

# Debt Payoff Planner

*Every debt's promo end date, real minimums and the month you're debt-free — with six strategies side by side.*

Free download

Tested in LibreOffice Calc

No macros

Up to 12 debts · 30 years

## 1. What this file is for

Most debt snowball sheets assume every rate stays the same and every minimum is a fixed amount. Real cards don't work that way: 0% balance-transfer offers end, “no interest if paid in full” store cards add back months of interest if you miss the deadline, and card minimums shrink as the balance shrinks. This planner models those things month by month, so the debt-free month and the interest you see are closer to what will actually happen.

**Not financial advice.** It's an estimate. Lenders accrue interest daily, apply payments across balances in their own way, and can cancel a promo if a payment is late. Check your card agreement and statements, and re-enter balances every month or two. The example debts are fictional.

## 2. Sheets at a glance

| Sheet      | What you do                                                                              |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Start Here | Read once: how it works, license, limits.                                                |
| Settings   | Plan start month, the monthly amount for all debts, and the strategy.                    |
| Debts      | One row per debt (up to 12). Yellow = you type; grey = calculated.                       |
| Extras     | Optional: change the monthly amount from a month on; add one-off extra payments.         |
| Plan       | Debt-free month, interest, what to pay this month, promo and deferred-interest warnings. |
| Compare    | Minimums only + five strategies, side by side.                                           |
| Schedule   | Payment for every debt, every month, until you're debt-free.                             |

Hidden helper sheets (Months, Results and six engines) do the month-by-month simulation. You never need to open them; sheets are protected without a password so formulas aren't overwritten by accident.

### 3. Entering a debt

#### Debts

One row per debt (up to 12). Yellow = you type. Promo and minimum rules are per debt. Grey = calculated.

| Debt                   | Type        | Balance now | Regular APR | Promo APR | Promo ends   | Deferred interest? | Min % of balance | Min floor or fixed payment |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| Example Rewards Card   | Credit card | 6,840.00    | 28.49%      |           |              | No                 | 1.00%            | 40.00                      |
| Example Transfer Card  | Credit card | 4,200.00    | 27.49%      | 0.00%     | Jul 31, 2027 | No                 | 1.00%            | 35.00                      |
| Example Furniture Card | Store card  | 2,380.00    | 26.99%      | 0.00%     | Apr 30, 2027 | Yes                | 3.00%            | 29.00                      |
| Example Car Loan       | Loan        | 11,350.00   | 6.90%       |           |              | No                 |                  | 318.00                     |
| Example Student Loan   | Loan        | 8,900.00    | 5.50%       |           |              | No                 |                  | 112.00                     |
| Example Clinic Plan    | Other       | 720.00      | 0.00%       |           |              | No                 |                  | 60.00                      |

| Debt                   | Add interest to min? | Custom priority | Promo months | Minimum, month 1 | Pay per month to clear by promo end | Check |
|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Example Rewards Card   | Yes                  | 3               |              | 230.79           |                                     | OK    |
| Example Transfer Card  | Yes                  | 2               | 9            | 42.00            | 466.67                              | OK    |
| Example Furniture Card | No                   | 1               | 6            | 71.40            | 396.67                              | OK    |
| Example Car Loan       | No                   | 5               |              | 318.00           |                                     | OK    |
| Example Student Loan   | No                   | 6               |              | 112.00           |                                     | OK    |
| Example Clinic Plan    | No                   | 4               |              | 60.00            |                                     | OK    |

| Column                                     | What to type                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Balance now, Regular APR                   | From your latest statement. Type APR as a percentage (24.99%).                                                                                                                                |
| Promo APR, Promo ends                      | Only for a promo: the promo rate (often 0%) and the date it ends. A month counts as promo only if the promo is still on at the end of that month.                                             |
| Deferred interest?                         | Yes for "no interest if paid in full by ..." offers. If any balance is left when the promo ends, interest at the regular APR on every promo month's starting balance is added the next month. |
| Min % of balance, Min floor, Add interest? | Card minimums: e.g. 1% + interest with a \$40 floor → 1% , 40 , Yes . Loans: leave % blank and type the fixed payment as the floor.                                                           |
| Custom priority                            | Only used by the Custom order strategy. 1 = pay first.                                                                                                                                        |

**Pay per month to clear by promo end** shows the level payment that clears each promo balance on time. Compare it with *Pay in month 1* on the Plan.

## 4. The strategies

| Strategy                    | Where the extra money goes                                                                                                             | Good to know                                                                           |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Snowball                    | Smallest starting balance first.                                                                                                       | Quick wins. Usually costs a little more interest.                                      |
| Avalanche                   | Highest regular APR first.                                                                                                             | Least interest when there are no promos. Can miss a deferred-interest deadline.        |
| Avalanche + promo deadlines | Deferred-interest promos get the level payment that clears them by the end date; the rest goes to the highest rate <i>this month</i> . | 0% balances wait while they are 0%; back-interest is avoided where your budget allows. |
| Promo deadline first        | Promo balances first, earliest end date first; then highest APR.                                                                       | Simple and safe. Often pays more interest than needed.                                 |
| Custom order                | Your order from the Custom priority column (1 = first; blanks go last).                                                                | For when you have reasons the maths doesn't see.                                       |

Every strategy pays all minimums first. What's left of the monthly amount (plus any one-off extra) goes to the strategy's target; when a debt is cleared, its payment rolls into the next one. *Minimums only* is shown for comparison.

## 5. Reading the Plan and Compare sheets

Plan

Your plan with the strategy chosen on Settings. Change the strategy there; compare all of them on Compare.

|                     |                             |                                  |           |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| Strategy            | Avalanche + promo deadlines | Minimums only: debt-free         | Sep 2045  |
| Plan starts         | Nov 2026                    | Minimums only: interest          | 30,097.84 |
| Debt-free month     | Sep 2028                    | Interest saved vs minimums       | 27,334.46 |
| Months to debt-free | 23                          | Promo balances left at expiry    | 1         |
| Total interest      | 2,763.38                    | Deferred interest charged        | 0.00      |
| Total paid          | 37,153.38                   | Months amount was below minimums | 0         |

Check

Note: a promo ends with a balance, which then costs the regular APR

| Debt                   | Balance now | Regular APR | Promo ends   | Pay in month 1 | Paid off | Months | Interest | Left when promo ends | Deferred interest | Promo pay / month | Status                    |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|----------------|----------|--------|----------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Example Rewards Card   | 6,840.00    | 28.49%      |              | 521.33         | Jul 2027 | 9      | 930.26   |                      |                   |                   | On track                  |
| Example Transfer Card  | 4,200.00    | 27.49%      | Jul 31, 2027 | 42.00          | Nov 2027 | 13     | 208.93   | 3,836.77             |                   | 466.67            | Balance left at promo end |
| Example Furniture Card | 2,380.00    | 26.99%      | Apr 30, 2027 | 396.67         | Apr 2027 | 6      | 0.00     | 0.00                 | 0.00              | 396.67            | On track                  |
| Example Car Loan       | 11,350.00   | 6.90%       |              | 318.00         | Apr 2028 | 18     | 844.61   |                      |                   |                   | On track                  |
| Example Student Loan   | 8,900.00    | 5.50%       |              | 112.00         | Sep 2028 | 23     | 779.58   |                      |                   |                   | On track                  |
| Example Clinic Plan    | 720.00      | 0.00%       |              | 60.00          | Oct 2027 | 12     | 0.00     |                      |                   |                   | On track                  |
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The Plan shows the strategy picked on Settings. **Left when promo ends** is the balance still owed the month the promo finishes; **Deferred interest** is the back-interest that plan would trigger. The Check line tells you the most important thing to fix first.

## Compare strategies

Same debts, same monthly amount, six ways. Minimums only = what happens if you pay just the minimums.

| Strategy                    | Debt-free month | Months | Total interest | Total paid | Interest saved vs minimums | Promo balances left at expiry | Deferred interest charged | Months amount was below minimums | First debt cleared (months) | Selected | Lowest interest |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|--------|----------------|------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------|-----------------|
| Minimums only               | Sep 2045        | 227    | 30,097.84      | 64,487.84  |                            | 2                             | 298.04                    |                                  | 12                          |          |                 |
| Snowball                    | Sep 2028        | 23     | 3,303.96       | 37,693.96  | 26,793.88                  | 0                             | 0.00                      | 0                                | 2                           |          |                 |
| Avalanche                   | Sep 2028        | 23     | 2,982.10       | 37,372.10  | 27,115.74                  | 2                             | 298.04                    | 0                                | 7                           |          |                 |
| Avalanche + promo deadlines | Sep 2028        | 23     | 2,763.38       | 37,153.38  | 27,334.46                  | 1                             | 0.00                      | 0                                | 6                           | Selected | Lowest interest |
| Promo deadline first        | Sep 2028        | 23     | 3,237.01       | 37,627.01  | 26,860.83                  | 0                             | 0.00                      | 0                                | 4                           |          |                 |
| Custom order                | Sep 2028        | 23     | 3,237.01       | 37,627.01  | 26,860.83                  | 0                             | 0.00                      | 0                                | 4                           |          |                 |

Promo balances left at expiry = promo debts with money still owed when their promo ends. Deferred interest charged = back-interest added on deferred-interest promos that were not cleared in time.

Months amount was below minimums = months where your monthly amount plus extras did not cover all minimums (the plan still pays the minimums).

Compare runs all strategies on the same inputs. *Lowest interest* marks the cheapest strategy among those that clear within 30 years. Pick one on Settings and the Plan and Schedule follow.

## 6. A monthly routine

1. After statements arrive, update *Balance now* on Debts and set the plan start month to next month.
2. Check Plan → *Pay in month 1* and pay those amounts.
3. Got a raise or a refund? Add it on Extras and watch the debt-free month move.

## 7. Every check message

| Message (Debts → Check)                                  | Meaning                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Add a balance above 0                                    | The row has details but no positive balance, so it's left out of every plan.                       |
| Add a name                                               | Give the debt a short name so the Plan and Schedule are readable.                                  |
| Add the regular APR (0% if none)                         | Type the APR from your statement. Use 0% for an interest-free plan.                                |
| Set a minimum payment                                    | Neither a % nor a floor/fixed payment is set, so the minimum would be zero.                        |
| Deferred interest needs a promo end date                 | Deferred interest only makes sense with an end date.                                               |
| Promo ends before the plan starts: ignored               | The promo end date is before the first plan month, so the regular APR is used.                     |
| Minimum is below the interest: balance grows on minimums | Paying only the minimum would never clear this debt. Common with 1% minimums on high APRs.         |
| Deferred promo treated as 0% (promo APR ignored)         | Deferred-interest offers are 0% during the promo; the back-interest is charged at the regular APR. |

Settings and Plan also warn when the monthly amount is below the minimums (the plan still pays every minimum and counts those months), when deferred interest would be charged, and when a promo ends with a balance. Extras flags rows without a month or amount and extras outside the 30-year window.

## 8. Limits, compatibility and license

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- **Limits:** 12 debts, 360 months, 12 amount changes, 24 one-off extras. Interest is monthly ( $\text{APR} \div 12$ , rounded to the cent) on the balance at the start of the month. No new purchases, fees, penalty APRs or transfers between cards.
- **Compatibility:** tested in LibreOffice Calc (free). It's a standard .xlsx with no macros and uses long-standing functions (IF, INDEX, MATCH, CHOOSE, SUMPRODUCT, SUMIFS, COUNTIF, ROUND, ROUNDUP, EOMONTH, DATE and similar), but it hasn't been tested in Excel, Google Sheets or Numbers yet.
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