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Chapter 1 : Best Personal Finance Services - Lab Tested Reviews by www.nxgvision.com

Personal finance software can cost as little as nothing or as much as \$ - much depends on what you want your software to do and if you prefer using an app, an online portal or a program downloaded to your computer.

Get to Know Your Money Over 1. Personal Capital also allows you to stay on track when it comes to managing your budget, paying your bills, and meeting your financial goals, making it the best personal budget software to consider. Looking for the best free personal finance software? Linking your accounts is a very easy process. You simply click a small plus arrow, specify the account type you want to link, and enter your log-in information. Like most financial and personal finance apps, Personal Capital is a read-only application, which means they are unable to transfer or remove funds from your accounts. And neither can anyone else. Lastly, in regards to security, here is what the firm has to say about it: We also use Verisign and other state-of-the-art security solutions and practices to protect our site. WhiteHat Security performs around-the-clock security testing on our site. If the software is free, how does the company make money? However, the company also has financial advisors that you can choose to use for financial planning and investing if you wish. They charge fees for these financial advisory services. Best of all, Personal Capital is free to use. Give it a test run yourself, and make your own judgment call. As a free personal finance software, Mint makes it cost-effective for people to learn how to budget. This also includes free credit tracking—a notable benefit among personal financial planning software. Mint has many revenue streams. For example, whenever a user signs up for a credit card, checking account, savings account or account marked as sponsored on Mint, Mint earns a referral fee. It does not matter what device you use: Mac, PC, Android, etc. As long as you can access the Internet, you can log in and use the Mint personal finance app to manage your transactions. Our Mint review found that this personal finance app provides efficient reporting through the way that data is communicated to users. Sign Up Process Easy to open an account? Open an account in minutes. It is very easy to get started because Mint is connected to most U. Online Bill Payment Feature As a personal budget software, Mint provides a simple and organized way to not only keep track of bills, but to pay them off, too. Through Mint Bill Pay, users can: Additional Benefits Our Mint review found a few other notable features of this personal finance app that deserve recognition. Even better, this money management software allows users to add their own categories, which can be applied to future charges. High Security Mint is obsessive about security. Since this money management software comes from the makers of TurboTax and QuickBooks, there are strong security measures in place to protect sensitive data. Our Mint review found that this money management software also uses multi-factor authentication to protect each account, which includes: Mint is an online personal financial planning software, while Quicken needs to be downloaded to your computer. Personal Capital Personal Capital is similar to Mint, but it comes with many more comprehensive features. If you invest or have any investments, or are interested in financial planning, wealth building and management, then Personal Capital picks up where Mint leaves off. Personal Capital also provides detailed information on asset allocation, income tax planning, and retirement planning, making it the best personal finance software for investors.

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Chapter 2 : How to Choose and Use Financial Software - Personal Finance - www.nxgvision.com

Personal budget software apps can't help much with the self-deprivation, because your income is what it is and it's up to you to work within it or change it. But these best software choices can take the tedium and the challenge out of the budgeting process.

I used to hate Mint. But a lot of people love Mint. As of October , Mint has a reported 10 million users. However, it cannot establish a budget or categorize your expenses. He also has an award-winning financial blog called Roots of Wealth. It took me about 25 hours of research and testing to choose the best personal finance software. I started by identifying 43 potential candidates and narrowing them down, one by one. I ended up with a Top 10, and created accounts with each of the programs to do some hands-on testing. After trying out the programs, my Top 10 quickly became a Top Three with one honorable mention. Hardcore budgeting for people who want to know where every dollar is going. Net worth is what counts in this investment-focused app. Honorable Mention Mint has a robust suite of features that are easy to learn. I think a lot of you will too. Here are some of the parts I love the most: Mint makes setup incredibly easy. Mint also makes it really easy to figure out where to click if you want to categorize transactions, create a budget, or set a goal. Of all the personal finance software programs I tested, Mint was by far the easiest and that was one of the biggest reasons why it became my favorite. Mint understands that you need flexibility in your budget. It let me set up a budget that made sense with my expenses. I pay rent and I buy groceries and I pay my bills, but some months I go out to eat five times and some months I only go out once. Some months I see Star Wars: If your spending is as variable as mine, use that Everything Else category. Mint helps you plan for those every-few-month expenses and those long-term goals. Mint makes the process easy. YNAB lets you budget for both long-term expenses and long-term goals. Quicken does not, and neither does Personal Capital. The green bar represents how much of the total allotted budget has been spent so far, with the remaining amount shown in gray. Mint does slip in ads I noticed one for Future Advisor at one point, which made me smile because I used to write for Future Advisor. I write for a lot of financial blogs. Maybe exactly as much. YNAB is great for people who have a lot of steady, recurring expenses. Here are a few other things YNAB does really well: If you spend more than you budgeted in one category, YNAB makes you take money out of another category to cover that overspending. Those few dollars count, and you have to account for them. YNAB encourages you to plan for future expenses. If you follow the YNAB system and give every dollar a job, more and more of those jobs will be 15 or 30 or 60 days in the future and your Age of Money will grow. So will your financial security, by the way. Your money is, as the saying goes, working for you. YNAB completely re-imagines the savings account. You save so you can get things done and live the life you want. Personal Capital focuses on your net worth, not your budget. Personal Capital goes to the other extreme and looks at your total net worth: I came very close to choosing Personal Capital instead of Mint as my personal finance tracking system. I also came very close to choosing YNAB. The decision was hard. Maybe then Personal Capital will be right for me. Personal Capital focuses everything on your net worth. All of your assets, minus your liabilities, in one big pile. Personal Capital knows you might not need a budget to be financially healthy. Because I eat right up to the amount of food the app says I can have and then I eat more because something unexpected happens. Some people are like that with budgets. That might be what budgeting is like for you. Personal Capital looks at your total financial health: Personal Capital shows you whether your investments are going up or down. Like Mint, Personal Capital is free. However, you will pay for the privilege: The best personal finance software options have four things in common: The top personal finance software programs sync directly with your banks and credit cards, and some even sync with your investment accounts, student loans, mortgages, and so on. The best personal finance software programs also have easy-to-use interfaces that allow you to quickly categorize transactions, check transactions against your budget, and see how much money you have left to spend. They also track your progress, so you can log in

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every day and see how your good habits are leading to better finances. Mint, Personal Capital, and YNAB all send out regular emails offering financial tips and reminding you to check in on your accounts. YNAB has 10 different webinars to teach you about budgeting and saving. Here are a few excerpts: Rather than just a login and password, we also verify who you are from a second source or with information only you will have, like special security questions or a code from a text message or email. Use your smartphone to check in with your finances while you ride the bus to work, so you know if you have enough money to go to happy hour afterward. Use the desktop interface to categorize transactions and update your budget. The best personal finance software goes where you go and works with your devices to give you accurate, up-to-date information about your money whenever you need it. Choose your personal finance software based on your financial needs. Which one should you choose? You may be someone who has trouble making a budget or knowing how much to set aside for upcoming expenses. In that case, YNAB may be the best program for you because it solves that problem really well. Getting started is easy, but fully setting up your software takes time. Repeat until all of your accounts are connected. YNAB makes you categorize everything, at least when you start out. Maybe you do want to separate out groceries and household goods. Or, as Crimmins puts it: Couples get the challenge of financial communication. None of the top programs on my list includes options for couples â€” although YNAB has a Join Forces handbook to help you and your partner budget together â€” but you can work around it. Talking about finances with your partner can help you both do money better. She gave me so much good advice about how couples can improve their financial communication. Ten minutes at minimum. This is a habit-forming exercise at first, where for 10 minutes you talk specifically about money. Where it went that week. What you need to be conscious of. Having that minute conversation and adding it to your habits is very important. But only you can make the decision to spend or save those dollars. No matter how good a personal finance software program is, the only person who can change your finances for the better is you. Sometimes multiple times a day. Then start using the tools it gives you to help you reach your financial goals.

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Chapter 3 : Best Budget Apps and Personal Finance Tools for - NerdWallet

The best personal finance software goes where you go and works with your devices to give you accurate, up-to-date information about your money whenever you need it. Choose your personal finance software based on your financial needs.

Freelance web design is an area, however, that can provide a whole lot of flexibility when it comes to cost. Depending upon where you live and what kinds of services you plan to offer, startup costs can be practically zero. Conversely, it could run into thousands of dollars. Being a solo entrepreneur who works on a small scale, you have a level of cost control that most traditional industries can only dream of. Here are a few factors to consider.

Where You Work The upfront costs of opening your business have a lot to do with where you choose to work. Working at home is usually the cheapest option, provided you have an area ready to host your office space. That could be a spare room, part of a larger room or even a basement or garage. Renting office or co-working space will almost always be the more expensive route. Depending upon your preferences, it may provide the better working environment, though.

Business Fees Staying with the theme of where you work, the locality where your business is based could cost you as well. There might be business registration fees or permits required in order to start off on the good side of the law. For example, some regions charge a fee for registering a fictitious name for your business. While hardware prices have come down quite a bit in recent years, power and quality will always cost a bit more. Software is an interesting area because, in theory, you could do just about everything using free applications. Still, there are times when commercial software is the best fit for what you do. How you proceed is really a matter of preference and budget. But there are some other items to think about. How much you should spend all depends on your needs. For instance, you might decide that each client should have their own separate account or you could simply place everyone on one large plot of server space. From there, you can charge a price above and beyond what the service is costing you. There is a little bit of money to be made here, which could more than cover any costs. Some designers charge clients monthly or yearly fees while others rely solely on affiliate programs to bring in extra revenue. Changing everything around afterwards can be difficult.

Software Licensing While we already mentioned software as part of the startup costs above, it also qualifies as an ongoing one as well. Of course, the software you use to write code and do design work could have a monthly or yearly cost to maintain a current license. Another factor to think about is that of the developer license. A popular example of this is a commercially-available WordPress plugin that, for a higher yearly fee, enables you to use the software on any number of projects. So, instead of buying the software separately for each new project, you purchase one beefed-up license to use on multiple sites. Continuing with the plugin example: Weigh the pros and cons of this kind of arrangement and do what you think will work best for your situation. Some freelancers spend absolutely nothing when it comes to marketing. But whether you choose to do so depends on a few factors. The web design market is crowded and it can be difficult to stand out. If your business relies on booking new clients throughout the year, then it makes sense to do at least some sort of advertising. Online advertising is often a great way to go because you can set a reasonable budget and finely-tune your ads to target specific localities and demographics. But there is also an argument to be made for more traditional forms such as print ads or postcards, depending on your desired results. Search is an incredibly powerful force in directing potential customers your way. Therefore, you have the ability to control how much you spend on a good many things. For everything else, the key is to treat each expenditure as an investment in your business. Before you spend that money, think about how a purchase will benefit your bottom line. If it will help you make money either directly or indirectly by boosting your productivity, for example, then it might be worth the cost. All told, making smart decisions with money will help you get off to a strong start and stay strong through the many challenges of running a business.

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Chapter 4 : Spending Money In Your Twenties - AskMen

Managing your money is a complex skill, especially now that you no longer have to leave the house or even pull out your wallet in order to spend money. That's why it is more important than ever for you to track spending and stick to a budget.

Review Jill Duffy The Best Personal Finance Services of Need to make sense of your entire budget or even just get a better handle on your monthly household spending? One of these top-rated apps can help. Take Control of Your Financial Life Personal financial apps are designed to help you make sense of your money. How much do you have? How much do you owe? Are you spending wisely? What do you need to do to get a mortgage or car loan? The best personal finance services help you answer these questions and others. More than anything else, they educate you on money matters. The most popular and well-known personal finance apps work on the premise that better money management comes through centralization and visibility. If you can see all your accounts and spending habits, your credit history, or the billable hours across your business all in one place, you are better equipped to make good decisions about your financial situation. While some apps specialize in one area, Mint does a little bit of everything. Mint tracks your spending and account balances, helps you pay bills on time, monitors monthly budgets that you establish, encourages you to set financial goals, provides your credit score, and gives you one of your credit reports. The Mint mobile app lets you check your account balances and monthly budgets before making a purchase. Best for Credit Reports and Scores There are two online services we like for credit reports: Credit Karma and WalletHub. Credit Karma pulls your credit report and score from both Experian and Trans Union, so you can keep an eye on all the information that two of the three credit reporting agencies have on you. Credit Karma updates your credit scores as often as once per week. WalletHub is similar, but with two major differences. First, it updates your score as often as daily. Second, it only tracks your credit reports and scores from one agency, TransUnion. Both WalletHub and Credit Karma alert you when changes occur on your credit report, giving you an opportunity to catch errors early. A unique feature in WalletHub is an excellent graph that charts changes to your credit score over time. Credit Karma, meanwhile, has a handy tool that anticipates how your credit score might change if you take certain actions, such as applying for a new credit card or car loan and whether you are accepted or rejected. Best for Household Management A more unusual personal finance tool, called Doxo, is a digital filing cabinet as well as a bill payment hub. Doxo automatically collects electronic statements from all kinds of providers, from utility companies to banks and other businesses. It saves them in one central account. You can also upload other kinds of family and household documents to your digital filing cabinet, such as medical bills. Doxo lets you schedule bills to be paid to various providers—all from one place. For smaller service providers, such as regional gas and electric companies, I recommend checking directly with the provider first to be sure they can process payments from Doxo. Best for Manual Entry Most personal finance apps have moved away from offline desktop software due to the vast benefits of online connectivity. That said, not everyone wants to connect to their bank accounts directly and manage their finances online. Quicken remains the big name in this space. Quicken is desktop software that gives you an option to manage your finances locally. There are optional online aspects, too, such as bank transaction import and bill-pay. Another app that has been very popular for its offline service is YNAB which stands for you need a budget , but even that app has moved online recently. Luckily, the latest version of YNAB still gives you an option to manage your budgets manually instead of automatically. When you choose this option, you never have to connect to any of your bank accounts for the budgeting app to work. While older versions of YNAB are no longer supported, you can still download and install a copy of YNAB 3 and 4 for Mac and Windows if you are a legacy user and want to continue with the older app. Harvest is an excellent solution for freelancers and small businesses that need to track their time and bill clients for hourly or project-rate work. The app offers both time-tracking tools and complete invoicing software in one package. Best Mobile Personal Finance Apps

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All the personal finance software mentioned here consists of apps that run on the desktop or in a web browser. Many of them have companion mobile personal finance apps , but they are not exclusively for mobile. Are Personal Finance Apps Secure? One very important concern many people have about personal finance apps is security. The exception is for bill-pay services. A few apps, such as Mint and Doxo, include a bill payment service that lets you authorize payments to be made from accounts you authorize to the biller or sometimes a third party that facilitates the payment. In both Mint and Doxo, this part of the service is optional, so you can skip it if you do not want to give those apps any authority to move money. Is there a risk to using an online personal financial app? Should it prevent you from actually using these apps? Is it possible that the payoff of getting your head around your debt, spending habits, and net worth is greater than the slim risk of fraud? Set a strong and unique password, and put your fears aside. For more tools for people who work for themselves, you can read our roundup of the best online accounting tools. Featured Personal Finance Service Reviews:

Chapter 5 : Use the Spending & Budgeting Tool to Get a Clear View of Your Finances

Day 2: Try a spending tracker. If you are taking part in our month long money challenge, yesterday you analyzed your paycheck, getting to know the input line of your finances.

Chapter 6 : What Does It Cost to Run a Freelance Web Design Business?

Take a look at my list of desktop personal finance software choices to narrow down your choices for Microsoft Money replacement software. There are several alternatives to Microsoft Money, and the majority of the software listed comes with a free trial, so it will cost nothing to experiment to find what works best.

Chapter 7 : Best Personal Finance Software for - The Simple Dollar

On your dashboard, you can pull up your transaction history and perform a cash flow analysis to see where you are spending money on the most. You can also use the personal budget software to quickly and effectively generate spending and income reports, that way you can quickly identify areas where you are wasting money and where you can save.