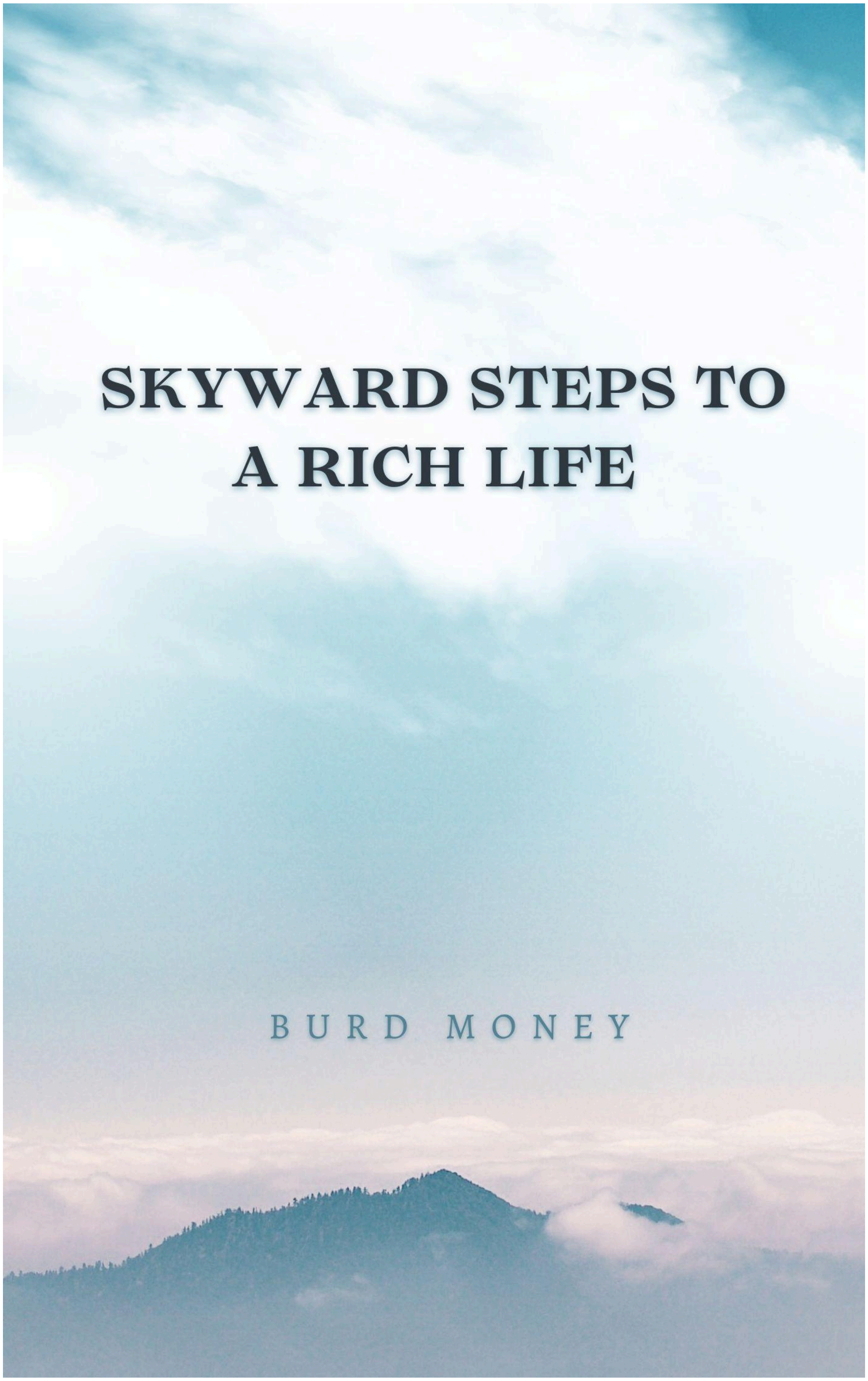
SKYWARD STEPS TO A RICH LIFE
BURD MONEY

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Skyward Steps to a Rich Life

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Intro/ About the author:
Why you should read this.

Are you seeking answers about your money?
Does the paycheck to paycheck life drain every last bit of your soul?

It did for me. I was dead broke at 22. Barely $5.99 in my account.
When I took the plunge to move out of my parents house, I discovered a life full of expenses and debt. Turns out when you use credit and don't make a lot, it adds up.

My dream at 22 was to make the world a clean place. As an owner and operator of a cleaning and restoration company, it was hard work. We had clients, we had advertising, what we did not have was investments.

Life was so bad that one day I had to decide if I was going to eat or keep the power in my apartment on. I chose lights, and then found some change to eat that day. Yet still, I wasn't convinced to find more.

One day, in my 30s, I woke up and realized I was responsible for three other lives.
Within those lives there will be needs. Lots of them.
There is not just me anymore to fund, there is a whole generation counting on me. People beyond my life will be impacted.

I saw it, light bulb. I didn't have enough for myself, much less for a generation of new humans..
How was I to be the father I want to be? Something had to change!

It took a drive. It took one day of saying enough is enough. We needed to make more money.
When you are driven to do something, you will stop at nothing to get there.
From 2021 to 2022 I studied the markets, how they worked, why they worked etc.

Now it's a lifestyle. Everyday I check all the parts of the market, the stocks, the funds, the crypto etc. It's not a job to me, it's a love and a passion.
It's thrilling to see what will happen, what announcements there will be to move things higher or lower.

In 2022 I finally did it, I started investing in myself. Wow what a feeling.
Especially when it works.
I took 20.00, and turned it into 40.00 overnight. It was the first time I made money that I didn't make with my hands.
No sweat, no effort, no more hot water melting my skin, no back breaking furniture moving. I didn't need to get new scars from the hot water from my cleaning machine. (Don't miss that)
Just good old fashioned investing.

Your world needs you to get there!

You deserve a rich life that is out there waiting for you.
It just needs you to get started!
Let's begin!

<u>What this book is</u>

This book is simple and designed for anyone to utilize immediately.
It is not designed to provide financial advice for you, it's designed to show you how money will work for you.

If everyone acts in a certain way, they will be rich.
The world is full of abundance. It can all be yours!
This book is made to help you make more money than you did before.
It will accomplish this mission if you apply the lessons!

In order to get to a happy life, whatever that looks like for you, you will need to have money to do it. Whether it's travel, owning things, going to parties, whatever.
You need money with life or it's more difficult.
Is it easier to travel with 20,000 or 20.00? You see the point.

All I want to do is help you get started.
Help you start making more money so you can do the things you want to do.
That's the definition of success, getting what you want and doing what you want. Becoming what you were made to be, in your world you get to decide.
You can have a lot of money, but if you are not doing what you want, can you really enjoy it?

By the end of this book you should be able to know what a high-yield account is,lock up your debt monster, automate your accounts, start a brokerage account, and begin to make money for your future using compound interest!

Nothing that has happened to you, can keep you from your destiny.
You have victory in your DNA!
The next days will be your best days!

No time to waste, let's get started!

How does compound interest work?
Think of money like a garden!

In the Burd Money garden, every dollar is a seed. You tuck it into the soil — your savings account, your portfolio, your hustle — and let time do its quiet work. At first, the sprouts are small: a few cents of interest, barely noticeable.

With patience, soon those sprouts start dropping seeds of their own. The interest begins to earn interest, the growth grows on itself, and before long, your once-empty patch is thick with green. You realize you're not just watching plants anymore — you're watching momentum.

Compound interest is the rhythm of nature and money combined. The patient gardener wins because they understand this law: the longer your seeds stay planted, the deeper the roots and the wider the reach. Every drop of time feeds the soil.

Every reinvested gain multiplies the harvest. What starts as spare change becomes abundance — not through luck, but through letting go and let it grow!

Step 1
Let's go; *Highest Yield Savings*

At the time of this writing, it's been a long time since you could make money with your money.
Most savings accounts have paid less than 1% for most of my adult life.
Until now! Why is this important?
Wouldn't you like your money to make money?

Key point: *Highest yield possible* for savings.

A yield is how much the account pays you per year. It is also marketed as APY.

Savings accounts have a yearly savings rate they pay you to store your money there.
Always check the fine print!

For example: Bank of America typically pays the lowest at less than 1%.
Some banks will pay way more!
*Upwards of 5% as of 2024.
*Late 2025 it's now 3.8%
That's 500.00 extra dollars on every $10,000 held in the account per year.
Wow! You didn't have to do gig work for that now did ya?! :)

Check with your tax professional or the IRS for details on your tax liability for this gain.

With every gain comes a tax, which I will just say now, **it's okay to pay taxes** on money you earned.
Why? **Because you made money!**
Did you know that the percentage of taxes removed from your paycheck at most jobs will be more than any capital gains tax?
Do the math and let me know! Or you can trust me and let's go to the next step!

Step 2, *Debt Monster!*

Did you know that the leading cause of financial hardship is debt?
Why is that so?
Debt is expensive!
Most people who take on debt, don't realize the long term cost associated. **Debt can destroy your income**, and keep you from doing anything you would like to do. It eats us alive and to keep you out of the monster's den, aka bankruptcy, I want to tell you that you have a sword.
A sword so mighty that it can slay any debt monster!

So let's go find that monster!
Rip the bandaid off, take the cold water plunge, open that envelope you have been ignoring!
Your life simply depends on it!

You can find the debt monster in the statements you receive from your collectors. This may be personal and the tough part.
You can do this!
The first way to attack the monster is to *have a plan*!

List everyone that you owe, all the things found on your credit report. Credit reports are free and easy to find from providers. Just search for a free credit report and choose a reputable source.

Then find out how much your debt costs, and what I mean by that is: find out how much they are charging you and find the percentage per month.
Sometimes they don't want you to see the percentage they charge, this can take a couple minutes to find.

How to find find the yield charged:
Go to the collector's website, log in, or even give them a call to ask. You just say “Hello, I would like to know the interest rate percentage on this debt, and is that monthly or yearly?”

There might even be an AI chat bot that can tell you. AI has been such a huge change, like the steam engine and internet, it will change the world. You can even let AI do the budgeting for you in any popular app these days.

Once you find the percentage it costs, you can now see how much you spend to hold the debt.

This part can be rough and I will tell you from experience, it can be the hardest part.
Facing your debt is not easy, that's why **it's a monster.**

It needs, must, and has to be slain! You have the sword, let's learn how to use it!

Next List all your debts. Every single one.
Including each of their interest %.
Go check past emails, past mail received, all the things with your debt must be listed.
Why list it?
You have to see the cost so you can see your future profits.
If all you did was stop here and get out of debt, you would be so much more ahead of the majority!

Why stop here, there is so much to know!

At the end it should look something like this:

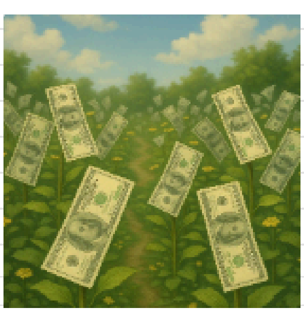
Take a pause here and review the debt you currently have!!
******

Now we know what the monster looks like and how it affects you, let's go find that income sword!
The next steps will explain building wealth.

It may look something like this:

Money Island	Account Type	Amount	Notes
	Checking 1	$0.00	
	Checking 2	$0.00	
	Checking 3		
	Savings 1	$0.00	
	Savings 2		
	OTHER______		
	IRA		
	401(k)	$0.00	
	Brokerage Account	$0.00	
	BONDS		
	CD'S AND OTHER ACCOUNTS		
	REAL ESTATE VALUE		
	CRYPTO Value	$0.00	
	OTHER______		

2	Debt Type	Lender/Bank	$ Owed	Monthly Payment
Liabilities & Debt Tracker	Credit Card #1			
	Credit Card #2			
	Credit Card #3	-		
	Personal Loan	-		
	Mortgage	-		
	Auto Loan			
	Student Loan	-		
				$0.00
			$0.00	Total Debt

3	Income Source	Employer/Platform	Monthly Amount	Frequency
Money Garden	Salary/Wages			
	Dividends			
	Business Income			
	Royalties			
	Other Income			
	Side Hustle/Freelance			
	Rental Income			
	Total Income		$0.00	
				Yearly Income Total

Step 3 Automation Nation

Why make saving automatic? Simply put, it does the hard part for you. Would you rather calculate percentages of income every month or just invest it and forget it? Let's make life easier for you! Make it automatic with your bank. Ask them how they can automate your savings and you will be so much better off! Wherever you receive income, figure out how much you have for expenses and what is remaining.How much do I save?
Step 1 Write out all the income you expect to have in the next month.
Then, list all of your expenses. This will show you how much your lifestyle is costing you.
The amount you have left over is called net income.
This, and only this, is the money you have to work with.

When you choose a percentage of that money to save, you are choosing to have a more rich life.
Saving a specific percentage every month, and having **a system/app/bank help you do this** automatically **saves you the time and stress.**

Auto savings is so wonderful, you can turn it off anytime!
Do this with a partner, friend, someone you trust to hold you accountable. Ai is also amazing with this in budgeting apps. It's super easy!

You must know how much you can afford to invest and build your savings.
This is the key to your success.
Income must be used and not put under a mattress!
Now you're ready to make it grow!

Step 4 *Big Picture +*

If you are rich, you can be who you want to become. That is the goal for most, wouldn't you want to be anything you want to be? Money gets you there and will help you stay there!
What is your reason for investing?

Maybe it's for medical reasons or needing money for something seriously affecting you.
If you made more money, how would your life be better or different?

I can share with you one experience,
When I bought my first few stocks. I never knew I could grow money or make money while I slept. After college I sincerely thought and felt investing was for the rich.

One day I sat down to watch the news, and a panelist mentioned a company I liked, so my interest turned into research also known as DD(due diligence).
I logged in and bought a few shares of the company after I liked what I saw.

What a change, a portfolio can go from 2,000 to 20,000 in an incredibly short amount of time after repeating this process and building up a group of stocks that were doing well.

How?
Compound interest!
When a company does well, they give their profits (which is money to you!) to shareholders in the form of buy backs and or dividends. So you get a piece of the **record breaking profits!**
If you then reinvest that new money, and it goes up, you get those new gains.

Alas, the cycle continues and your money stacks to the sky!

What's your why?
Why do you need money and what will you do with it?
What would you do with an extra $18,000 or $180,000?
Find your why, then you begin to grow.

To be wealthy you need health insurance. It's a must have if you are going to keep your new money. The last thing we need is some health issue to come storming in and taking away all your hard earned income! Get health insurance any way possible. This will help you!

Your health will be protected, savings making money, and by now seeing your big picture to wealth. Let's go plant money trees!

Step 5: *Market Money*

What does it mean when you hear “the markets”? NASDAQ? Dow?
What comes to mind? I like to think of the markets as my personal and generational money tree. It grows just as any living thing, with time and love.

I am going to tell you about something that is less risky than sports betting and the lottery.
Please do not do any lotteries. Think of a dollar as a soldier in the fight against inflation!
Inflation means our dollars will be worth a bit less over time.

So what is a stock market?
Think of buyers and sellers. It's super simple. Green and Red. Bull and Bear.
Something is placed on the market, people choose to buy, sell, or hold it.
You make money if you buy something that is worth more later.
You make less money if the price of it goes down.
There is a method to this that we will break down together.

You have probably heard this before: buy low and sell high!
Simple right?
Don't let all the finance words get in the way, you got this!

When you go to get started, there are many apps and websites that can get you on your path.
Find a reputable firm with the highest reviews.
You have to get started! Go..right now!

Find a brokerage firm. This is a simple yet important step.
Who will you trust with your money?
Vanguard, Fidelity or a new up and comer Robinhood?
So many choices, but keep it close to your goals and the decision will be easy.

Do you like access to your money quickly? Would you benefit from support and planning?
All important things to consider.

-Stop here if you do not have a brokerage account -
When you have opened your account, now continue:

We will now assume you found a company, and started a brokerage account.
It's time to make sure it's funded! Like from earlier, this is where your affordable percentage will be for the markets.
Transfer that amount to the brokerage, when it's ready to "trade" then you are in!

Next you can either pick what you want to buy or if you have no idea where to start, the general consensus would be to start with a low cost index fund while you learn how and what to do next!

An **index fund** is a type of investment fund that aims to **mimic the performance of a specific market index**, like the S&P 500 (which tracks 500 of the largest U.S. companies).

Why are they cool?

Built-in Diversification and Lower Risk!

Instead of a fund manager actively picking individual stocks or bonds they think will perform well (active management), an index fund simply buys **all or a representative sample** of the securities that make up the index it's tracking. This is called **passive management**. By investing in an index fund, you essentially own a tiny piece of every company in that list.

Simple **Diversification:** This immediately spreads your risk. If one company performs poorly, it won't severely damage your entire investment, which provides a more **stable and predictable** return than picking individual stocks.

Lower Risk: Because they're diversified across the entire market, index funds generally fluctuate much less than individual stocks, offering a more stable solution for navigating market volatility.

Historically Attractive Long-Term Returns

Major indexes, like the S&P 500, have historically delivered solid long-term average annual returns (around 7% to 10% over many decades), before adjusting for inflation.

Important Disclaimer: No Investment Advice Provided

This book and its contents are for informational and educational purposes only and should not be construed as professional financial, investment, or legal advice.

The use of the ticker symbol **SPY** (representing an S&P 500 Index Fund) is purely for **illustrative and educational purposes** to demonstrate concepts discussed in the text. I am not suggesting that you must invest in this specific fund, this particular index, or this type of index fund. **Furthermore, I am not suggesting that any single investment should constitute the entirety of your portfolio.**

Investing involves risk, including the potential loss of principal. Past performance is not indicative of future results. Always consult with a qualified financial or tax professional before making any investment decisions.

Writers and others may tell you other things, and that doesn't make them right or me wrong, it just shows you that the concept of retirement and money is actually pretty new!

History time!

The Start of Internet Trading

The shift to electronic and internet-based trading fundamentally changed who could invest and how quickly they could trade, driving down the costs that eventually led to zero commissions.

Date	Event	Significance for Investors
1971	**NASDAQ** launches as the world's first electronic stock market (an electronic bulletin board, not a trading floor).	This marked the first major step away from physical trading floors and toward electronic systems, which were necessary for online trading to exist.
1982	**NAICO-NET** launches, considered one of the first full-service electronic consumer equity trading systems using a personal computer (PC).	This was an early form of **electronic trading** for retail investors, though access and costs were still high.
1994	**digiTRADE** brings securities trading to the **public internet**. E*TRADE also begins its service as an online brokerage provider around this time (launching its platform for consumers in 1996).	This is the key moment where investing became accessible via a web browser, kicking off the **online trading revolution** and the rise of discount brokers.
Late 1990s	Online brokerages explode, surging from 12 firms in 1994 to **over 140 by the year 2000**.	Easy internet access and lower commissions ($7-$15 per trade) fueled a massive increase in retail investing.

The History of Trading Commissions and the Rise of "Free Trading"

Before 1975, brokerage commissions were **fixed** by the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE), meaning every broker charged the same price for a trade, regardless of the size or firm. The path to "free" trading was a multi-decade race to the bottom in fees:

Date	Event	Significance for Investors
May 1, 1975	**"May Day"**—The U.S. Securities Acts Amendments of 1975 eliminated fixed-rate commissions, making them **negotiable**.	This created the **discount brokerage** industry (like Charles Schwab), which began offering trades for *much less* than full-service brokers. Commissions were no longer "fixed" but were still charged.
2013	**Robinhood** launches the first mobile trading app offering **$0 commission** trades on stocks and ETFs.	This introduced the concept of commission-free trading to a new generation of retail investors, putting immense competitive pressure on established brokers.
October 2019	**Major brokerage firms** (Charles Schwab, TD Ameritrade, E*TRADE, Fidelity) drop commissions on US stock and ETF trades to **$0**.	This is the point when "free trading" as most people understand it today became the **industry standard** among all major retail brokers.

What is a stock price and what is the stock exchange?

Stock Price

A stock price is the current market value for a single share of ownership in a publicly traded company. This price constantly fluctuates based on the real-time interaction of buyers and sellers, governed by the forces of supply and demand.

Stock Exchange

A stock exchange is an organized marketplace, often a physical or electronic platform, where stockbrokers and traders buy and sell financial securities like stocks and bonds. Its primary function is to provide liquidity and transparency for these transactions, facilitating the price discovery process and enabling companies to raise capital.

Stocks are pieces of a company, we call it a “share”
Here is a simple stock buy example:
If you like Apple, an epic company. You did your research. You buy 1 share of Apple at 170.00.
In a bit of time, let's say it goes to 190.00.
Congratulations! You just made money (technically)!
Apple also pays a dividend!
Let's say you hold that 1 share for 1 business quarter, well then they pay you, for each share you own!
The cash you get can either go to more Apple stock, something new like a company in another industry or just help you pay expenses!

So let’s see that in action.
Apple paid a dividend of .20, and say you own 10 shares, that is 2.00 you made from Apple that quarter! Nice!

Now I am not saying you should buy this specific stock, it's just a quick example.

You might need to know more before you get started with investing!

Like for example:
Should you sell or buy now? What makes the prices change etc.

If the story for the company and the stock hasn’t changed, it’s best to hold if you also have evidence the company will be growing more in the future. Especially growing more than as expected by so called wall street “analysts”.

So what moves the markets up and down to make money?! I have found 3 key ways to know this.

1. **Economics**
2. **Earnings**
3. **News/Sentiment**

Economy for the money!

Stock prices are fundamentally **based on a company's expected future profit**s, and those profits are heavily dictated by the overall health and direction of the economy.
When the FED began lowering interest rates this year, companies like Tesla and other cyclical stocks were able to catch flight! Economy shifts come from rates, labor market, political landscape and sentiment, plus much more!

How Earnings Reports Affect the Stock Market

The stock market's reaction to an earnings report is primarily driven by whether the reported earnings **beat, meet, or miss** the expectations of financial analysts:

- **Positive Surprise:** If a company reports earnings that are higher than analysts' expectations (an "earnings beat"), its stock price will often rise immediately.
- **Earnings Miss:** If the company's earnings fall short of expectations, its stock price is likely to decline.
- **Guidance is Key:** The company's **forward guidance**—its forecast for future earnings and revenue—is often even more impactful than the past quarter's results, as the market is forward-looking.

The Information vs. Sentiment Effect

News can affect the stock price through two primary channels:

Information Effect: This is the rational channel, where the news contains genuine, fundamental data (e.g., strong earnings, a new product, or regulatory changes). This information is incorporated into the stock price, leading to a quick adjustment that reflects the change in the company's intrinsic value.

Sentiment Effect: This is the behavioral channel, where the *tone* and *hype* of the news influence investors' emotions (fear, greed, optimism) and perceptions about future cash flows that are **not** fully justified by the underlying facts. This can lead to investor **overreaction** (pushing prices too high or too low) and often results in short-term volatility or price reversals.

What about retirement?
Wouldn't it be nice to have money at a time of your life when you don't make any?
Wouldn't you thank your past self if you had lots of money to live off of later?
Your future self is thanking you now!

Let's learn the difference between some retirement options!

Traditional IRA

This is an individual retirement account where contributions are typically tax-deductible now, giving you an upfront tax break and lowering your current income tax. Your money grows tax-deferred, but all withdrawals in retirement will be taxed as ordinary income at your future tax rate.

Roth IRA

This individual account uses after-tax dollars for contributions, meaning you get no immediate tax deduction for saving. The significant benefit is that all investment growth and qualified withdrawals are 100% tax-free in retirement, and there are no required minimum distributions during your lifetime.

401(k) Plan

This is a high-limit retirement savings plan offered through an employer, which often includes a valuable company matching contribution. Contributions are usually made pre-tax (reducing your current taxable income), but your withdrawals in retirement will be fully taxed, similar to a Traditional IRA.

Find how much you can afford to put in, you will be so glad later! Learn IRS limits!
If you need money from them you can also have it under certain conditions. Learn those conditions!

Key Differences Summary

Feature	Traditional IRA	Roth IRA	401(k) Plan
Type	Individual Account (Self-directed)	Individual Account (Self-directed)	Employer-Sponsored Plan
Tax Break	Tax deduction **now** (on contributions)	Tax-free withdrawals **later**	Tax deduction **now** (on contributions)
Contributions	Pre-tax/Tax-deductible	After-tax (Not deductible)	Pre-tax (Most common)
Withdrawals	Taxed as ordinary income	Tax-free (qualified)	Taxed as ordinary income
Contribution Limit	Lower (e.g., $7,000 for 2024/2025)	Lower (e.g., $7,000 for 2024/2025)	Much Higher (e.g., $23,500 for 2025)
Income Limits	No limit to contribute (deduction may be phased out)	**Yes,** high earners cannot contribute	No limit to contribute
Employer Match	No	No	**Yes**, often available

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