

What to keep, What to shred

Holding on to every piece of paperwork “just in case” can quickly lead to clutter, but discarding important documents may cause headaches down the road. This simple guide will help you identify which documents to keep and which ones you can safely shred, empowering you to stay organized and declutter with confidence. **Be sure to check in regularly with your financial professional to ensure your “keep” pile is well-maintained and up to date.**

 **Need to keep****Keep as long as you are the owner**

- **Mortgage, property, vehicle and boat titles**
- **Current warranties** and major home repair receipts
- **Business ownership documents**
- **Insurance policies**, even canceled ones (in case of claims)

Keep forever

- Birth, marriage, and death **certificates**
- **Social Security cards**
- **Military discharge papers**
- **Finalized divorce decrees**
- **Adoption papers**
- **Naturalization/citizenship documents**
- **Loan payoff letters** and documentation
- **Pension plan documents**
- **Legal name change documentation**
- **Education records** and diplomas
- **Medical bills and receipts** for potential tax deductions

 **Safe to shred**

- **Junk mail** with pre-filled offers or personal information
- **Paid bank and credit card statements** unless needed for taxes, warranties, or disputes
- **Tax returns** older than 7 years
- **Expired ID cards** or licenses
- **Expired warranties**
- **Old appliance manuals** for items you no longer own
- **Travel itineraries** and boarding passes after the trip
- **Annual investment statements** older than one year
- **Utility bills** older than one year (unless needed for tax or proof of residency)
- **Pay stubs** after reconciling with your annual W-2

 **On the back:** See the complete **Maintenance schedule** to learn when to review and update other financial documents.



Maintenance schedule

Update
within
30 DAYS

After a major life event such as marriage, divorce, birth/adoption, death, job change, large inheritance, move to another state

- **Estate-planning documents** (wills, trusts, powers-of-attorney)
- **Beneficiary forms** (life insurance, annuities, 401(k), IRAs)
- **Legal settlement paperwork**
 - **Titles and deeds** of property ownership

Review
EVERY YEAR

- **Active insurance and annuity contracts**
- **Fixed index annuity (FIA) allocation options**
- **Annuity and retirement annual account summaries**
- **Investment accounts** and transfer-on-death (TOD) instructions
- **Social Security statement**
- **Personal medical records** (for chronic/long-term care planning)
- **Health care directives**
 - **Digital passwords** and access instructions

Review every
3-5 YEARS

- **Insurance coverage needs**
- **Estate planning documents** and beneficiary designations

Review every
7-10 YEARS

- **FIA annuitization options** (evaluate timing and suitability)
- **Overall retirement income and investment strategy**

Everyone's situation is different.
Talk to your financial professional to confirm which documents you should keep or shred.

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This guide offers general suggestions. Be sure to consult your tax, legal, or financial professional for guidance specific to your situation and document retention requirements.

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