people get into significant debt using BNPL because it's quick and easy
- If you pay late, fees and/or interest will be charged
- Your credit score is affected if you pay late or default on payments
- 43% of Australians said they'd used a BNPL service in the last 6 months (May 2023)
- 4% of Australians said their BNPL balance was 1 of the top 3 bills that caused them the most stress (January–May 2023)

### Percentage of Australian adults who paid a BNPL late fee in the last 12 months



#### TIP

Get more information about BNPL at

[moneysmart.gov.au/other-ways-to-borrow/buy-now-pay-later-services](https://moneysmart.gov.au/other-ways-to-borrow/buy-now-pay-later-services)

### THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DEBT

- Debt must be managed - e.g. make payments on time (in accordance with the credit contract)
- Always communicate with the creditor (person or business you owe money to) if you cannot pay and make affordable arrangements. Making unaffordable arrangements is detrimental because it sets you up to fail and can negatively impact your credit score
- Debt increases due to enforcement costs and compounding interest
- Unpaid debt (default) is legally enforceable
- Debt enforcement can lead to court action and bankruptcy which can affect your security clearance and therefore your employment
- Formal Debt Agreements are an act of bankruptcy
- Get help immediately if you can't manage your debts [adfconsumer.gov.au/debt](https://adfconsumer.gov.au/debt)

## UNDERSTAND YOUR CREDIT RATING AND SCORE

Credit rating/score is a way that creditors can work out whether you are a good risk.

Your credit score is based on personal financial information in your credit report. This includes any money you have borrowed and how much, how many credit applications you have made, and whether you pay on time. Some credit reporting agencies do not provide a score, just the credit report.

Credit reporting is undertaken by several different reporting agencies.

### TIP

Get more information about credit reporting and related processes

[moneysmart.gov.au/managing-debt/credit-scores-and-credit-reports](https://moneysmart.gov.au/managing-debt/credit-scores-and-credit-reports)

Having a credit card does not improve your credit rating.

Creditors also maintain their own lists of people who have borrowed from them and allocate their own internal ratings not available to the consumer.

### Get your credit report

You can get your credit report for free. Sometimes the reports differ between reporting agencies and it's worth cross-checking.

If your credit report is incorrect, contact the credit reporting agency to have the incorrect details amended.

### Note:

1. Paying a credit repair agency is often ineffective and very costly
2. Accessing your credit report alerts creditors to your address and contact details. If you have unpaid and overdue debt, it's a good idea to see a financial counsellor before getting your credit report

### TIP

Get more information about credit reporting agencies at:

[experian.com.au/consumer/order-credit-report](https://experian.com.au/consumer/order-credit-report)

[creditcheck.illion.com.au](https://creditcheck.illion.com.au)

[equifax.com.au/personal/products/credit-and-identity-products](https://equifax.com.au/personal/products/credit-and-identity-products)



## UNDERSTAND INSURANCE

Having appropriate insurance means you have some peace of mind, so that if damage, theft, fire or other adverse events occur, the insured items may be able to be replaced or you may be reimbursed for the cost of their replacement.

## COMPARE INSURANCE PRODUCTS

Insurance products, policies and disclosure statements are important to understand because they tell you what is insured, how much for and what exclusions apply.

Compare insurance prices and what they offer before agreeing to insurance.



## WORK OUT WHAT YOU WANT TO INSURE

It's important to work out what needs to be insured and work out the value of each item.

Sometimes an item has sentimental value, and insurance does not replace that, and sometimes it costs more to insure an item than replace it.

Insurance is complex and competitive, so get several quotes, obtain detailed information about each insurance product by reading the Product Disclosure Statement (PDS) and identify whether the items you want to insure are covered by the policy.

Understand insurance exclusions e.g., building insurance may have higher excess or exclusions for properties that are vacant for 60 days or more.

Creditors will generally require insurance for items that are secured e.g., car or house. This protects their interest as well as yours.

Use a comparison website to see which policy gives you what you need.

You can get more information about insurance at [adfsconsumer.gov.au/insurance](https://adfsconsumer.gov.au/insurance)

ITEM	COST TO REPLACE \$	WILL I INSURE (YES/NO)

## ONLY INVEST IN THINGS YOU UNDERSTAND AND CAN AFFORD

Investing has benefits and risks. Investing in products with high returns increases the risk that you may lose on the investment.

Always assess the risks of any investment product and seek good advice before making investment decisions.

### TIP

If things seem too good to be true, they usually are!  
Find out more information about investing at [adfconsumer.gov.au/investing](https://adfconsumer.gov.au/investing)

## UNDERSTAND YOUR TAX OBLIGATIONS

Every Australian who works is required to lodge an annual income tax return.

The ATO has rules about what you can claim on your tax return, and they regularly audit people's returns. If you claim more than others in the same industry as you, you are opening yourself up for a taxation audit. So, make sure all your claims are legitimate. Read about obligations for ADF members here [adfconsumer.gov.au/income-tax](https://adfconsumer.gov.au/income-tax) or by going to [ato.gov.au](https://ato.gov.au)

Tax returns must be lodged with the ATO by 31 October each year. If you have complex tax matters and claims or are likely to be away, consider getting a registered tax agent or accountant to do your tax. You will be able to receive an extension of time for lodgement if you approach a registered tax agent by 31 October.

### TIP

You can lodge your own tax return by going to [my.gov.au](https://my.gov.au)  
Watch a short video here [adfconsumer.gov.au/income-tax](https://adfconsumer.gov.au/income-tax)

## AVOID BEING SCAMMED

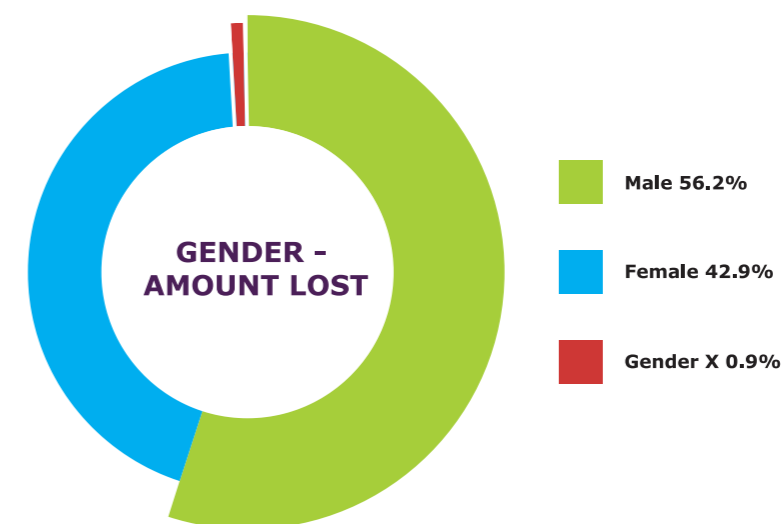
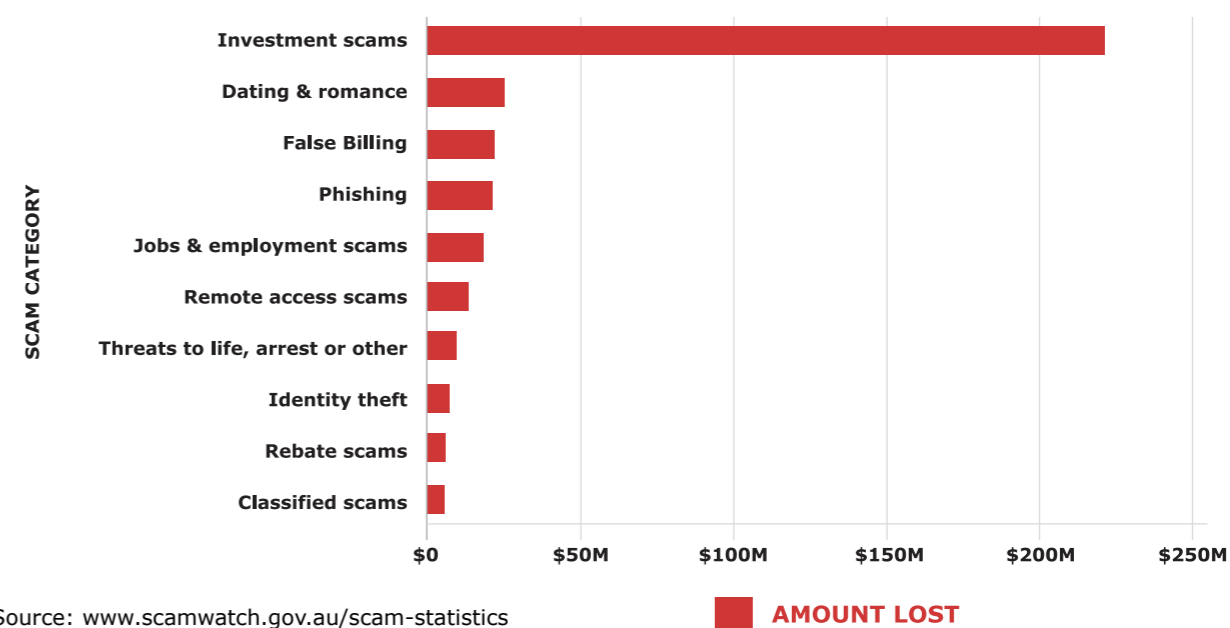
Scams do not discriminate. Anyone can be targeted and become a victim. Many people lose lots of money and feel very disenfranchised by the process of resolving the scam. Overall, billions of dollars are lost every year through scams in Australia.

Scammers and hackers are great at impersonating others. Scammers imitate logos and identifying features of major government agencies like the ATO and the Australian Federal Police.

### TIPS

- Government agencies send secure emails through MyGov. The only emails you receive to your private email from government agencies are notifications to check your MyGov inbox
- If in doubt, find out! Look up blogs and social media to see if there is any information about new scams if something seems unusual
- Check out [scamwatch.gov.au](https://scamwatch.gov.au) regularly and see what's happening in relation to scams
- Find out more about the types of scams at [scamwatch.gov.au/types-of-scams](https://scamwatch.gov.au/types-of-scams)
- Invoices paid online can be intercepted by hackers who falsify/alter or duplicate invoices and direct payments to them - always check that the invoices are genuine before paying




## TOP 10 SCAMS BY AMOUNT LOST



## AVOID RIP-OFFS

There are many ways in which people get ripped off. As an ADF employee you are no different. Some key areas in which people get ripped off include:

KEY RIP-OFF	WHAT YOU CAN DO	INFORMATION
<p><b>Consumer rights</b></p> 	<p>Understand your consumer rights</p>	<p>Australia has great Consumer Law. It protects you from dodgy contracts, provides protection against products that are unsuitable or not fit for purpose, provides cooling-off periods and much more.</p> <p><b>TIP</b> Find more information at <a href="http://acc.gov.au/consumers/buying-products-and-services">acc.gov.au/consumers/buying-products-and-services</a></p>
<p><b>Buying a car</b></p> 	<p>Research buying a car</p>	<p>Find a car that works for your budget and get advice before you sign a contract.</p>
	<p>Work out what works for you in terms of getting a car</p>	<p>You might want to buy; equally it may be prudent to rent a car for a while if you are planning to move around or are expecting to be posted or deployed.</p> <p><b>TIP</b> Get more information at <a href="http://acc.gov.au/consumers/specific-products-and-activities/cars-buying-or-rental">acc.gov.au/consumers/specific-products-and-activities/cars-buying-or-rental</a></p>
	<p>Be aware of high pressure car deals</p>	<p>Sometimes the way in which deals are brokered can make you feel under pressure to sign up - it might make you have FOMO (fear of missing out) that is not legitimate.</p>

KEY RIP-OFF	WHAT YOU CAN DO	INFORMATION
<p><b>Car yard finance</b></p> 	<p>Beware of car yard finance</p>	<p>Car yard finance is often quick and easy, but car yard finance has to pass the pub test of responsible lending. Think about borrowing the funds from a bank where the loan is not secured to the vehicle. Work out what works best for you before signing up. There will always be other cars!</p>
<p><b>Car yard insurance</b></p> 	<p>Beware of car yard insurance</p>	<p>It's easy to sign up for car yard insurance, but all the same things apply - check that it's fit for purpose, get someone to help you read and understand the insurance product if you're not sure. Work out what insurance you can afford.</p>
	<p>Never sign a waiver for warranty</p>	<p>Sometimes pressure selling leads to the seller wanting the buyer to waive their rights to warranty. This is NEVER a good idea.</p>
<p><b>Gambling</b></p> 	<p>Don't gamble using credit</p>	<p>Using credit for gambling can quickly escalate credit debt, causing financial trouble.</p> <p><b>TIP</b> Get more information at <a href="http://adfconsumer.gov.au/gambling-on-credit">adfconsumer.gov.au/gambling-on-credit</a></p>

## BE READY FOR CHANGE

### MAKE OR UPDATE A WILL AND CONSIDER A POWER OF ATTORNEY

Should the worst happen, it's vital that someone knows your wishes and what you want to do with your worldly goods.

Having a legal Will is an important step to take, especially when your circumstances change.

We recommend the use of a lawyer to make a Will. It means that your entire circumstances are considered. The ADF provides opportunities for members to set up a free Will through Defence Counsel Services. You can get in touch by emailing [your.will@defence.gov.au](mailto:your.will@defence.gov.au)

A Power of Attorney (POA) is used when you can no longer make your own decisions due to incapacity or you wish someone to act on your behalf in your absence (limited POA).

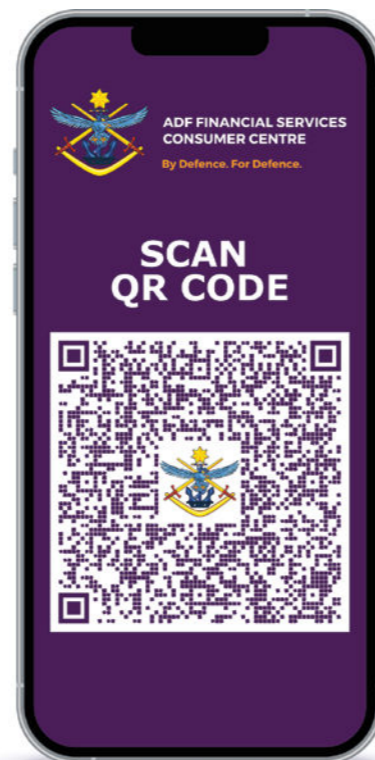
If you want a POA, make sure you choose a person you trust implicitly. Consult a lawyer to prepare the required documents.

### NEWSLETTER

The Centre's monthly e-newsletter is designed especially for you as you kick off your career in Defence. Each edition is filled with practical consumer tips and the latest financial insights and strategies to help you develop solid financial habits. Whether it's smart budgeting, savvy investing or navigating the complex world of finance, we're here to guide you on your journey to financial fitness. Subscribe now to maximise the opportunities you have by virtue of your employment and take control of your financial future.

### STAY INFORMED AND SUBSCRIBE

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## CHECK YOUR LEARNING AND FOCUS ON YOUR NEXT STEPS

TOPIC	SUGGESTED ACTIONS
<b>Remuneration</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Understand your employment package and SERCAT options <input type="checkbox"/> Use our estimators <a href="https://adfconsumer.gov.au/employment-package-estimator">adfconsumer.gov.au/employment-package-estimator</a> <a href="https://adfconsumer.gov.au/sercat-change-estimator">adfconsumer.gov.au/sercat-change-estimator</a>
<b>Goal setting</b>	Write down at least one financial goal you want to achieve: <input type="checkbox"/> In the next 1-2 years <input type="checkbox"/> In the next 3-6 years <input type="checkbox"/> In the next 7+ years <input type="checkbox"/> Calculate how much you need to save each pay to achieve your goals <input type="checkbox"/> Use a savings calculator to help you create and track your financial goals <a href="https://moneysmart.gov.au/saving/savings-goals-calculator">moneysmart.gov.au/saving/savings-goals-calculator</a>
<b>Budgeting &amp; Banking</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Create a money plan <a href="https://adfconsumer.gov.au/budget-calculator">adfconsumer.gov.au/budget-calculator</a> <input type="checkbox"/> Track your spending and adjust your budget to achieve your goals <input type="checkbox"/> Aim to have 3-6 months of savings in a separate account for emergencies <input type="checkbox"/> Think about setting up separate savings accounts to achieve your goals using direct internet banking transfers
<b>Credit and debt</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Investigate the cost of credit before entering credit agreements (fees, charges and interest) <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid high cost credit products eg: credit cards, payday loans, buy-now-pay-later <input type="checkbox"/> Shop around for best comparison rates (interest and fees) <input type="checkbox"/> Pay debts on time and avoid loans with penalty rates for paying out early <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid Debt Agreements (an act of bankruptcy) <a href="https://moneysmart.gov.au/managing-debt/bankruptcy-and-debt-agreements">moneysmart.gov.au/managing-debt/bankruptcy-and-debt-agreements</a> <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain a free credit report <a href="https://moneysmart.gov.au/managing-debt/credit-scores-and-credit-reports">moneysmart.gov.au/managing-debt/credit-scores-and-credit-reports</a>
<b>Tax</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Read about tax including the ATO tax guide for ADF members <a href="https://adfconsumer.gov.au/income-tax">adfconsumer.gov.au/income-tax</a> <input type="checkbox"/> Lodge your tax return annually by 31 October <input type="checkbox"/> Contact a registered tax agent before 31 October if you need an extension of time <input type="checkbox"/> To complete your own tax return online, go to <a href="https://my.gov.au">my.gov.au</a> <input type="checkbox"/> Consider using a registered tax agent or accountant if tax matters are complex
<b>Salary packaging</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Understand the benefits and costs before entering salary packaging agreements <input type="checkbox"/> Consider seeking professional advice through a financial adviser / accountant <input type="checkbox"/> Consider contacting <a href="https://smartsalary.com.au">smartsalary.com.au</a>

TOPIC	SUGGESTED ACTIONS
<b>Superannuation</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Understand your current superannuation account(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Consider making pre or post tax additional contributions to your super <input type="checkbox"/> Find out more about your superannuation at <a href="https://adfconsumer.gov.au/superannuation">adfconsumer.gov.au/superannuation</a> <a href="https://csc.gov.au">csc.gov.au</a> or your superannuation provider <input type="checkbox"/> Use the superannuation comparison tool to check benefits and costs <a href="https://ato.gov.au/YourSuper-Comparison-Tool">ato.gov.au/YourSuper-Comparison-Tool</a>
<b>Death and invalidity cover</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Find out about ADF Cover <a href="https://csc.gov.au">csc.gov.au</a> <input type="checkbox"/> Understand definitions (e.g. disability) and exclusions (e.g. war/war-like) in private sector insurance policies
<b>Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme [DHOAS]</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Research home loans including comparison rates (interest and fees) prior to purchasing a home <input type="checkbox"/> Visit <a href="https://dhoas.gov.au">dhoas.gov.au</a> to check your eligibility for the scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Read our buying a home guide for more helpful tips <a href="https://adfconsumer.gov.au/buying-a-home">adfconsumer.gov.au/buying-a-home</a>
<b>Investing</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Learn more about investing by going to <a href="https://adfconsumer.gov.au/investing">adfconsumer.gov.au/investing</a> <input type="checkbox"/> Only invest in products and services you understand <input type="checkbox"/> Consider getting financial advice when investing <a href="https://adfconsumer.gov.au/getting-financial-advice">adfconsumer.gov.au/getting-financial-advice</a>
<b>Rip-offs</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Check out how to avoid scams <a href="https://moneysmart.gov.au/online-safety/protect-yourself-from-scams">moneysmart.gov.au/online-safety/protect-yourself-from-scams</a> <input type="checkbox"/> Never gamble using credit <a href="https://adfconsumer.gov.au/gambling-on-credit">adfconsumer.gov.au/gambling-on-credit</a> <input type="checkbox"/> Understand your consumer rights <a href="https://acc.gov.au/consumers/buying-products-and-services">acc.gov.au/consumers/buying-products-and-services</a> <input type="checkbox"/> Beware of high pressure car deals, car yard finance and insurance <input type="checkbox"/> Beware of dodgy warranties and worthless insurance <input type="checkbox"/> Research buying a car (best price and finance) and get advice before you sign a contract <a href="https://acc.gov.au/consumers/specific-products-and-activities/cars-buying-or-rental">acc.gov.au/consumers/specific-products-and-activities/cars-buying-or-rental</a>
<b>Will</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Check that you have a Will <a href="https://adfconsumer.gov.au/have-a-will">adfconsumer.gov.au/have-a-will</a> <input type="checkbox"/> Update your Will when major things change in your life e.g. marriage <input type="checkbox"/> Defence Counsel Services can assist you to make a free Will, email <a href="mailto:your.will@defence.gov.au">your.will@defence.gov.au</a>
<b>Power of Attorney (POA)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Make sure you choose a person you trust implicitly <input type="checkbox"/> Get a lawyer to prepare the POA documents and consider a limited POA
<b>Financial advice</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Watch the film 'Financial Advisers -The Facts and the Fiction' <a href="https://adfconsumer.gov.au/getting-financial-advice">adfconsumer.gov.au/getting-financial-advice</a> <input type="checkbox"/> Consult the ADF Financial Advice Referral Program for remuneration conflict-free advisers <a href="https://adfconsumer.gov.au/find-a-financial-adviser">adfconsumer.gov.au/find-a-financial-adviser</a> <input type="checkbox"/> Understand the cost of the advice. Get cost and recommendations in writing





# ADF FINANCIAL SERVICES CONSUMER CENTRE

**By Defence. For Defence.**

Providing financial education to help you plan your future.

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