

The aim of The Money Sandwich is to provide you the tools and knowledge you need to get the basics right and under control — for yourself, your adult children, and your elderly parents.

Each chapter focuses on an area of your finances, that will help you get more out of your savings, insurance, and superannuation, and allow you to look towards a more comfortable life post-Year R (retirement), as well as set yourself and your family up to be able to deal with what life throws at you.

If your aim is to implement the strategies that I share throughout the book, you shouldn't try to do this all-in-one go. It's much easier to focus on specific steps and complete them before moving on to the next one. And you'll need to spend some time locating and organising the various documents.

To help you get started, here is a guide for the first 3 months, which is something I get my clients to do when looking at their finances. In The Money Sandwich, I provide a checklist for the first 12 months, but I wanted to provide you with the quick and easy things to do initially, to help you on your journey to financial freedom.

First 3 months

- A goals plan** (Chapter 3: Laying the groundwork)
Write down on a piece of paper your three to five major goals. They can be split between short-term goals, such as paying off debt, and long-term goals, such as closing your retirement gap. Importantly, place this somewhere where you can see it regularly, review it and not forget it.
- Get control of your cash** (Chapter 1: Taking control of your money)
Use the template on our website to understand where your money is going each month and to categorise your expenses.
- Banking** (Chapter 1: Taking control of your money)
Set up separate bank accounts and, if needed, start paying yourself a weekly 'salary' if paid monthly, for example.
- A savings plan** (Chapter 1: Taking control of your money)
Start a savings plan, with a regular amount at first that you won't miss. Pay yourself first (set up a transfer to your savings account) at the beginning of each month or pay period.
- Debt** (Chapter 2: Getting to grips with debt)
Review what you owe, whether that's credit card debt, loans or mortgages. List what debt you have and at what interest rates you are paying, and how much you can afford to pay back, to ensure you have this under control as soon as possible.
- Superannuation** (Chapter 5: Optimising your superannuation)
List how many super funds you have, which options those funds are invested in (should you be considering high growth which I mention in Chapter 4: Building an investment portfolio?). Check what insurances you have within your fund and make sure you nominate a beneficiary.
- Insurance** (Chapter 6: In case the unexpected happens)
In addition to insurance under your super fund, list what other life insurance policies you have. Determine whether you have enough cover for you and your family. Use the calculator on our website to help work out how much cover you may need.

