

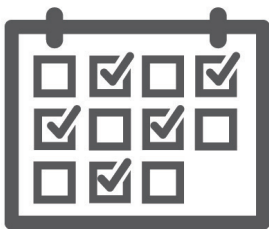
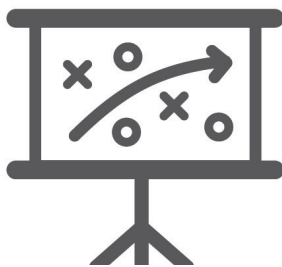


The Ultimate Guide to
**HAVING TOUGH
CONVERSATIONS
ABOUT MONEY**



ARMY FAMILY

YOUR MONEY, YOUR FUTURE



Although we all have a relationship with it and it plays a role in our everyday lives, money matters can be difficult to talk about. But since money finds its way to the center of most financial plans, it's essential to have important conversations to get organized and strategize with those closest to you. Take a look at the tips below for navigating these conversations with ease and kicking your financial goals into high-gear.

WHEN TO HAVE MONEY CONVERSATIONS

Don't worry, you don't have to tackle money topics every night over dinner. Money can be stressful to talk about, and chances are you and your spouse have different styles for dealing with it. In addition to a monthly check-in, you'll have your bases covered if you carve out some time to factor in money at a few key junctures in your life, including:

- Around a major life event, such as marriage, birth of a child, PCS move or promotion. What goals arise after these events? How are you putting yourself on a track to achieve them?
- Three months before deployment- establishing a deployment "plan" in advance allows you to assess where you stand and sends your spouse off to their deployment with less stress about money matters.
- During a deployment- make sure you're checking in regularly about family finances to keep lines of communication open and make sure you and your spouse are on the same page if unexpected expenses arise.
- During tax season, when money matters are naturally at the forefront.

HOW TO TALK ABOUT MONEY

Sometimes you find yourself in the middle of a serious conversation in an unexpected place, but it's safe to say that a Saturday afternoon at Chuck-E-Cheese is not the best place to strategize establishing college funds for your kids.

For your financial check-in:

- Choose a relaxed, private area to chat. This could be on the couch or around the kitchen table- wherever you feel most comfortable talking one-on one.
- Remove distractions- wait until after bedtime if you have kids, shut off the TV and put away your cell phone.
- Try to enter the conversation without an agenda. Starting on opposite sides of a situation can make it difficult to reach agreements and increases the chance of having an argument.
- Bring any necessary information or documents. This can include a household budget, bank statements, or any research you've done leading up to the discussion.

ARMY FAMILY

YOUR MONEY, YOUR FUTURE



WHAT TO TALK ABOUT

Get Goal Oriented

It's the first step in designing your financial path and helps you outline the steps you need to take. List out all of your goals, large and small, and set them in front of you. From there, look over bank statements and other income to get a clear snapshot of your financial preparedness. Chief on your mountain of financial priorities: building an emergency savings account. Nothing can undermine your plans like having to dip into your regular savings or monthly income to cover unexpected expenses.

Create a Budget

List your income and monthly expenses using whatever tracking tool works best for you. Take a look at how your expenses match up to the 50/30/20 rule: 50% of income spent on essential needs; 30% on savings/debt, and 20% on wants. You don't have to eliminate all of "non-essential" expenses- in fact, it's important that you're able to factor in a little fun. But see where what should be an occasional treat may be turning into a real burden on your expenses and try to scale back from there. Your budget should be a living document- look back at it often and make any necessary adjustments to accommodate changes or needs.

Review Legal Documents

Do you have the correct legal documents, and are they up-to-date? Chances are they're tucked away in a file folder, but review these documents before/during major life events, such as the birth of a child or deployment, is important. Do you have adequate coverage under SGLI? Are your beneficiaries current? Make an appointment with your JAG office to review documents such as your Power of Attorney and Last Will and Testament, and they can assist in making any necessary updates.

RESOURCES

militarysaves.org
americasaves.org
saveandinvest.org
usaaef.org
handsonbanking.org
tsp.gov
militaryconsumer.gov
www.ausa.org

consumerfinance.gov (CFPB)
investor.gov (U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission)
militaryonesource.mil/web/mos/personal-finance
militaryfamilyadvisorynetwork.org
militaryonesource.mil/military-and-family-life-counseling



Special thanks to Alecia Blair, Executive Director, Military Saves, for her guidance and expertise.

THANKS FOR JOINING US.

Feel free to email us with any questions at pbarron@ausa.org. If we can't help, we'll find someone who will! Become an AUSA member for additional resources and support. Learn more at ausa.org/membership.