

# Your Debt Payoff Starter Guide

See it clearly. Choose your strategy. Build your way out.

Hi. Before we talk strategy, we need to look at the full picture. A lot of people carry debt without ever sitting down to see exactly what they owe, what it's costing them, and what order to tackle it in. This guide changes that. Work through it honestly — and by the time you reach the end, you'll have a clear starting point and a strategy that fits your life.

**How to use this guide:**

Complete the debt snapshot table first. Then choose your strategy. Then build your 30-day action plan. In that order.

Your name (optional):

Date:

## 1 Your Complete Debt Snapshot

List every debt. All of it. This is your starting line.

You can't build a payoff strategy on a partial picture. List every debt — credit cards, student loans, medical, car, personal loans, everything. Include the credit limit for revolving accounts so we can calculate your utilization.

Debt Name / Creditor	Balance	Interest Rate	Min. Payment	Credit Limit	Utilization %
<b>TOTALS</b>					

**How to calculate utilization:**

Divide your balance by your credit limit and multiply by 100. Example:  $\$3,500 \div \$5,000 = 0.70 = 70\%$  utilization. Under 30% is the target.

Total debt balance: \$

*Add up all balances above*

Highest utilization card: %

*Which card needs attention most?*

Total minimum payments/mo: \$

*What you must pay just to stay current*

Debt with highest interest rate:

*Name the creditor and rate*

## 2 Choose Your Strategy

The right method is the one that fits your life.

There is no universally 'correct' debt payoff method. The best one is the one you'll stick to — and the one that serves your bigger goals. Read each option below and circle or note the one that resonates.

01	02	03
<p><b>Avalanche</b></p> <p>Pay minimums on all debts. Put every extra dollar toward the highest interest rate first. Roll that payment to the next highest when paid off.</p> <p><b>BEST FOR:</b> You're data-driven and motivated by long-term savings. You have the discipline to stay the course without quick wins.</p>	<p><b>Snowball</b></p> <p>Pay minimums on all debts. Put every extra dollar toward the smallest balance first. Roll that payment to the next smallest when paid off.</p> <p><b>BEST FOR:</b> You need momentum to stay motivated. You've lost steam before and need visible wins to keep going.</p>	<p><b>Credit Health First</b></p> <p>Focus on reducing credit card utilization to below 30% before tackling other debts. Then pivot to avalanche or snowball.</p> <p><b>BEST FOR:</b> You're working toward a major purchase, better loan terms, or a credit score goal in the next 12-24 months.</p>
<p><b>My chosen strategy:</b>   <input type="checkbox"/> Avalanche                      <input type="checkbox"/> Snowball                      <input type="checkbox"/> Credit Health First                      <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid (describe below)</p>		

If hybrid — describe your approach:

e.g. 'Pay down highest utilization card first, then snowball remaining balances'

## 3 Your Payoff Order

Sequence your debts based on your chosen strategy.

Now that you have your strategy, rank your debts in the order you'll attack them. Use the priority column from your snapshot table above as your guide.

Debt Name	Balance	Rate / Utilization	Monthly Extra \$	Target Payoff Date
#1				
#2				
#3				
#4				
#5				
Total extra I can put toward debt each month: \$			Where this money is coming from:	
<i>Beyond minimums — even \$25 makes a difference</i>			<i>e.g. reduced spending, side income, etc.</i>	

## 4 Your 30-Day Action Plan

Five actions. 30 days. Real momentum.

Strategy without action is just a plan. These five steps will get you moving in the next 30 days — before motivation fades and before life gets in the way.

### 1 Contact your highest-utilization creditor

Ask about a credit limit increase OR confirm your current limit. A higher limit lowers your utilization ratio without paying down a dollar.

### 2 Set up automatic minimum payments on all accounts

Never miss a payment again. Late payments hurt your credit score and add fees. Automate the minimums so your floor is always covered.

### 3 Find your extra monthly payment amount

Review your spending and find at least one expense to redirect toward debt. Even \$50/month changes your timeline significantly.

### 4 Make your first extra payment toward Priority Debt #1

Don't wait for the perfect moment. Make one extra payment this month, however small. Starting is the hardest part.

### 5 Set a 90-day check-in reminder

Put a date in your calendar 90 days from now to review your balances, celebrate progress, and adjust your plan if needed.