



IMPROVING FINANCIAL LITERACY AND PROMOTING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS

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Introduction

Financial decisions are a part of all our lives. Every day, we face situations where we have to decide what to spend our money on, how to allocate it, or how to prepare for the future. Have you ever thought about exactly how much money you spend each month? Or what would happen if an unexpected expense came up? Do you know how to manage your finances safely in the online world? This course was created to help you better understand and manage your finances more effectively in your everyday life.

The Purpose of This Course

The purpose of this course is to help you learn the basics of managing your money, explore ways to save, and understand how to avoid financial fraud and abuse. The goal is not merely to convey information, but also to help everyone make more confident decisions about their own finances and respond more effectively to financial situations in everyday life.

Teaching Methods

During the sessions, participants do not merely listen to information; they actively engage in the learning process. The sessions are based on discussions, examples, and collaborative thinking. The tone of the curriculum and the sessions is direct and encouraging.

Through various exercises, participants encounter situations that might also occur in everyday life. For example:

- They role-play a scenario in which someone pretends to be a bank employee, and the participants decide how they would respond.
- They discuss which payment methods are safe for online shopping.
- Working in pairs or small groups, they make decisions about how to manage a family's expenses.

These exercises help participants reflect on financial decisions through their own experiences. You can find definitions of the financial terms used in the curriculum in the "Glossary" at the end of this publication.

Financial Security

In today's world, we're handling more and more financial matters online or over the phone. While this is often more convenient, it's also important to pay attention to security. The following situations may arise:

- we receive a suspicious message,
- we come across an offer that seems too good to be true,
- or someone asks for our bank information during a phone call.

It's not always easy to decide how to respond in these situations. The purpose of this session is to draw attention to these situations and help you recognize the signs of fraud.

This program is based on three key pillars: protection, so that we can manage our money and personal data safely; equal opportunity, so that everyone can participate in financial decisions; and inclusion, so that financial literacy is accessible and understandable to everyone.

Equal Opportunity and Inclusion

Learning about financial literacy is important for everyone, as it helps people make informed financial decisions and navigate everyday life with confidence. Everyone has the right to understand the basics of finance, participate in planning family finances, and make responsible decisions about their own finances.

The curriculum takes into account that students' prior knowledge, experiences, and access to information may vary. Accordingly, the lesson is structured to be understandable, accessible, and inclusive for all participants, regardless of age, prior knowledge, or individual background. The goal is for every student to master the basics of financial literacy and to make decisions with greater confidence in everyday financial situations.

Finances are part of our everyday lives, and everyone can learn to manage money more wisely if they receive guidance and have the opportunity to practice. This workshop and curriculum provide an opportunity to learn through own experiences, recognize risky situations, and try out how to make safe, responsible decisions about our finances. Remember: the goal isn't for everyone to become an expert, but rather to be able to handle financial situations with greater confidence and preparedness. If you're open to new knowledge and share your thoughts with one another, you can all learn more.

Let's get started and take the first steps toward making more informed financial decisions!

Financial Literacy

“

“Don't tell me what your priorities are. Show me what you spend your money on, and I'll tell you what your priorities are.”

JAMES W. FRICK





Before we talk about bank accounts and financial services, it's worth taking a moment to think about how we handle money in our daily lives. People pay for things and manage their finances in different ways: some prefer to use cash, while others pay by debit card or make payments online. We'll start this session with a brief discussion to help everyone get into the topic. Everyone can share their own experiences about how they use money in their daily lives.

You can kick off the discussion with questions like these:

- How do you usually pay: by cash or debit card?
- Have you ever had a bank account? If so, what did you use it for most often? When do you think a bank account can be useful?

This brief discussion helps everyone draw on their own experiences and actively engage with the topic. Next, we'll look at what to keep in mind when opening and using a bank account.

ACCOUNT SELECTION



checking or savings account, bank website, cash, credit card, wire transfer, invoice



Payroll account or checking account: a bank account into which money can be deposited, such as our salary, CSED, GYED, GYES, family allowance, pension, scholarship, or other benefits.



How do I open a checking account?

You can open one at a bank branch, on the bank's website, or through its app.



What do you need for this?

- **A valid ID card (or other form of identification), proof of address, and tax identification number. When opening an account, the bank enters into a contract with us and explains how we can use the bank account and debit card, as well as what fees we will be charged.**
- **The bank will review the account opening application and, in certain cases, may decide not to open a bank account.**



What should you look out for when opening an account?

Before you decide, consider the following:

What do you need an account for?

Will your paycheck or pension be deposited here?

Would you also like to use the account to set money aside?

Are you taking out a loan?

How much cash do you withdraw?

How many times a month would you withdraw money, and approximately how much?

How much do you pay with a card?

Do you often shop at places where you can pay with a card?

Do you usually send or receive money?

Do you plan to send money to friends or receive money from them?

How do you choose a bank?

Before opening an account, it's a good idea to compare offers from several banks. The best-known bank may not necessarily offer you the most favorable terms.

Compare:

account maintenance fees,

card usage fees,

ATM withdrawal fees,

transfer fees.



Bank comparison websites can help with this,

such as the Hungarian National Bank's bank account selection tool:

<https://bankszamlavalaszto.mnb.hu/kalkulator>

Bankmonitor's bank account search tool:

<https://bankmonitor.hu/bankszamlal>

Money.hu's bank account calculator:

<https://www.money.hu/bankszamlal>



- **How would you pay the bills?**

For example, utilities, phone, and internet: do you pay by bank transfer (you send the money) or by direct debit (the service provider deducts the amount from your account)? You need to consider all of this so you can choose the account package that best suits your needs.



Why is it important to pay attention to these things? Opening and using a bank account is an important decision because the security of our money, our day-to-day payments, and our savings all depend on it. If we think ahead about how we want to use the account—how much cash we'll withdraw, how much we'll pay by card, or how we'll pay our bills—it will be easier to choose a solution that meets our specific needs.

This also helps make our finances more transparent, avoid unnecessary expenses, and manage our money safely in our day-to-day lives.

Collection

You need a bank account to take out a bank loan because the bank transfers the loan funds to that account and often deducts the monthly payments from it as well. If someone consistently fails to pay their debt, the bank or another authorized party may initiate collection proceedings and, later, even enforcement proceedings. During this process, the debt may be deducted from the bank account. This is often referred to colloquially as "debit collection." In such cases, the bank does not necessarily deduct a percentage from every incoming payment; instead, it may freeze or deduct funds from the account up to the amount of the debt, subject to legal limits.

FAMILY BUDGET



budget, reserve, income, savings, expenditure



The Family Budget:

A family budget is a plan that helps you keep track of how much money comes in and how much goes out each month. It shows you what you spend your money on and how much you can set aside. This helps you build a reserve for unexpected situations, so you aren't caught off guard by expenses. It's important to understand that your income and expenses aren't always the same: in any given month, there may be multiple paychecks, bonuses, or extra expenses, and all of these affects how much you can set aside. If you plan your expenses and financial goals in advance, it's easier to manage your money wisely than if you simply spend whatever is left after payday.

The "Pay Yourself First" Principle



Why are we talking about this?

A family budget not only helps us manage our money wisely, but also ensures that every family member lives in safety and well-being. If we plan our expenses and income carefully, every family member—children, women, or vulnerable individuals—can have access to the necessary resources. In this way, budgeting supports gender equality and strengthens the family's resilience in the face of challenges. Understanding budgeting

also helps us:

- avoid financial surprises,
- build a cushion for unexpected situations,
- make informed decisions about our spending and savings.

We'll learn how to plan ahead, rather than just hoping there will be money left over at the end of the month to set aside.

Household Budget

A family budget and a household expense log can help us get our finances in order. Let's take a look at the difference between them!

Family Budget

= plan/budget -
applies to the future

framework

so you don't overspend
and have enough left for
your goals

pre-prepared financial plan
aligns cash flow with
its goals

Household expense log

= recording of completed items/
tracking - refers to the past

so you can see the
reality and find out
where the
plan goes wrong

the actual or retrospective recording
of expenses is intended to help you see
the flow of funds

family budget



household exp. log



responsible money
management



How do we create a family budget?

It's a good idea to start by making an annual plan. Unless it's absolutely necessary, avoid taking out loans; instead, try to plan ahead as much as possible.

Income and savings:

First, figure out how much money comes in each month:

count only the income you're sure to receive at this time!

Decide how much you can set aside (even a small amount)

The amount remaining after that is what you have available for your monthly expenses. It's recommended to divide this amount into five weekly portions rather than four! That way, you'll be sure to have accounted for every day.

The envelope method works well for planning expenses.

Don't exceed your planned expenses

Recurring expenses: These are the expenses you have every month, such as: housing (utilities, rent, etc.), transportation, essential groceries, cleaning and personal hygiene products, and medications for chronic conditions. Always make housing the first thing you pay for!

Less frequent but large (extraordinary) expenses: There are expenses that don't come up every month, but when they do, they take a big chunk out of your budget, e.g., back-to-school costs, home renovations. You should set aside money for these and for unexpected expenses as much as possible.

How much is left? Once you've subtracted your fixed, planned expenses, you'll see how much is left.

This can go toward, for example:

- clothing,
- hobbies,
- entertainment.

total income

—

savings

=

frame



Prepaid Electricity Meter

A prepaid electricity meter can help households better manage their electricity consumption and avoid accumulating more debt.

It works by requiring you to prepay for electricity, similar to a cell phone prepaid card. You can use only as much electricity as you've prepaid for. This way, you won't receive a large bill later on; instead, you'll know in advance how much money is available for electricity.

This can be particularly useful if you already have utility arrears or have difficulty paying your bills in full each month. A prepaid meter can help prevent the debt from growing further, since you can only use as much electricity as you've paid for in advance.

It's important to note that this does not clear the old debt. Previous arrears must still be settled, for example, through installment payments or another agreement with the utility provider.

Monthly Budget: If you plan well, then by the beginning of the month you'll already have:

You set aside what you can, accounted for your regular expenses, and planned for occasional expenses.

It's a good idea to start with the most important things:

groceries, utilities, childcare, hygiene products



If you're having trouble making ends meet at the end of the month, here are a few tips:

Plan your weekly meals, create a shopping list based on that, and keep an eye on store sales. It helps with budgeting if you freeze leftovers for later. Larger stores generally offer better prices. To figure out which option is more cost-effective, always check the price per kilogram or liter on the price tag. You can save a lot by cutting out alcohol, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, chips, energy drinks, and carbonated soft drinks. Plus, this helps keep your family healthier, which may also benefit your finances by reducing the risk of lost income and medical expenses. Keep an eye on your utility bills! Turn off the lights when you're not in the room! During the day, if you're not home, just keep the room at a comfortable temperature! In the winter, wear an extra sweater at home! You can save a lot on utility bills by cooking enough for two days at a time.



To find the best available prices, you can visit price comparison websites such as arfigyelo.gvh.hu, argep.hu, and arukereso.hu. These sites make it easy to compare food prices at different stores. By using them regularly, you can find the cheapest deals and save a significant amount of money on your grocery shopping. On these sites, you can track price trends, which helps you identify genuine sales and avoid overpriced products. With careful planning, you can prevent impulse buying—that is, buying based on a momentary feeling—since you'll know exactly where to buy the items you need. In the long run, this kind of attention to detail helps keep your family budget in balance and fosters financial discipline.

7 salary is usually a fixed amount paid every month

annual budget table

Income	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Salary 1												
Salary 2												
Extra work 1	for example an extra shift that you do not take every week											
Extra work 2												
Other 1	occasional income that you do not necessarily receive every month, for example											
Other 2												
Other 2	a weekend job, or money received as a gift											
Total savings	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Savings 1												
Savings 2	it is worth setting a predetermined fixed amount for every month											
Regular expenses	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Housing	usually fixed: utilities, rent, or loan repayment											
Transport												
Healthcare	usually fixed: bus pass or fuel, possibly rental fee											
Essential food												
Essential food	this means truly essential food, such as milk or bread, which is usually fixed for a weekly/monthly shop; occasional chocolate or other non-essential food is not included											
One-off expenses	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Celebration	foreseeable larger expenses that are not regular, if in your annual budget you plan, for example, to buy your child a school bag in September, you can determine your monthly savings more easily											
Gift												
Children's shoes												
Child's graduation												
Other 1												
Other 2												
Summary	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Income	the total of your monthly wages, extra wages and other income											
Savings												
Spendable	the amount you set aside in that month											
Expenses	subtract your monthly savings from your monthly income											
Expenses	add regular compulsory expenses and occasional expenses											
Remaining amount	subtract your monthly expenses from the amount available to spend											

monthly budget table

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Spendable	Enter here, month by month, the amount left for that month, after all expenses have been deducted in the annual budget.											
Shopping	Enter here the things you buy each month in addition to compulsory and regular expenses. You can spend only the amount shown as spendable/remaining in the top row.											
Household												
Personal care												
Everything else spent by the family monthly or occasionally												

Financial Adventure:

Through the following interactive activities, we'll explore how money plays a role in our daily lives. These exercises will help us understand the concepts of income, expenses, and savings, as well as how to make more informed financial decisions.

The activities demonstrate why it's important to plan ahead and why it's a good idea to build a financial cushion for unexpected situations. The games are simple and easy to understand, and everyone can participate based on their own experiences. The goal isn't to compete, but to think together and expand our financial knowledge.





Smart Decisions

Let's learn about finance through play! In the following games, we'll use simple, everyday situations to practice recognizing income, expenses, and savings; making smart financial decisions; and preparing for unexpected expenses.

1. Income - Expenses - Savings Game

We give each player pictures of everyday objects or events

Decide whether each image represents income, an expense, or savings.

Place the card in the appropriate spot: Income, Expense, or Savings.

Examples:

Income: salary, child support, occasional earnings

Expenses: groceries, medicine, bus fare

Savings: piggy bank, bank, emergency fund

At the end of the game, check how much you spent and how much you saved. Think about which expenses were important and which ones could have been postponed.

2. "What Would You Do?" Role-Playing Game

Read the description of the situation and decide what you would do with your money. You can choose between a smart decision and a risky decision.

Examples:

You need to buy medicine because you're sick. What do you do?

Food is on sale at the store. Do you buy everything, or just what you need? You received a bonus at work. Do you spend it all, or set some aside? Discuss why your choice might be a good one or a risky one.



3. "Unexpected Situation" Game

Each player receives 10,000 Ft in play money. Various events occur during the game, and you must decide how to use your money.

Examples:

Your bike broke down - pay 2,000 Ft

You need to see a doctor - pay 3,000 Ft

You win a small contest—you get 2,000 Ft

A friend asks to borrow money—pay 500 Ft

At the end of the game, check how much money you have left and think about why saving is important.

4. Safe Money Management Game

Read the description of the situation and decide whether it's safe or risky.

Examples:

A text message from your bank asking for your code—not safe

An unknown online store offering products that are too cheap—not safe

Handling the matter at a bank branch—safe

Think about how you can protect your money and personal information from fraud.

Summary:

What did we learn from Financial Adventure?

- **Income, expenses, savings:** We've come to understand that consciously tracking the flow of money in and out helps us manage our finances better.
- **Smart Decisions:** We've seen that every decision counts, and it's worth thinking ahead about what we spend our money on.
- **The role of savings:** Setting aside money for unexpected expenses provides security and reduces stress.
- **Practical takeaway:** Now that we've explored finances through games, it will be easier to reflect on our own lives: how much we spend, how much we can set aside, and how we can prepare for unexpected situations.





Pro Tip

How can we avoid unnecessary spending?

Keep track of your money!

Write down how much money you have and what you spend it on. This will make it easier to see what you really need and what you're spending money on unnecessarily.

Keep an eye on your expenses!

Regularly record your purchases and bills. This will help you see where your money is going.

Make a shopping list!

Before you go shopping, write a list and try to buy only what you really need.

Plan ahead!

Think ahead about expected expenses, such as rent, utilities, clothing, or gifts, and set aside money for them.

Save regularly!

Even setting aside a small amount can help you build a cushion for unexpected situations.

Don't buy right away!

Before making a major purchase, pause for a moment and think about whether you really need that item.



Assignment for the section above:

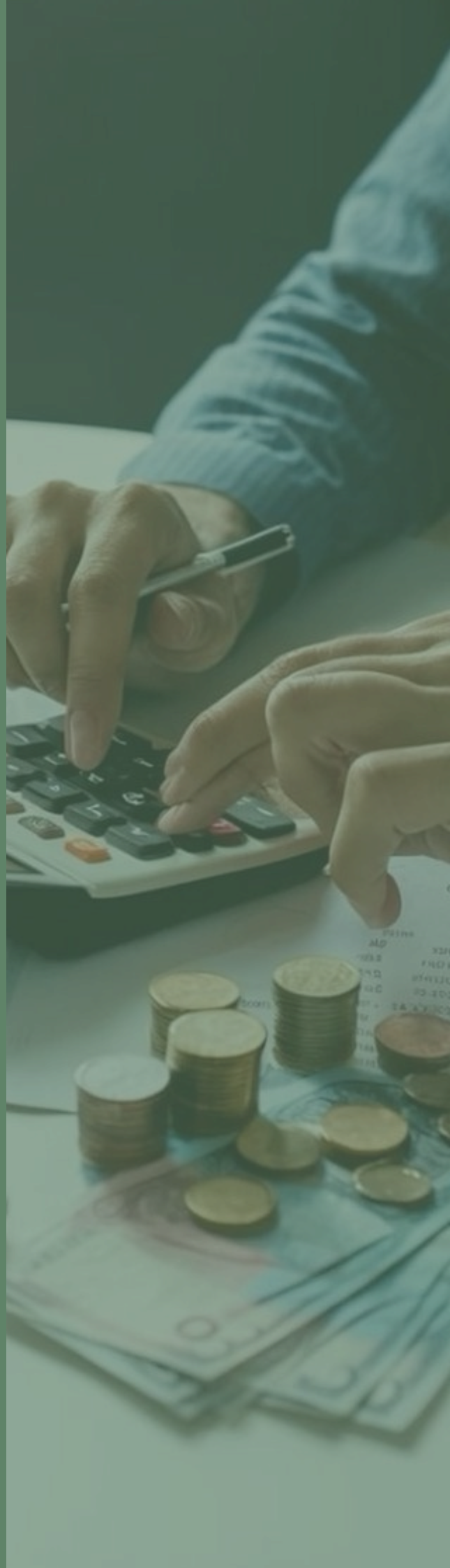
List 5 important and 5 unnecessary expenses from the past week. Think about how you could have saved money!

Loan

“

“The surest criterion of creditworthiness is when someone does not need credit.”

Kner Izidor



Credit: Making Informed Decisions About Our Finances

Now that we've learned how to plan for income, expenses, and savings—and why it's important to have a cushion for unexpected situations—it's time to move on to the topic of borrowing.



A loan is a tool that must be used consciously and prudently.

If we don't have enough savings, we may have to cover unexpected expenses with a loan. However, this poses a risk, which is why financial protection is important: managing credit responsibly helps us protect ourselves and our families from financial losses, excessive debt, and vulnerable situations.



The issue of gender equality is also of paramount importance, because in certain life situations—for example, for single parents, particularly women—financial decisions are especially critical due to limited financial resources.

The goal is for everyone, armed with financial knowledge and an understanding of the bigger picture, to be able to make independent decisions appropriate to their situation, and for credit to help—rather than hinder—their financial well-being.



Inclusivity ensures that knowledge about credit is understandable and accessible to everyone, regardless of age, background, or digital literacy. This way, we not only learn the basics of finance, but also ensure that everyone is able to make smart and safe decisions.



A loan can be part of our finances, but we should always consider whether we really need it and whether we're able to pay it back. Before taking out a loan, it's important to assess how much money we have, what we want to use it for, and how it fits into our monthly expenses. Making an informed decision helps us use credit safely and avoid excessive debt.



loan, debt, late payment interest, central credit information system, repayment, mortgage, interest, inflation



Loan



principal



interest

the cost of borrowing money ←

Interest is simply the cost of using money, while the **APR** is a metric expressed as a percentage that reflects the total annual cost of the loan in addition to the principal.

You should keep this in mind when comparing offers from banks

Creditworthiness:

The bank assesses whether you would be able to make regular payments on the loan you're applying for. To do this, they examine your monthly income, how secure your income is in the long term, and whether you own enough valuable assets—movable property and/or real estate—that you can offer as collateral (e.g., an apartment); however, they may also request additional collateral. Banks do not all make decisions the same way. Some are more willing to grant loans, while others are more cautious. The types of documentation they require also vary.

The interest rate:

When taking out a loan, it's important to consider not only how much money you'll receive from the bank, but also how your monthly payments might change. The type of interest rate is a key factor here. With a fixed interest rate, the interest rate remains the same for a predetermined period. This could be, for example, 5, 10, or 15 years, or even the entire term of the loan. In this case, the monthly payment is more predictable: we know roughly how much we'll have to pay each month. This can be particularly beneficial for those with a tight monthly budget who cannot afford a sudden increase in their monthly payment. The downside is that a fixed-rate loan is often more expensive at the outset because you have to pay more for the security it provides.

With a variable-rate loan, the interest rate may change from time to time. If interest rates fall, your monthly payment may decrease. However, if interest rates rise, your monthly payment may also increase. This can be risky because you can't know for sure in advance how interest rates will change. A loan that seems affordable today could become too much of a burden later on.

Simply put: a fixed interest rate is safer and more predictable, while a variable interest rate is riskier because your monthly payment could go up. It's best to opt for a variable interest rate only if you understand the risks, have savings set aside, and can still make payments even if your monthly payment increases.

Types of Loans - What Are They For, and in What Life Situations Can They Be a Solution?

The summary below is not intended to encourage you to take out a loan, but rather to help you understand what the different types of loans are for and in what situations they are typically used. For any loan, it's important to check the APR, the monthly payment, the total amount to be repaid, and the terms of the contract. Before taking out a loan, it's worth considering how much you'll borrow, how long it will take you to repay it, and that a longer repayment term generally means a more expensive loan.



Credit card

A credit card is a card that allows you to spend money borrowed from a bank.

It's very important to remember that you're not spending your own money—you'll have to pay it back later.

Credit cards are best used for purchases: you can use them to pay in stores, online, or for services.

You should only use a credit card if you know you will be able to repay the balance when it becomes due—not simply because you cannot currently afford the purchase.

The bank gives you a limit for this—say, 100,000 Ft—which is your credit limit. This is the maximum amount you can spend, and it's interest-free if you pay it back on time—usually within one month. However, if you don't pay back the full amount on time, the bank may charge interest, so the amount you have to repay will be much higher.



Personal Loan

With a personal loan, the monthly payment and the term—that is, how long you'll need to make payments—are known in advance. This can help with planning. At the same time, you must make the payment on time every month.

An important difference is that, since there is no collateral backing it, the interest rate on a personal loan can often be higher than, for example, a mortgage. Therefore, you shouldn't just focus on whether you can get the money quickly. You also need to consider the total amount to be repaid and the APR.

A personal loan is worth considering mainly when you need money for an important, specific expense, and the monthly payment fits comfortably within your family's income.



Loan for the Purchase of Goods

A purchase loan—also known as a retail loan—is a loan that can be taken out to purchase a specific product or service. For example, a refrigerator, washing machine, phone, furniture, or other durable consumer goods. In this case, the buyer does not pay the full price all at once but repays it in monthly installments.

You can often apply for a purchase loan at a store or online, frequently at the time of purchase. This may seem convenient because you can take the product home right away. However, it's important to know that this is still a loan, so it entails a payment obligation.

A purchase loan is generally not money that can be spent freely. The loan is intended to pay for the specific goods or services in question. This distinguishes it, for example, from a personal loan, which can be used for a variety of purposes.

Before making a purchase, you should always check the APR, the monthly payment, the loan term, and the total amount to be repaid. You should also read the terms of "0% APR" offers, as there may be conditions attached. It's not a good idea to buy something just because you can "take it home right now."

It's worth taking out a purchase loan only if the product is truly necessary and the monthly payment definitely fits within your family's budget.



Overdraft Limit

An overdraft line of credit is a credit facility linked to a bank account. This means that if you run out of your own funds in the account, the bank will allow you to continue making payments or withdrawing money up to a predetermined amount. This is called a line of credit.

For example, if someone has a balance of 0 forints but has a 50,000-forint overdraft line of credit, the bank may allow them to spend up to 50,000 forints from that amount. However, this is no longer your own money; it is a loan that must be repaid.

The bank generally grants an overdraft line of credit based on regular income. This could include, for example, a salary, a pension, or other regular income. Repayment often occurs automatically: when money is deposited into the account, the bank may deduct the amount of the credit used and the associated fees.

The advantage is that it can provide quick relief in the event of a temporary cash shortage. For example, if your paycheck isn't due for a few more days but you already need to pay an important bill. The danger, however, is that it's easy to get used to. If you're in the red every month, the overdraft is no longer a help but a constant debt.

It's important to know that an overdraft may come with interest and fees. Therefore, it should only be used for a short time and in situations where it's truly necessary—not for day-to-day living expenses.



Mortgage Loan

A mortgage loan is a type of loan in which the bank requires real estate as collateral. This real estate can be, for example, an apartment, a house, a plot of land, or other valuable property. The loan is most often taken out to purchase, build, renovate, or expand a home, but there are also mortgage loans that can be used for any purpose.

The most important difference from a personal loan is that this type of loan is secured. This means that if the borrower fails to make payments for an extended period, the bank can, as a last resort, foreclose on the property. Simply put: in the event of serious delinquency, the property may be at risk.

A mortgage is typically a larger loan with a longer term, which can last anywhere from 10 to 20 years or even longer. For this reason, it's very important that the monthly payment be affordable not only now, but also if your expenses increase, your income decreases, or an unexpected problem arises later on.

Before taking out a mortgage, it's always a good idea to compare offers from multiple banks, and you should look not only at the monthly payment but also at the total amount to be repaid, the APR, the interest period, and any other fees.

0% APR Loan

A 0% APR loan is a loan where, in theory, you don't pay more than the cost of the purchased product. The APR is the annual percentage rate, which shows what other costs are associated with the loan besides interest. If the APR is truly 0%, then the total amount of the monthly payments must equal the price of the product.

For example, if a washing machine costs 120,000 HUF and you take out a 12-month loan with a 0% APR, you'll pay 10,000 HUF per month. In the end, you'll repay a total of 120,000 HUF.

It's important to note that 0% interest is not the same as 0% APR. The interest rate may be zero, but there may be processing fees, account opening fees, insurance, or other costs. That's why you should always check the APR and the total amount to be repaid, not just the bold headlines in the ad.

A 0% APR loan can be useful if you truly need the product and are certain you can afford the monthly payments. However, it's risky to buy something just because it is advertised as interest-free. A loan is still a debt, even if it doesn't accrue interest.

What Should We Avoid Taking Out a Loan For?

- It's not worth taking out a loan for things that aren't essential and that are quickly used up or lose their value. Examples include Christmas gifts, holiday shopping, vacations, expensive cell phones, clothes, or entertainment.

The Hungarian National Bank (MNB) also warns that a loan is not a gift—what you buy today with borrowed money must be repaid later, along with interest and fees. This can be especially dangerous before the holidays, when it's easy to spend more than your family can actually afford.

What types of insurance are typically purchased along with a loan?

Lenders may offer several types of insurance along with a loan. These are generally intended to help with repayments in case of an emergency or to protect the asset for which the loan was taken out.

Important: Not all insurance is mandatory, so you should always ask what is required, what is optional, and how much it costs.

1. Loan Protection Insurance

Loan protection insurance means that, in certain difficult life situations, the insurer may take over the payment of your loan installments or pay off part or all of your outstanding debt.

Such situations may include, for example:

death,
long-term illness,
disability,
inability to work,
unemployment.



This sounds good, but it's very important to read the terms and conditions. The insurer does not pay out in every case. For example, there may be a waiting period, exclusions, or a rule that assistance is only available for certain types of employment.

Simply put: this insurance can help if you're unable to make your loan payments for some reason, but only in the cases specified in the contract.

2. Home Insurance to Go Along with a Mortgage

With a mortgage—such as a home loan—the bank often requires that you have home insurance on the property. The reason for this is that the property serves as collateral for the loan. If, for example, significant damage occurs due to a fire, storm, or burst pipe, the insurance can help with the repairs.

This is not the same as mortgage insurance. Home insurance protects the property, not the borrower directly. In other words, it pays out not because someone loses their job, but because the property suffers damage.

Simply put: with a home loan, the bank may require home insurance because the home serves as collateral for the loan.

3. Life Insurance with a Loan

For larger loans, you may be offered life insurance. The purpose of this is for the insurance company to pay out a sum of money in the event of the borrower's death. This allows the family or the bank to settle the remaining debt.

This can be particularly important if the family depends on a single person's income and, due to that person's death, the family members would no longer be able to make the loan payments.

Simply put: life insurance can help ensure that the family is not left with the full loan balance after a death.

4. Comprehensive Auto Insurance with a Car Loan or Lease

When taking out a car loan or lease, the lender may require or recommend comprehensive auto insurance. Mandatory auto liability insurance is not the same as comprehensive auto insurance. Mandatory insurance covers damage caused to others, while comprehensive insurance can also cover damage to your own car, such as damage from an accident, theft, or natural disasters.

Simply put: comprehensive insurance can be important if the car is still under a loan or lease, and you'll still need to pay off the debt even in the event of major damage.

What should you look out for?

Insurance can be useful, but it comes with additional costs. That's why you should always check the following before taking out a loan:

whether the insurance is mandatory or just recommended,

how much the monthly premium is,

whether it's included in the APR,

exactly in which cases it pays out,

when it doesn't pay out,

whether there is a waiting period,

how long it will cover payments on your behalf,

and whether you can cancel it later.



The Risks of Excessive Indebtedness–What to Watch Out For (Information from the Hungarian National Bank)

1. Before taking out a loan, think carefully about how risky it is.
2. The biggest risk is if you can't pay back the loan.
In that case, you'll have to pay late payment interest, debt collection costs, and fees. Additionally, this default information may be reported to the Central Credit Information System, which could prevent you from getting a loan in the future.
3. If you fall too far behind on your payments, the bank may also decide to terminate the contract and demand payment of the entire debt at once.
4. If the loan is secured by collateral—such as your home—then you may lose the property used as collateral. In fact, the value of the home may not even be enough to cover the debt, and you may still owe money even after it has been repossessed.
5. Only take out a loan that you can afford to pay back even if something unexpected happens in the meantime—for example, if you have a sudden expense, your income decreases, or your monthly payment increases.

Other unexpected situations that could actually occur and that might make it difficult or impossible to make payments:

- You could be laid off from your job
- Your working hours could be reduced, and consequently, so could your wages
- Your salary could be reduced, or your benefits could be cut
- Orders could decline, thereby reducing your business's revenue
- You could become unable to work due to illness or surgery
- You could have an accident that prevents you from working
- Sudden damage to your home requiring costly repairs
- Sudden car repairs or replacement, especially if you need a car for work
- Damage caused by flooding, fire, or storms that isn't covered by insurance
- Divorce
- Loss of your partner's job, ability to work, or income
- A costly emergency involving a child or family member: hospital treatment, care costs, etc.

- **Costs of caring for an elderly relative**
- **Unexpected fines or legal fees**
- **Unexpected medical bills or medication costs not covered by health insurance**
- **Deterioration in loan or lease terms—e.g., contract amendments or an interest rate increase on a variable-rate loan**
- **Drastic changes in exchange rates for foreign-currency-denominated loans**
- **Financial losses due to fraud or identity theft, especially if you're not careful when shopping online...**
- **Sudden increases in rent or utility bills**
- **A reduction in government benefits, e.g., the discontinuation of subsidies or assistance**
- **Employer bankruptcy**
- **A sudden increase in school or educational expenses**
- **A sudden increase in common charges**
- **Persistent inflation**



For low-income families—such as single-parent families—it is particularly important to borrow responsibly, because failure to repay a loan poses a greater risk for them.

Taking out a loan always involves risk, so you should always consider how much you can afford to pay back in the event of unexpected circumstances. If you make a mistake, you could end up in a spiral of debt!

What should you do if you have trouble making your loan payments?

Contact the bank as soon as possible and explain in writing why you're behind on your payments.

In such cases, the bank may suggest temporary solutions, such as installment payments, extending the loan term, a grace period for principal payments, or allowing you to sell the property on your own.

Pay as much as you can, because interest and fees can cause the debt to grow rapidly.

Don't fall for non-bank "helpers"; always check with the lending financial institution first.

Why isn't it a good idea to pay off one loan with another?

Many people think that if they can't pay off their existing loan, they can solve the problem by taking out another loan. However, this is generally not a good solution, because instead of paying off the old debt, a new debt is created that also has to be repaid.

The new loan also has interest, fees, and monthly payments. This means that, in the end, you usually end up paying back more money than you originally owed. If someone takes out a new loan because they can no longer afford to pay off their existing loan, it's quite possible that repaying the new loan will also become difficult. This can lead to a debt trap.

A debt trap means that a person spends more and more energy and money on paying off debts, while less and less money is left for essential expenses, such as food, housing, utilities, medication, or their children's needs. Over time, this can lead not only to financial difficulties but also to problems making ends meet.

If someone falls behind on payments, their debt can continue to grow. Late payment interest, collection fees, and debt collection costs may also be charged. In severe cases, enforcement proceedings may be initiated, which can significantly worsen the family's situation.

It's important to note, however, that not every new loan is a bad decision. With careful debt restructuring, multiple high-interest loans can be replaced with a single loan offering more favorable terms.

This can be a good solution if the new loan is more favorable overall, the monthly payment is manageable in the long term, and it does not lead to further indebtedness. Before making such a decision, it is important to carefully review the terms and conditions, taking into account not only the monthly payment but also the total amount to be repaid and the loan term.

If you are having difficulty making payments, it is advisable to contact the bank or lender as soon as possible. In many cases, it is possible to arrange payment relief, reschedule payments, or find another solution.

It's also a good idea to consult a qualified debt management counselor. This service is often available at family and child welfare centers. A counselor can help you assess your financial situation and find the right solution.

Pro tip: Learn how to use artificial intelligence (AI) to manage your finances



Loan agreements are often long, difficult to understand, and full of technical terms. This can be particularly challenging for those who aren't used to reading such documents. Artificial intelligence—AI for short—can help with this.

Think of AI as an assistant you can ask questions. If there's something in a loan agreement that you don't understand, you can ask it to explain it in simpler terms. For example, it can explain what APR, term, late payment interest, prepayment, collateral, or termination mean. It can also help you identify which parts require special attention.

Important rule: Don't upload everything without thinking

Before copying or uploading anything to an AI, pay attention to the data. A loan agreement may contain a lot of personal data, such as:

- name
- address
- ID number
- bank account number
- income
- employer
- loan amount
- property address
- contract number



It is not safe to copy these onto a website without giving it some thought. Several sources warn of data protection risks: sensitive data, contracts, and personal information should not be uploaded to AI systems irresponsibly.

Therefore, the best approach is to first redact or delete any personal data.

The goal is not for the AI to know who we are, but for it to help us understand the text.



How Can We Ask AI the Right Questions?

AI gives better answers when we tell it exactly what we want. This is called “prompting.” A prompt simply means an instruction or question that we type into the AI.

The more precisely we ask, the more useful the answer we’ll get.

For example, this is not a good question:

“What does this mean?”

It’s much better to say:

“Explain this official text in simple Hungarian. Write it in a way that someone less familiar with finance can understand.”

It’s even better if we also specify the format in which we’d like the answer:

“Answer in three parts: 1. What does it mean? 2. Why is it important? 3. What should I ask the clerk about?”

This is helpful because it ensures the AI doesn’t just give a general answer, but one that’s easier to use.



How can we ask questions in a way that minimizes AI errors?

There's no foolproof method; AI can sometimes make mistakes or make things up. This is called hallucination. However, asking good questions can reduce the likelihood of this happening.

It's always a good idea to ask it not to make guesses:

"If you're not sure, say you don't know. Don't make up information."

For important matters, ask for a source as well:

"Only write information that you can back up with a reliable source, and provide a working link."

When dealing with official documents, it's better to proceed in smaller sections.

We don't want to understand the entire document at once, but rather one paragraph at a time. For example, we can write:

"Just explain this paragraph simply. Don't add anything that isn't in the text." It also helps to ask it to distinguish between certain and uncertain parts:

"List separately what can be known for certain and what still needs to be verified."

If the text is a contract or an official letter, ask the AI to show the basis for its response:

"Indicate which sentence you're drawing this conclusion from."

Important: AI can help you understand the text, but it does not make decisions for you. In financial, legal, or official matters, it's always a good idea to seek help from an administrator, lawyer, or other trusted professional.



You can also get help with debt management: there are social workers who provide debt management counseling, as well as various programs. Your local Red Cross chapter or municipal family assistance center can help you find these resources.



Debt management is a process aimed at resolving and reducing accumulated debts, which includes financial counseling, negotiations with creditors, entering into installment payment agreements, and legal representation. Its goal is to help individuals escape the debt trap, retain their housing, and restore a sustainable financial situation.





Game: Risk and Decision-Making

Objective: The game demonstrates that taking out a loan requires responsible decision-making and that our decisions affect our financial situation.

Tools:

Illustrated cards, such as: medical expenses, unexpected home repairs, a pay cut, a small prize

Play Money

Three sections on the floor or board: "I'll cover it with savings," "I'll cover it with a loan," "A risky decision"

Gameplay:

The facilitator shows a card depicting an unexpected financial situation. The participants decide how they would handle the situation: using their savings, taking out a loan, or choosing a riskier option. We then discuss together which solution might be safer and what the consequences of the various financial decisions might be.

The game's message: Taking out a loan isn't always a bad decision, but it always requires careful consideration. It's only worth doing if you can safely afford the payments over the long term and it won't cause you financial hardship.

Summary



Responsible Use of Credit: Credit provides an opportunity to cover unexpected expenses or larger purchases, but it always requires a conscious decision. It is not a substitute for saving; we should always use our own savings first.

Key lessons: Only take out as much credit as you can be sure to repay, even in the event of unexpected circumstances. Assess the risks, such as late payments, interest rate hikes, or the loss of collateral.



Communicate with the bank promptly if you encounter any difficulties, and don't trust unofficial "helpers."



When making financial decisions, let's consider protection, equality, and inclusion so that everyone can use credit safely.



Key message: A loan is a safe financial tool only if we carefully consider our needs in advance, assess the risks, have savings, and manage our repayments responsibly. With careful planning, a loan can help you purchase a necessary, higher-priced item or handle unexpected situations without jeopardizing your financial stability.



A loan is a tool, but it's only safe if we think through in advance how much money we have, what we need, and how much we can repay. As part of financial literacy, let's share what we've learned with others so that everyone can make smart decisions.

You can manage your debts if you approach them consciously and step by step. Every small payment and planned step is a new victory that brings you closer to financial freedom and your long-term goals.

Savings



“

“WEALTH STARTS WITH A PENNY.”
JULIE OTSUKA



Now that we've reviewed the rules for taking out loans responsibly and managing risks, it's worth moving on to the world of savings.

A loan can only be a temporary solution and always carries risk. To achieve financial stability, it's always best to rely on your own savings before taking out a loan. A savings account is a tool that helps you safely set money aside, prepare for unexpected expenses, and reduce the need to take out a loan.

This section will explain how to build up savings strategically, how a savings account works, and the benefits of planning ahead when it comes to our finances.

Saving helps us be prepared to handle unexpected expenses and manage our finances with greater security.



savings, foreign currency, exchange rate

A little bit about saving:

Think of saving as a game where you're in control and every little step counts. Every forint you set aside brings you closer to your big goals—whether it's owning a home, pursuing an education, starting a family, or even securing a more peaceful future. You don't have to set everything aside at once; just start with small steps and keep at it consistently. The key is to have a "financial cushion" that helps you weather unexpected expenses and supports your long-term goals. Now let's take a look at how you can save money safely and flexibly, starting with savings accounts!





preserving value, growing our wealth



Why is a savings account useful?

It's flexible—you can deposit or withdraw money at any time, and you don't have to decide in advance how long the money will stay in the account.

You can earn some interest while keeping your money accessible. It's cost-effective because maintaining and managing it is often free or cheaper than a checking account.

It's easy to track: It's managed electronically, so you can easily track your balance and transactions.

Types

1. By currency: You can open a savings account

- in forints and
- foreign currency.

With a foreign-currency account, the forint value of your money may fluctuate more, because the exchange rate can change over time (that is, how many forints one euro is worth, for example).

2. Based on the method of interest calculation, there are

- fixed (you know in advance approximately how much interest you will earn),
- variable,
- or adjustable.

3. Depending on the method used to calculate interest,

- step-rate (there is a specific threshold above which the interest rate increases),
- tiered (different interest rates apply to different portions of the amount; there are no sudden jumps, and the interest rate increases gradually),
- simple interest (interest is calculated only on the amount you deposited; interest earned previously does not accrue further interest).

Advantages:

- It prepares you for unexpected expenses: you can build up a reserve that you can access quickly.
- Reduces the need to take out loans: if you set money aside in advance, you'll be less likely to need to borrow.
- Easy to track: with online access, you can always see how much money you have and plan easily.
- Flexible and simple: You don't have to decide in advance how long you'll leave the money in the account.

Tips for effective use:

- Regular savings: Even small amounts add up quickly if you set money aside regularly.
- Separate your savings from your spending: use separate accounts for your regular expenses and your savings.
- Be prepared for unexpected expenses: always have a small amount of money available that you can use immediately, such as for medical costs, home repairs, or a sudden trip.

Now that we know how to safely set aside money, let's see how we can align our savings with our long-term goals.

Long-Term Goals - The Future You're Building Long-term goals are things we achieve not today, but over the course of months or years. They may seem far off at first, but by taking small steps, everyone can get closer to them. Saving is your best ally in this: every small amount you set aside is a building block toward your big dreams. Examples of long-term goals:

- A Home of Your Own: You don't have to save the full amount all at once. If you save regularly, sooner or later you'll have enough for a down payment on a home or a stable foundation for your housing.
- Education and Training: Books, classes, and courses—your savings help cover the costs, so you can focus on your personal growth with peace of mind.
- Retirement or financial security: It's helpful in your later years to have a small nest egg to assist with daily expenses and unexpected costs.
- Family planning or major life changes: A little savings provides stability when a new family member arrives or when you change jobs.

How are these goals structured?

- Small steps: You don't have to set aside all your money at once. Every little bit counts.
- Regular savings: If you set money aside monthly or weekly, your money "works" for you.
- Tracking: You can see your savings grow, which motivates you to take further steps.
- Flexibility: If an unexpected expense comes up, part of your savings remains accessible, so you don't have to resort to risky solutions.

Who may find this particularly useful?

- For families living in temporary housing: Saving provides security, ensuring more stable housing in the future and making it easier to plan for everyday life.
 - For seniors: Small but regular savings provide peace of mind and help manage unexpected expenses.
 - For young people: Starting to save at a young age makes it easier in the long run to buy a home, pay for education, or start living on your own.
- For Ukrainian families: Savings provide stability in uncertain situations and help make daily life more predictable.

Why Is It Worth Thinking Long-Term?

- Because big dreams take time—small, regular savings add up.
- Because financial security brings peace of mind to your everyday life.
- Because it makes it easier to avoid risky loans, and you can handle unexpected expenses on your own.

Key idea: "Long-term goals don't disappear if you build toward them little by little. Every bit of money you set aside is a step toward your future."

Contingency Reserve

There may be situations in life that we don't anticipate. A household appliance might break down, we might need to buy medicine urgently, or our car might need repairs. These expenses arise unexpectedly, so it's good to have money set aside.

We call this money set aside an emergency fund. An emergency fund isn't meant for everyday purchases, but only for situations when it's truly needed. If you have an emergency fund, you're less likely to have to ask for a loan or take out credit.

It's a good idea to keep your emergency fund in a separate place, such as a savings account or a separate envelope. That way, you'll be less tempted to spend it on other things. You don't have to set aside a large amount all at once. Saving just a few thousand forints a month can be a good start. The key is to set aside as much as you can afford on a regular basis.

Practical Example

Katalin sets aside 3,000 forints every month. Over the course of a year, she saves 36,000 forints. One day, her refrigerator breaks down, and the repair costs 28,000 forints. Since she has an emergency fund, she can pay for the repair. She doesn't have to take out a loan, and in the coming months, she can start rebuilding her savings again.

Important to know: The purpose of an emergency fund isn't to accumulate a lot of money quickly, but to provide security in unexpected situations.

Methods for Setting Aside Contingency Reserves

An emergency fund is most useful when it's kept separate from your everyday spending money. That way, you're less likely to spend it little by little. It's best to keep it somewhere where it's safe but can be accessed quickly if needed.

A simple solution is to open a separate bank account or subaccount. Many banks allow you to create a separate "pocket," "piggy bank," or savings goal within their mobile banking app. You can even name it, for example, "emergency fund." This way, the money doesn't get mixed in with your daily expenses, yet you can still see how much you've accumulated.

A useful method is setting up regular automatic transfers. This means that when your paycheck, family allowance, or other income arrives, the bank automatically transfers a small amount to your emergency fund. This could be as little as 1,000-2,000 forints. The key is not to try to set money aside at the end of the month, because by then your money is often already gone.

If you find it difficult to set aside larger amounts, you can also use round-up savings if your bank offers this feature. In this case, after a debit card purchase, the system rounds up the amount spent and automatically sets aside the difference. For example, if someone makes a purchase for 870 forints, the system rounds it up to 1,000 forints, and 130 forints goes into savings.

It's important that your emergency fund isn't tied up for a long time, because you might need it quickly in case of an emergency. At the same time, it shouldn't be in your everyday checking account, because it's easier to spend it there. As a first goal, a smaller safety net—such as 10,000 to 20,000 forints—may be enough. Later, you can aim to save up the amount equivalent to one month's worth of basic expenses, and later several months' worth.



Savings Path: Role-Playing Game _____

Objective: To develop decision-making and financial planning skills through various real-life situations.

Materials:

Cards: various life situations (e.g., paycheck, bonus, unexpected bill, gift)

Three zones: "Spend," "Save," "Risky Decision"

Gameplay: The facilitator holds up a card depicting a life situation.

Participants decide how they would handle the situation: spend, save, or handle it in another way. They then place the card in the corresponding zone based on their choice.

Next, we discuss together the potential benefits and consequences of each decision, how saving can help in unexpected situations, and why it's important to plan ahead.

Message: Making informed financial decisions helps us manage our money more securely. Saving doesn't mean giving up everything; it means thinking ahead and preparing for future expenses.

Public Health Care Benefit as a Form of Financial Assistance.

The public health care benefit is an official document. It is available to people who, due to their social circumstances, are in need of this assistance.

With this aid, you can obtain certain subsidized medications, medical devices, and specific specialized health care services for free or at a reduced cost.

You can apply online at Magyarország.hu or in person at the Government Office with jurisdiction over your place of residence.

There are two types of public health care benefits:

Public health care benefits granted as a matter of right:

This means that in certain life situations, the benefit is granted regardless of income. Examples include disability in Groups I-II, disability benefits, or veteran status.

Public health care benefits based on income criteria:

This support depends on the applicant's income and regular monthly medical expenses. In other words, officials assess the applicant's income and how much they must spend regularly on medication or treatment.

Key steps in the application process:

1. Request a medical certificate

First, you must request a certificate from your treating physician or primary care physician stating what regular medications or treatments you need.

2. Fill out the application

Next, you must fill out the form titled "Application for Public Health Care Benefits."

3. Submit the application

Submit the completed application and the medical certificate to the district office or government service center with jurisdiction over your place of residence. You can also initiate the process electronically, for example, through the Client Portal.

Everyday use:

At pharmacies, the system automatically verifies whether your public health care coverage is valid. Therefore, you generally do not need to present the plastic card to fill a prescription.

However, when applying for medical aids or certain specialized care services, you may still be required to present the card.

Detailed information on the exact amount of the subsidy and the current budget limit can be found in the NEAK's official bulletin.

Summary:



Saving is like a little financial “treasure chest”: it helps you manage your money wisely, prepares you for unexpected expenses, and brings you closer, little by little, to your long-term goals—whether that’s owning a home, pursuing an education, receiving training, planning for retirement, or securing your family’s future.



What we learned:

With a savings account, we can deposit and withdraw money flexibly

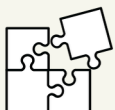
There are various types, such as classic, fixed-term, or children’s/student accounts, each with its own advantages.

It is important to pay attention to interest rates, fees, and availability.



Regular, deliberate saving helps you prepare for unexpected expenses, such as medical bills, home repairs, or minor life changes.

Saving is accessible to everyone, regardless of age, background, or digital literacy.



Connection to previous sections: A savings account is a tool for responsible money management and planning ahead before taking out a loan: we save first so that we don’t have to resort to risky loans, thereby protecting our own financial security and that of our family.

Key idea: “It’s easier to set money aside intentionally than to cover unexpected expenses with a loan later on.”



Protect your money
and personal
information online, too!

“

"A TRUE CON MAN DOESN'T USE FORCE:
HE MAKES US COMPLICIT IN A CRIME COMMITTED
AGAINST OURSELVES. HE DOESN'T STEAL ANYTHING; WE
GIVE IT TO HIM."

MARIA KONNIKOVA



The internet is now a part of our everyday lives: we can shop, pay bills, buy tickets, read the news, stay in touch with others, or even learn. Online opportunities make our lives more convenient, but they can also pose risks.

When using the internet, it's important to protect our money, personal information, and online accounts. If we use untrustworthy websites, messages, or apps, we can easily fall victim to fraud, data theft, or other online threats. In this section, we'll learn how to use the internet more safely. We'll explore:

- which secure payment options are worth using, such as prepaid cards or dedicated virtual wallets;
- why it's important to protect your accounts, use strong passwords, and enable two-factor authentication;
- how to recognize trustworthy websites and suspicious offers;
- what to watch out for when using emails, messages, apps, and social media;
- how to protect your personal information and money during everyday internet use.

A Brief Introduction

Before we dive deeper into this, it's worth having a brief discussion:

- How often do you shop online?
- How do you pay when you do: with a credit card, a prepaid card, or some other method?
- Have you ever been unsure whether a website was secure?

This discussion will help you get in the right frame of mind for the topic by drawing on your own experiences, and will prepare you to learn practical tips and guidelines for safe online shopping in the next section.

The bank card: the key to your account

A bank card gives you access to the funds in your account. You can use it to pay in stores, online, or to withdraw cash from an ATM.



That's why it's very important to keep your card safe: If it falls into the wrong hands, someone could access your money.

Never give it to strangers, and never share your PIN or CVC number!

When shopping online, if possible, use a separate, prepaid card or a virtual card—not the one linked to your main account.

The bottom line: a bank card isn't just for making payments—it's also the key to your money. If you use it carefully, your money will stay safe.

Safe online shopping isn't just about protecting your money—it's also about protecting your personal information. Always verify every source, and if you're unsure, ask for help.

In the digital world, fake emails, fraudulent websites, and fake payment apps are becoming increasingly common. It is important to learn how to recognize them and protect our personal data and financial information.

Unauthorized fundraising and the so-called "grandchild scam" are often linked to fraudulent emails and phone calls. Older members of the community are most vulnerable to these schemes.



data theft, credit card information, two-factor authentication, online banking, online shopping, scam, bank transfer

In the digital world, fake emails, scam websites, and fraudulent payment apps are becoming increasingly common. It's important to learn how to recognize them and protect our personal data and financial information. To make this easier to understand, let's go through, step by step, what to look out for when shopping online and protecting our accounts. We'll learn how to spot suspicious messages, how to use secure payment methods, and what simple rules we can follow to protect our money.

How can you protect your assets and personal information online?

Pay Safely

When shopping online, avoid using your primary debit card if possible. If your card information is stolen, all your money could be at risk.

Safer solutions:

Single-use card

It's like a separate wallet. You only put as much money into it as you want to spend. If something goes wrong, you'll only lose that amount.

A separate payment app or virtual card, such as Revolut or Wise. This also helps you keep your money separate from your main account.

Keep an eye on your account

If someone gains access to your account, they can place orders in your name, use your saved card information, and obtain your personal information (name, address). That's why it's important to: Use a strong password. Don't use something simple (e.g., your birth year, your name).

- Turn on two-step verification

A password alone isn't enough to log in. You must also enter an additional code (via text message or email). Check the website.



- Before you place an order, check to see if the site is legitimate.

"Fake websites" can look very similar to the real ones. You should be suspicious if: there is no phone number or address listed; the web address looks strange; it doesn't resemble the company's name; or the offer is too cheap. If something seems too good to be true, it might be a scam.



Lesson

Always be careful when shopping online.

Protect your personal information and your money with simple security measures.



Watch out for scammers!

Scammer: a person who deceives others in order to obtain money or information from them.



Suspicious Messages

- You may receive a text message or an email, for example:



"There's a problem with your order—click here!"

"Here is an invoice from your mobile provider."

Always ask yourself first:

"Did I order this?"

"Do I recognize this website?"

If you're not sure, don't click the link!

It's better not to open the website!

Or: call customer service!

Suspicious Phone Call

Pay attention if:

- You're getting a call from a bank where you don't have an account!
- They claim they can transfer your call to another bank
- They ask you to transfer your money somewhere else.
- They try to get you to download a program (such as AnyDesk or TeamViewer).



This is almost certainly a scam!

DOWNLOAD NOW



Never provide the following information!

Bank card details:

- card number
- expiration date
- 3-digit security code (CVC)



Netbank data:

- username
- password

Codes:

- Code received via text message
- bank approval
- activation code

The bank never asks for these!

How do they scam you if you give them this information?:

- They log into your account, make
- payments in your name, and
- steal your money

🧠 Important rules:

- If someone pressures you, be suspicious!
- If a stranger contacts you, be careful!
- Don't download programs on request!
- Don't share personal information!

On social media:

- Don't post photos of your ID online!
- Don't show your bank card!
- Don't post or share your personal information online.
- What should you do if something goes wrong?

If you have entered data:

- Call your bank immediately!
- If necessary, contact the police!

Lesson:

- If something seems suspicious, it's better to stop and think!
- It's better to double-check than to lose your money!



Secure online money management is not just a matter of technical knowledge; it also provides protection against fraud and financial losses, and ensures that everyone—regardless of age, gender, or background—can use digital financial tools with confidence and security, whether for transfers, payments, or checking account balances.



Real Message or Scam? - Safe Online Shopping Game

Objective:

This game helps participants recognize suspicious messages and teaches them how to respond safely online.

Gameplay:

The facilitator reads a message aloud. Participants decide how they would respond:

log in to the official banking app or website;

ask for help from the bank or an expert;

do not click on the link and do not provide their personal information.

We then discuss as a group why a given decision is safe or risky.

Example messages:

✗ "Congratulations! You've won 50,000 Ft! Click the link and enter your credit card information."

✗ "Your account has been locked. Click here to confirm your information!"

⚠ "We've detected an unusual transaction. Please check your banking app."

Message:

If you receive a suspicious message, do not click on unknown links or provide any personal or banking information. Always verify the information on the official app or website.

Thank you for participating in the session! You've already made a big difference just by paying attention, asking questions, and thinking about your own financial habits. That was a great and smart move, because every small, conscious decision brings you closer to managing your finances with confidence. Remember: financial knowledge is built step by step. Practice saving, keep track of your expenses, and stay safe when paying or shopping online. "Don't focus on how much money you have, but on how wisely you can use it!"

Share what you've learned with others, talk about financial decisions and security, and support one another. Every small step counts, and every experience helps you move forward.

Get started, go at your own pace, and celebrate every success you have in managing your finances!



Glossary

Data theft: When someone unlawfully obtains your personal or financial information.

Debt: An amount of money you owe someone because you borrowed it from them.

Debt-to-Income Limit: A legal limit that determines how much credit you can take on relative to your income.

Exchange Rate: The ratio that shows how much one currency is worth compared to another.

Bank account: An account you open at a bank where your paycheck is deposited and from which you can manage your finances, such as making transfers or paying with a card.

Income: The money you receive, such as a paycheck, government benefits, or proceeds from a sale.

Investment: An activity in which you invest your money for a specific purpose (such as in stocks or real estate) so that you'll have more money later.

Foreign currency: A currency from another country, such as the euro or the dollar.

Checking account: A bank account used for day-to-day transactions, from which you can withdraw money or make payments at any time.

Monthly budget: The amount of money you can spend in a month after deducting your mandatory expenses.

Loan: A loan you receive from a bank that you must repay with interest.

Collateral: The asset (such as a home or car) that the bank requires as security for the loan.

Loan-to-Value Ratio: the ratio of the loan amount to the value of the collateral.

Creditworthiness: An assessment of how reliable a person is in repaying a loan, based on their income and debts.

Income: The money you receive in exchange for work or other activities.

Payment-to-Income (PTI): A rule that determines what percentage of your income you can spend on loan payments.

Card Information: Information associated with a bank card, such as the card number, expiration date, and security code.

Late Payment Interest: Additional money you must pay if you are late in paying a debt or installment.

Cash: Physical money, i.e., bills and coins.

Budget: A pre-planned outline of how much money you want to spend on what and how much income you will have.

Debt collection costs: The fees charged when you fail to pay a debt on time and measures must be taken to collect it.

Central Credit Information System (KHR): A database where banks record credit information, such as whether someone is making regular payments or has outstanding debt.

Two-factor authentication: A security system where a password alone is not enough to log in or make a payment; a second form of verification (such as an SMS code) is also required.

Expenses: The amount of money you spend, such as on bills, shopping, or entertainment.

Leasing: An arrangement where you pay for something (such as a car) in installments, and ownership may pass to you at the end of the term, depending on the agreement

Savings: The money you don't spend but set aside for later.

Savings account: A bank account where you keep your saved money and can earn interest on it.

Netbank: An online platform where you can manage your bank account over the internet: check your balance, make transfers, and manage your account.

Online shopping: When you order and pay for goods or services over the internet.

Installment: A smaller portion of a larger amount, paid periodically.

Scam: Fraud or deception, usually online, where someone tries to trick you out of money or personal information.

Invoice: A financial document proving that you have paid for or are required to pay for a product or service.

Savings account: A bank account used to hold savings and usually earn interest.

Sick pay: Financial assistance you receive when you are unable to work due to illness.

Reserve: Money set aside in case of unexpected expenses.

Debt: An amount owed to another person or institution that you have not yet repaid.

Social Security (TB): A government program that provides health care and certain financial benefits.

Repayment: The process of paying back a debt or loan in installments.

Wire transfer: When you send money from one bank account to another.

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Notes

