
PRACTICAL INDEX INVESTING FOR CANADIANS

An online course on getting started

SYLLABUS

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WHERE TO ENROLL: [HTTP://PRACTICAL-INDEX-INVESTING.THINKIFIC.COM](http://practical-index-investing.thinkific.com)

BACKGROUND:

This online course is designed to introduce people with no prior experience to do-it-yourself (DIY) investing using index funds. No background knowledge is needed or expected, though familiarity with spreadsheets (Excel or Google Sheets) will be beneficial.

The course has two aims: to show you *how* to invest, and to help you set up good processes and behaviour so that you can be successful for the long term.

The course is delivered online through the Thinkific platform using mixed media (text modules, video, presentations with voiceover). You'll be able to move through the course at your own pace, and there's no time limit on your access to the materials, so you can revisit the course to refresh your memory any time you want.

COURSE OUTLINE:

1. Introduction: Planning and Other Grown-up Money Concerns

- 1.1. Welcome message [video]
- 1.2. Reading guide [PDF]
- 1.3. What makes a good DIY investor [text]
- 1.4. Exercise: budgeting [presentation/exercise]
- 1.5. On uncertainty [video]
- 1.6. On uncertainty [text]
- 1.7. Inflation [text]
- 1.8. Inflation [presentation + voiceover]
- 1.9. Sketching out a plan [text]
- 1.10. Sketching out a plan: tools [links + spreadsheets]
- 1.11. Using real returns and following your plan [text]

- 1.12. Monte Carlo simulations [text]
- 1.13. A rant on the industry and why DIY [text]
- 2. Investing: What and Why**
 - 2.1. Why we invest [presentation + voiceover]
 - 2.2. Types of investments [text]
 - 2.3. Exercise: valuing a business [exercise]
 - 2.4. Investing in other stuff [text]
 - 2.5. History of investing and setting reasonable expectations [text]
- 3. The Quick and Dirty Yet Completely Convincing Explanation of Index Investing**
 - 3.1. The importance of fees [text]
 - 3.2. MERQ (or MERXXX) [text]
 - 3.3. What can be controlled (and what cannot be) [text]
 - 3.4. The benefit of simplicity [video, text]
 - 3.5. Active vs passive investing [text]
 - 3.6. What active investing entails [text]
 - 3.7. The importance of “I don’t know” [video]
 - 3.8. “Steely-eyed Missile Man” [presentation + voiceover]
- 4. Risk, the Gom Jabbar, and the Unfortunate Gambling Analogy**
 - 4.1. Risk is everywhere [text]
 - 4.2. Risk and the unfortunate gambling analogy [video]
 - 4.3. Risk and human psychology [text]
 - 4.4. Risk tolerance [presentation + voiceover]
 - 4.5. The Gom Jabbar and a value investing perspective [text]
 - 4.6. Risk tolerance questionnaire [text]
- 5. Where I Talk About Processes**
 - 5.1. Processes and lessons from engineering and health care [text]
 - 5.2. Good enough solutions [text]
 - 5.3. The long term is just a series of days [text]
 - 5.4. The behaviour gap and execution risk [presentation + voiceover]
- 6. Asset Allocation and Your Plan**
 - 6.1. The canonical portfolio [text]
 - 6.2. Asset class apocrypha [text]
 - 6.3. How to decide on an allocation that works for you [presentation + voiceover]
 - 6.4. The value of diversification [text]
 - 6.5. Pensions and other factors to consider [text]
- 7. How You Actually Do This: Four Practical Investing Options**
 - 7.1. Four practical options [text]
 - 7.2. How-to: Tangerine [presentation + voiceover]
 - 7.3. Robo-advisors [presentation + voiceover]

- 7.4. TD e-series: Two Paths [text]
- 7.5. How-to: TD e-series with TDMF [presentation + voiceover]
- 7.6. How-to: TD e-series with TDDI [presentation + voiceover]
- 7.7. How-to: ETFs with Questrade [presentation + voiceover]
- 7.8. Terminology & more details on exchange trades [text]
- 7.9. Choosing ETFs [text]
- 7.10. Norbert's gambit [text]
- 7.11. Checklists [text]

8. Taxes and Tax Shelters

- 8.1. Introduction [text]
- 8.2. TFSA [text]
- 8.3. RRSP [text]
- 8.4. TFSA vs RRSP decision guide [PDF]
- 8.5. TFSA vs RRSP decision guide walkthrough [presentation + voiceover]
- 8.6. RRSP and pre-tax money [text + worksheet]
- 8.7. RRSP fancy footwork [text]
- 8.8. RESP [text]
- 8.9. RDSP [text]
- 8.10. RRSP and US withholding tax [presentation + worksheet + infographic]
- 8.11. Non-registered accounts, tax matters overview [text + worksheet]
- 8.12. Non-registered accounts, reporting taxes [presentation + voiceover]
- 8.13. Account allocation [text]
- 8.14. Exercise: adjusted cost base [exercise]

9. Writing Stuff Down and Making Spreadsheets

- 9.1. Intro to processes [text]
- 9.2. Condensing your goals and direction down into a written plan [text]
- 9.3. Writing down your asset allocation and a rebalancing plan [text]
- 9.4. Write it down! [presentation + voiceover]
- 9.5. Your process for saving and purchasing investments [text]
- 9.6. Tools that exist and can help [text]

10. Behaviour and the Long Term

- 10.1. The importance of attitude, behaviour, and long-term thinking [text]
- 10.2. Mindfulness and the Hedonic Treadmill [text]
- 10.3. Heuristics and rules-of-thumb [presentation + voiceover]
- 10.4. Neat grey-matter tricks [text]
- 10.5. Problems in the industry [video]
- 10.6. DIY investor pledge

11. Discussion and FAQs

- 11.1. [Will depend on questions received; 2 questions so far]