

SMART MONEY MONTHLY

DECEMBER 2025

EDITION



QUICK TIPS FOR DECEMBER

1. Budgeting for Christmas Without the Stress

Holiday costs add up quickly—gifts, food, travel, events. Set a simple spending limit for each category, track it, and use cash or a prepaid card if overspending is a temptation.



Your January self will thank you.

2. Year-End Checklist You Don't Want to Miss



Some financial deadlines are hard cut-offs. Reviewing them now keeps your goals on track and prevents missed opportunities.

Budgeting for Christmas & New Year

The holidays are packed with excitement—but also pressure. A little planning can keep the season joyful and protect your long-term goals.

Start With a Holiday Spending Plan

Break your budget into 4 groups:

- Gifts
- Food & Entertaining
- Travel
- Events & Extras

Estimate what you can spend, not what you wish you could spend. If it doesn't fit the budget, scale back without guilt—memories matter more than price tags.

Use a “3-Gift Rule” for Kids

Pick:

1. Something they want
2. Something they need
3. Something to grow their mind or creativity

This keeps spending realistic and teaches healthy habits.

Avoid the January Credit Hangover

If you use credit cards, aim to pay off the balance before the statement date. It helps protect your credit score and avoids rolling into 2026 with last year's debt.



YEAR-END FINANCIAL DEADLINES

Here are the key items Canadians should review before December 31:

RESP Contributions

- Contributions can be made anytime, but the CESG (Canada Education Savings Grant)—the 20% government match—uses the calendar year.
- If you didn't get all of this year's grant room, now's the time to catch up.

RRSP vs. TFSA

- RRSP contributions toward your 2025 tax return can be made until March 1, 2026, so no year-end rush here.
- TFSA: If you've withdrawn money in 2025, the room returns January 1, 2026. Good time to plan how you'll use that room.

FHSA Year-End Notes

- Annual room resets January 1. If you opened your FHSA this year, make sure you've used what fits your plan (up to \$8,000/year).

Charitable Giving

- Donations must be made by December 31 to count for this year's tax credit.

Group Benefits & Health Spending Accounts

- Many plans reset January 1.
- Claim your paramedical benefits, dental cleanings, glasses, or outstanding receipts.

Insurance & Estate Planning Review

- Review your policies: beneficiaries, coverage amounts, and any missing areas like CI or disability.
- Update your emergency contacts and personal documents.

DEADLINE



FROM MY FAMILY TO YOURS

As the year comes to a close, I want to take a moment to share something deeper than financial tips and year-end checklists.

This season is about connection – the people around our tables, the memories we create, and the hope we carry into a new year. Whether your 2025 was calm, chaotic, full of growth, or full of challenges, I hope you take time this month to pause, breathe, and celebrate how far you've come.

From my family to yours, I wish you a holiday season filled with warmth, laughter, and comfort. May your home feel a little brighter, your heart feel a little lighter, and may you be surrounded by people who make you feel appreciated and supported.

As we look ahead to 2026, I'm wishing you a year of clarity, confidence, and prosperity. A year where your goals feel achievable, your finances feel organized, and you feel empowered to take the next step toward the life you want. I look forward to walking alongside you, helping you build security, stability, and generational wealth for the people you love.

Thank you for trusting me with your financial journey. It means more than you know.

Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and warm wishes for a prosperous year ahead – from my family to yours.

