

Compound Interest **RULE OF 72**

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*“Money makes money.
And the money that money
makes, makes money.”*

– Ben Franklin

Compound interest =
earning interest on your interest

You can use the

Rule of 72

to approximate how long it will take for an
investment to double at a given interest rate

USEFUL FOR



**COMPARING
INVESTMENTS**



**SAVINGS
GOALS**



**RETIREMENT
GOALS**

HOW TO 72

Divide the rule number **(72)** by the annual interest rate **(R)** to find out the approximate time **(T)** required for doubling



The Rule of 72 only applies to compound interest, not to simple interest calculations

HOW TO 72

ANNUAL
INTEREST
RATE



YEARS TO
DOUBLE



$$\boxed{72} \div \boxed{R} = \boxed{T}$$

HOW TO 72

3% ANNUAL
INTEREST
RATE



24 YEARS
TO DOUBLE



$$72 \div 3 = 24$$

COMPARING THE MATH



Although scientific calculators and spreadsheet programs have functions to find the accurate doubling time, the Rule of 72 is useful for mental calculations or when only a basic calculator is available

COMPARING THE MATH

This table illustrates just how close the Rule of 72 is to the actual doubling time

Interest rate	Actual years	Rule of 72
1%	69.66	72.00
2%	35.00	36.00
3%	23.45	24.00
4%	17.67	18.00

COMPARING THE MATH

This table illustrates just how close the Rule of 72 is to the actual doubling time

Interest rate	Actual years	Rule of 72
5%	14.21	14.40
6%	11.90	12.00
7%	10.24	10.29
8%	9.01	9.00

COMPARING THE MATH

This table illustrates just how close the Rule of 72 is to the actual doubling time

Interest rate	Actual years	Rule of 72
9%	8.04	8.00
10%	7.27	7.20
11%	6.64	6.55
12%	6.12	6.00

Doubling
IN ACTION



Modest
increases in
rates have
a dramatic
effect on the
doubling time

Years	1.5%	3%	6%	12%
0	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
6	<i>In times of historically low interest rates, it's especially important to start investing early</i>			\$20,000
12			\$20,000	\$40,000
18				\$80,000
24		\$20,000	\$40,000	\$160,000
30				\$320,000
36			\$80,000	\$640,000
42				\$1,280,000
48		\$40,000	\$160,000	\$2,560,000

THE TAKEAWAY



Use the Rule of 72 to estimate your potential savings. Time is money when it comes to compound interest—the longer you wait to get started, the less interest you'll earn.

INVESTING CAN BE RISKY

Not all investments are guaranteed—
some investments carry the risk of losing
money, even when made through a
financial advisor or financial institution



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Sources: *All the Math You'll Ever Need* by Steven Slavin, BetterExplained.com

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