

When you invest, you buy a stock, bond, piece of property, or something else that you believe will grow in value. In general, the longer your money is invested, the more it will grow. That's why the best time to start is when you're young, says Avi Lele, CEO of Stockpile. His company allows investors to buy stock through gift cards.

Growth separates investing from saving. If you save \$100 in a bank and it earns 1% interest, in 10 years, you'll have \$110. But if you invest it in the stock market, which has historically increased by an average of 10% a year, in 10 years, you'll have about \$200.

But risk is an element to consider. Money in the bank may not grow in value, but it won't lose value. But stocks and other investments can lose money. Looking back over long periods

of time, we see the stock market has gone up. But during shorter periods, it sometimes has gone down. For that reason, only invest money you will not need for at least five years. If you need onto it while it grows, then sell it for that money sooner, you should put it somewhere safer. like a bank.

How Stocks Work

Companies—think Apple, Facebook, and Disney—need money to pay workers and produce products. One way they raise money is by selling pieces of their company, called shares or stocks, to the public. When you buy a stock, you become an owner, or a shareholder.

The stock market is like a store in which you can buy, sell, and trade stocks. Stock markets exist all over the world, but many investors in the U.S. use the New York Stock

Exchange or the NASDAO. If you're under 18, you need a parent or guardian to help you buy stocks.

Your goal is to buy stock, hold a higher price to make a profit. Since individual stock prices vary based on a combination of how well the company is doing at the moment and how well people expect it to do in the future, choosing stocks isn't easy. It's best to do research, says Lele. Start with companies whose products you know, then go online and read about their future plans. There are many opinions, so read several sources.

Consider Nintendo's stock price. Five years ago, one share of Nintendo stock cost about \$21. But over time it fell to about \$12. Why? Its handheld gaming device didn't sell well during that period. But

in the last year, Nintendo's stock price climbed to \$38. Why? Because Pokémon Go became a huge hit.

Lower Your Risk

It's a smart strategy to buy many types of stocks at the same time. Diversifying, or spreading your money out over many stocks, lowers your risk. Even if one goes down, there's a good chance others will do better, says Rick Roman, founder of GiveAshare.com.

One easy way to diversify is to invest in an index fund, an investment that holds many stocks in a particular group at the same time. The S&P 500 is probably the best-known index. It holds shares of 500 very large companies. If the prices of those companies rise overall, the S&P 500 index rises with them. Are you ready to start investing?

—By Kelly Hultgren

How to Keep Track

It's good to keep a close eye on your investments and the stock market, both of which will go up and down every day. Here are key pieces of information to pay attention to.



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A Visit to the New York Stock Exchange



◀ Gerard Farco, a floor broker, shows Finn how to make trades on an electronic device.

► Finn Lytle talks to Jonathan Corpina, senior managing partner of Meridian Equity Partners.

►► Nicole Petallides, of Fox Business Network, chats with Finn.



On assignment for *Your \$*, Finn Lytle, 13, visited the New York Stock Exchange. He spoke with traders and other experts. Here's what he learned:

What is the stock market?

"It's a place where companies come to raise capital," says Robert Airo, a NYSE executive. They can use that money to grow their businesses. It's also a place for individual investors to buy shares of companies.

How do you make money?

"When you buy a stock, there's a price for the stock," says Jonathan Corpina, senior managing partner of Meridian Equity Partners. "You hope that stock [price] goes higher, so you can sell it and make a profit," he says. "So, for example, if you buy a stock at \$10 and it trades up \$1, to \$11, you make a \$1 profit."

How do you start?

Buy stock through a broker or brokerage company that is licensed to sell stock. "You can pick a company you like," says Nicole Petallides of Fox Business Network. But, she warns, don't invest any money you're not willing to lose.

POWER WORD

capital noun: money

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Meet a Shareholder

Noa Polish, 12, has been a shareholder of Mondelēz International (the company that makes Oreos, Chips Ahoy!, and Ritz Crackers) since her ninth birthday. After receiving her shares, she started attending yearly shareholder meetings. "I like listening to the CEO discuss our business," she says. "I even asked a question at the meeting a few years ago—I was nervous at first, but it felt great." A few months ago, she saw the CEO of GoPro on television and is considering buying its stock, too. "My advice is: If you have a company you really like and you trust that the product is good, try investing in it."

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