

BUSINESS INSIDER

3 Simple Steps to Retiring with Confidence in an Uncertain Market

A sponsored post for Brighthouse Financial, written by Megan Nye

When you're living in or approaching retirement, the possibility of market downturn is a real concern. Referencing the dramatic decline nearly a decade ago, Arielle O'Shea, NerdWallet's Investing and Retirement Specialist notes, "The recession was certainly scariest for the people who were in or very close to retiring that year."

But it's possible to retire with confidence while continuing to enjoy the unmatched asset growth of the market. And you can [nail your retirement goals](#) even when facing a struggling economy in your golden years.

Here's our 3-step method for keeping your financial portfolio healthy, even when the market is faltering:

1. Give your portfolio a check-up.

Check off these tasks yourself or with your financial advisor:

- [Use a calculator](#) if retirement is around the bend. "See if you're on track," says O'Shea. "You really don't want to bury your head in the sand. You want to know how much you should be saving and where you stand."
- **Weed out high-risk stocks and bonds.** If your portfolio is sporting junk bonds, penny stocks, or investments in businesses that are flailing financially, consider dropping them in favor of more stable assets.
- **Look into reducing investment fees.** Review your broker's trade commissions, your funds' expense ratios, and your advisor's annual take. Explore your options if you worry that your gains are being eaten up by fees.
- **Prepare for a bear market . . . just in case.** "Make sure you have a couple of years of income in cash," recommends O'Shea, "just in case there's some kind of ill-timed market downturn that happens right when you're retiring and right when you need to start

drawing income from your portfolio. What you don't want is to sell investments at a loss."

2. Diversify and rebalance regularly.

Creating diversity in your investment portfolio is an excellent way to protect yourself against market fluctuations in certain business sectors or geographic areas.

As you inch closer to and later live in retirement, most financial advisors recommend that you weight your portfolio increasingly toward bonds. So it's important to stack [your actual asset allocation](#) against your risk profile.

Maintaining that ideal allocation means ensuring that you rebalance your portfolio periodically – at least once a year, according to O'Shea. "During a time like right now when stocks are doing really well, you might find that they're over-weighted in your portfolio," she adds.

Need some assistance in diversifying and rebalancing your portfolio? O'Shea suggests looking into a financial advisor, robo-advisor, or target date fund.

3. Consider an annuity that protects your investments.

When you're worried that a bear market is just around the corner, you may be tempted to yank your money out of the market and hide it away in savings accounts and CDs. "That's a good way to run out of money," says O'Shea, who notes that most portfolios need market exposure to achieve the growth necessary to sustain a healthy retirement.

If you're looking to hedge against the losses of an underperforming market, an annuity may be just the right addition to your portfolio. The right annuity can provide you with the peace of mind that comes from knowing you have a guaranteed source of income for life.

And a [Brighthouse Financial shield annuity](#) grants you unique access to market returns while offering the protection you crave against market downturn. It's a customizable financial vehicle in which Brighthouse Financial actually absorbs an investor-specified quantity of asset loss. And in so doing, the shield annuity ensures that you have enough money to grow when the market swings back.

When you're financing your dream retirement, you have more power than you know in protecting your portfolio against market downturn. You can safeguard your nest egg with the right mix of investments, some regular maintenance, and the inclusion of the right guaranteed lifetime income products.

Ready to learn more? [Watch a quick video on how a Brighthouse Financial shield annuity can help you achieve your retirement goals.](#)