THE OXFORD CLUB

Guaranteed Blueprint for Financial Success in 2025

By Alexander Green, Chief Investment Strategist

With a new year comes resolutions… the promises we make to ourselves every January to achieve new goals in the new year.

What if your goal were to become a millionaire this year and build a legacy to leave your kids? Do you want to travel the world? Or perhaps you want to give to a charity to leave a lasting impact? Maybe you want to do all three. The sky is the limit when it comes to your personal goals…

But you need money to make your dreams and goals a reality.

So make a financial New Year's resolution – to follow this blueprint for success. One you'll stick to because wealth is freedom. It's the freedom to achieve the goals you set for yourself.

There are 10 strategies in this report. Follow just one of them, and at this time next year, you'll be a wealthier, freer you.

Your path to true financial freedom starts today. Make a promise to yourself to achieve the wealthy life you've always dreamed of.

No. 1: Simply Save More

It's one thing to want a wealthier life; it's another thing to make it a reality. We all have to start our journey somewhere. And the best place to start is to make sure you have the money you need to invest.

After all, it's hard to invest if you're living paycheck to paycheck. Yet that's what the majority of Americans are doing. It gets worse – 50% of Americans say they would have trouble finding just $400 to pay for an emergency.

The phrase "You need to spend money to make money" may sound cliché, but it's true. You need cash to invest…

And the easiest way to ensure you have the money to invest is simply by keeping more of it. That's why you should commit to saving more money in 2025.

There are too many ways to do that to list here. But even making just a few small changes can make a huge difference…

Try ringing in the new year by making a budget.

Outline your expenses and income, see where your money is going, and make cuts anywhere you can…

For example, you probably have subscriptions you're not using anymore. Cancel them. Perhaps you eat out more frequently than you should; consider cutting back.

Simply eliminating unnecessary costs and being a bit more frugal can save you thousands of dollars each year. Take that money and invest it.

Whatever your income, strike a balance between spending and saving. You don't have to live like a Spartan. Even saving just 4% of your monthly income for investing can make a big difference in the long run.

Make a plan and stick to it. You'll see the rewards compound just like the money in your bank account. The longer you budget and plan, the more discipline and planning skills you'll cultivate over time.

But there's another factor to consider when it comes to freeing up investment capital…

No. 2: Reduce Your Debt

Debt is one of the biggest drains on the monthly incomes of Americans. In fact, the average American debt per household is around $100,000. The total consumer debt held collectively by all Americans is over $17 trillion. Roughly 77% of American households are in some kind of debt.

Credit card debt is one of the most common and expensive kinds to carry. The average annual percentage rate (APR) for a new card is as high as 24%. Paying off the average household credit card debt of $6,380 at that rate would cost $603 a month for about a year.

That's money you could be investing.

Do yourself and your portfolio a favor this year. Pay off as much of your debt as possible. Pay off your smallest first, then your next highest and so on.

Each time you pay one debt down, you'll have more usable money each month. And you'll be able to pay down each successive debt faster than the last. It's a positive snowball effect.

Whatever your current debt, you can benefit from reducing it. After all, one of the easiest ways to grow your wealth is to ensure less of it is going to bank fees and interest each month.

Saving more and reducing debt is the perfect financial one–two punch. It's the bedrock of any financial New Year's resolution. It will ensure you have the capital you need to invest.

The path to financial freedom starts small. But it will compound the longer you build up good financial habits.

No. 3: Read a Financial Book Each Quarter

One of the best ways to learn a new skill is by reading everything about it that you can. This year, commit yourself to becoming a better investor by becoming a better reader.

Don't waste your time reading the nonsense the financial media puts out. The financial media not only is usually wrong but also is chasing trends and hot headlines, not the truth.

Books represent something more lasting: wisdom.

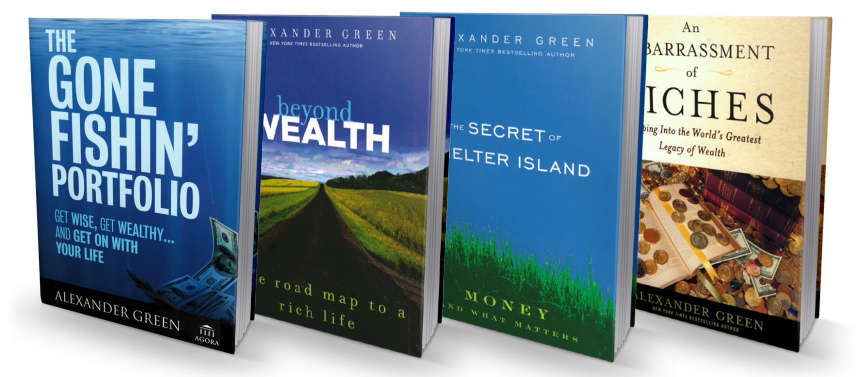
Anyone can report facts or find facts to support their cause. But those facts often go out of date quickly. Either that or they're flat–out wrong and need to be corrected later.

Regardless, even the biggest news stories usually have a life span of about a week at most.

Wisdom, on the other hand, is timeless. Plato is still read thousands of years later because his insight was truly for the ages. It never goes out of style. That's why wisdom will serve you far better than facts, both in investing and in life.

Naturally, I do have some suggestions for where to start your reading list…

I've written four books on the subject: ***The Gone Fishin' Portfolio***, ***Beyond Wealth***, ***The Secret of Shelter Island*** and ***An Embarrassment of Riches***.



Those can cover your first four quarters alone. But there are many other books I recommend…

One of my favorites is Thomas J. Stanley's The Millionaire Next Door: The Surprising Secrets of America's Wealthy. As the title implies, it details the personal habits of America's wealthiest people and what about them facilitated their wealth accumulation.

Alternatively, you could read some books that aren't about investing per se but contain wisdom that will help you in the market in other ways…

- ***The Rational Optimist: How Prosperity Evolves by Matt Ridley***
- ***It's Better Than It Looks: Reasons for Optimism in an Age of Fear by Gregg Easterbrook***
- ***Factfulness: Ten Reasons We're Wrong About the World – and Why Things Are Better Than You Think by Hans Rosling***
- ***Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress by Steven Pinker.***

That list should be enough to get you started. I think you'll find that reading books rather than news reports or a social media feed will improve not only your investing but also your outlook…

The media thrives on leaving you confused and ignorant. It paints the world in a negative light so you'll become pessimistic and get hooked on its reporting.

Note, the media will never offer any solutions. It'll just keep telling you how awful everything is.

The media doesn't want you to be healthy, wealthy and wise. It'd much rather you be sick, poor and ignorant.

Don't let them get you down. Separate the "facts" from true wisdom. And make yourself wealthier and mentally healthier in 2025.

No.4: Try a New Kind of Investing

One of the best investment strategies is portfolio diversification. It protects you from changes in industries and the broader market.

But beyond having a portfolio of stocks from diverse industries, what can you do?

Branch out into another type of asset, of course.

Please don't get me wrong – stocks are fantastic. They're a solid bedrock for wealth building. But your portfolio could benefit from the addition of options.

Essentially, options are a type of contract. Each option contract gives its holder the right (but not the obligation) to buy or sell 100 shares of stock at a set date and at a set price. They're riskier than stocks but have much more upside potential.

They come in two varieties – calls and puts.

Calls are agreements to buy 100 shares of stock, while puts are an agreement to sell 100 shares.

An option is a bet on the direction a stock will move. That's where the strike price comes in...

The strike price is the price you're betting the underlying stock's share price will rise above or fall below.

A call is a bet that the price of its underlying stock will rise above the option's strike price. That will allow its holder to buy at a discount.

A put is the opposite. It's a bet the price of its underlying stock will fall below the option's strike price. It allows its holder to sell at a premium.

If a call's underlying share price is above its strike price or a put's below, the option is "in the money," meaning it has value. The further above the strike price a call's underlying share price goes, the more valuable the option becomes, and vice versa for puts.

When options are "out of the money," they have no intrinsic value. They're calls with a strike price below the underlying stock's price or puts with a strike price above the underlying share's price. Their only valuation is the potential they have to be in the money before the expiration date is reached.

The trick with options is that they amplify movements in the stock market. For example, if the value of an option's underlying shares moves just 5% to 10%, the options associated with it could move as much as 50% to 100% or more. Because of that, options are one of the quickest ways to make life–changing gains.

Bonds and gold could also be great additions to your portfolio. They act as excellent hedges against instability in the market. In many ways, they are the polar opposite of options. They're a great way to further diversify your portfolio, and they will help to insulate you from market volatility while positioning you for large gains in one stroke.

No.5: Rebalance Your Portfolio

The U.S. stock market has made a remarkable run since it bottomed in 2009, even with dips in 2020 and 2022 from COVID–19 and the geopolitical playing field.

But no matter how strong the bull market is, recessions are an inevitability of market economies. It never hurts to be prepared for a potential recession. Especially if you have more in stocks than you'd be comfortable with in a serious market downturn.

That's why you should start habitually evaluating and rebalancing your portfolio each year.

Rebalancing means selling asset classes that have appreciated the most and putting the proceeds to work in those that have lagged the most.

This is a contrarian exercise. And it has one major salutary effect: It forces you to sell high and buy low. This adds to your long–term returns while reducing your risk.

Yes, I often tell traders to hang on to their winners and cut their losers short. But there's a big difference between trading individual securities and rebalancing your portfolio.

When it comes to asset allocation, you flip the script and sell the assets that have surged and buy the laggards. When the cycle turns – as it will eventually – you'll be glad you did.

There are, after all, some industries that do well in recessions but lag in good economies. Two of the best examples are discount retailers and sin industries.

A company like Walmart does well most of the time. But in a recession, people are looking to make each dollar stretch as far as possible.

As a result, companies like Walmart that offer cheap goods tend to do well when everyone else falls on hard times.

Sin industries, like alcohol and tobacco, along with makers of candy and other sweets, also do well in recessions. People are always in the market for a bit of comfort, especially when times are tough.

When money is tight, people don't necessarily buy fewer comfort items. They simply scale down what they do buy. It's a bottle of liquor or a candy bar, not a new TV or expensive clothes. As a result, the companies that make cheap pleasures tend to do well when the economy falters.

Rebalancing your portfolio to prepare for an ever–changing market should be a routine part of investing. Ensure you're never caught off guard by the market by evaluating your portfolio at least once a year. If you've never done it, then there's never been a better time than this new year.

No. 6: Profit From Insider Knowledge Both Safely and Legally

The media has created the impression that company executives trading their own company's stock is by definition illegal. That's flat–out wrong. They can profit from their insider knowledge… legally and safely. That means you can too.

In reality, that practice is both perfectly legal and one of the handiest tools in an investor's arsenal. Now, I already do all the detective work for you in each alert and recommendation, but it can only help you to understand what goes into each one.

I scour insider buying records every day to find investment opportunities. The No. 1 thing I look for is a recent spike in insiders buying shares.

Executives used to be able to trade their own company's stock freely, and needless to say, it infuriated investors. They rightly saw the game as rigged. It favored people who held information not publicly available and gave them an unfair advantage.

For example, corporate insiders know the direction of sales since the last quarterly report, what new products and services are in development, and the status of any pending legislation, among other things. They have information anyone on the outside looking in couldn't possibly know.

Further, numerous studies have shown that stocks with heavy insider buying substantially outperform the market. Insiders simply know better than anyone else how their companies are doing.

The federal government heard the concerns of America's investors and stepped in. Ever since, corporate insiders have had to file a Form 4 with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) within 48 hours of making a trade with their own company's shares.

All that information is publicly available through the SEC. Its website has a Form 4 database that details how many shares an insider bought or sold, at what price, and when.

There's more to it than that, of course. For instance, you'll want to look at an individual insider's track record if you want to follow their purchases. You should also look into other companies they might be on the board of.

If an insider has a history of buying low and selling high, you should keep track of what they're doing and follow suit.

Following insider knowledge is an easy–to–understand, intuitive and effective trading tool. It can help both new and veteran investors improve their returns. Learning the ins and outs of how and why company executives trade their own stock will give you an edge in the markets in 2025 and beyond.

No. 7: Ignore the Financial Media

Every day, we're subjected to headlines that spell doom and gloom right around the corner. The talking heads and "experts" you see on TV run around like Chicken Little, shouting that the sky is falling.

The media wants you to believe we're on the brink of the next Great Depression. It's how it makes its money – fear sells. It wants you to think your future will be tenant farms and the Dust Bowl.

Commit to ignoring the media this year, and the remainder of the 2020s can be your Roaring '20s, no matter what the market does. Forget Tom Joad; you'll be living like Jay Gatsby.

The fearmongers of CNN and MSNBC are more often wrong than right anyway. There are examples aplenty that prove it.

Back in 2012, Jim Cramer of CNBC's *Mad Money* urged his audience to sell their Hewlett–Packard shares. Anyone who took his advice missed out on a 100% gain over the next six months.

That same year, Marc Faber – one of the financial media's most infamous permabears – predicted in a Bloomberg interview that then–President Obama's reelection would cause the market to tumble by 50%. It must have been embarrassing for him to watch the S&P 500 climb by 32.2% over the following year.

Or when Paul Krugman – one of my favorite contrarian indicators – was proven wrong once again. When Donald Trump was first elected in 2016, Krugman predicted the market would fall and never recover...

In the years that followed, we were amid one of the greatest economic booms in American history. The S&P 500 rose above 3,000 – and reached the highest level it had ever been to that point.

As you can see, listening to anything the financial media puts out is a surefire way to lose money and miss out on huge gains.

No. 8: Build an Emergency Fund

Unexpected car or home repairs, loss of a job, and medical emergencies happen.

If you don't know where you'd come up with the money to cover those emergency costs, then you're not alone. As I mentioned previously, many Americans are strapped for cash.

That's why you should commit to building an emergency fund in 2025. Having money socked away will give you peace of mind. Not only in case of emergency but also in the market.

Aim to have at least three months of your expenses ready as liquid cash. If you have that emergency fund, you'll likely feel less anxious about money in general. Think of it as an insurance policy you don't have to pay any premiums for.

You'll be ready if you have to cover any emergency expenses. You'll also be able to soften market losses. In turn, you'll be a more levelheaded investor, which is a huge advantage.

Having peace of mind and a calm attitude toward trading will make you less prone to panic selling or making any other rash decisions with your money.

Plus, you'll sleep a little easier at night. You can't put a price on that.

No. 9: Keep Yourself Accountable in 2025

It seems that many people set out excitedly on January 1 to achieve their resolutions only to falter and fail sometime in February.

That's because they go about it the wrong way. They try to do it all alone and all at once. It's a recipe for failure.

Luckily, there are some useful strategies you can use to make sure you achieve your resolution goals…

The first mistake many people make is that they try to achieve the entirety of their goal at once. It's much better to start small.

You can have a big New Year's resolution goal, just be sure you can break it down into smaller, more manageable steps. Ensure you're progressing in measurable ways as well.

Say your goal is to make $1 million for your retirement account in 2025. It can be done and easily measured. But if your only measuring stick is your $1 million end goal, then you might become discouraged if your fortune stagnates for a month or two.

Try breaking that $1 million goal down. Set your first goal at $10,000, then $100,000, then $200,000 and so on. That way you have the positive reinforcement of consistently hitting your goal. That $1 million number won't seem as far away or as daunting.

Another great thing you can do is involve friends or loved ones. Tell them about your financial goals. They will be able to keep you accountable for saving and investing the amounts you committed to.

They may even join you. Perhaps 2025 could be an opportunity to get your children or close friends to start investing as well. Having companions can make any journey – financial or physical – much easier.

Finally, give yourself enough time to achieve your goal. Another reason you'll want to set numerous smaller goals building up to your big one is so you'll have a reason to keep going after you achieve your goal.

And don't give up your good habits once you achieve your goal. If you hit your $1 million goal, don't stop. Aim even higher – $2 million in 2026, for example.

The idea is to build good habits and keep them. It might not pay off immediately, but it will in the long term. Cultivating positive habits will lead you to a happier, healthier and wealthier life.

No. 10: Maximize Your Retirement Savings

One of the best things you can do for yourself if you're still working is to save as much as possible for retirement.

In spite of that, many Americans don't do it. A full 32% of Americans, about 58 million people, have no retirement savings whatsoever. Further, many current workers won't be able to rely on Social Security. The program will run a cash deficit of more than $1.7 trillion over the next decade.

It's projected to be insolvent by 2035.

The bottom line is this: Your retirement funding will likely fall entirely on your shoulders.

That's why you should commit to putting more money toward your retirement in 2025. Nobody wants to be working at 80.

Luckily for you, compound interest is a remarkably powerful thing. The more money you put away in a 401(k) or an IRA today, the more it will grow. It rewards you more the sooner you start saving, and it's the single best tool you have to ensure your golden years are indeed golden...

The limit for 401(k) plans is now $23,500. The catch–up contribution for employees over 50 currently stands at $7,500.

You'll want to come as close as possible to your contribution limit as you can each year. Meet it if you can. The more you contribute now, the more it will grow over time. Also, be sure you're using your employer match if you have the opportunity. The average match is between 4% and 6%, but some employers even offer 9% contributions. Go as high as possible to grow your retirement savings rapidly.

If you make no other financial resolutions for 2025, make sure you're making the most of your retirement savings. That way you'll be able to retire one day to enjoy the fruits of your labor while many of your peers are forced to work, even in their 80s.

A Happy New Year for Your Portfolio

When it comes to investing, there's no time like the present. Your greatest asset in the markets is time. The sooner you start investing, the more time your money has to work for you.

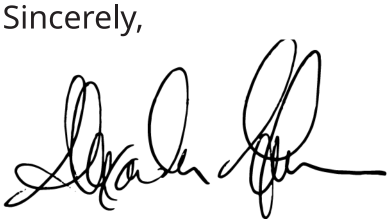
Whether you're a new investor or a seasoned market veteran, make 2025 your year.

If you're new, start investing. Save more and manage your debts. Read about investing as much as you can to become an expert faster.

Longtime traders, take a look at your portfolio or try a new type of investing. No matter your experience, don't do it alone. Get your friends and loved ones to do it with you.

If you implement just one of these ideas in 2025, you'll be well on your way to a richer life.

Sincerely,



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