

July 2009

Our **Money**madeclear™ guides –  
here to help you

This guide is part of our **About the FSA** series.



Available from our helpline or website

[www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk](http://www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk)

**No selling. No jargon. Just the facts.**

If you would like this guide in Braille, large print or audio format, please call our Money

madeclear helpline on 0300 500 5000 or Tynetalk on 1800 1 0300 500 5000.  
(Calls should cost no more than 01 or 02 UK-wide calls, and are included in inclusive mobile and landline minutes.)

To help us maintain and improve our service, we may record or monitor calls.



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No selling.  
No jargon.  
Just the facts  
about  
Money

**Money**madeclear™  
from the Financial Services Authority (FSA)

With our **Money**madeclear™ range of guides, we cut out the jargon and give you just the facts about financial products and services, helping you to make an informed decision.

# Just the facts about Money

## madeclear.

We try to ensure that the information in this guide, some of which comes from sources outside the FSA, is correct at the time of print. It is possible that some of it is oversimplified, or may become inaccurate over time, for example because of changes in the law. You should check the current position before you take any action.

This is general information to help you make financial decisions. It is not advice, and cannot take account of your individual circumstances. When making decisions about your own circumstances you should consider whether to consult a financial or other professional adviser.

# This guide is for you if

## You want

to know what  
Money

### madeclear is all about; and

## You want

to know how  
Money

### madeclear can help you.

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# What is Money made clear?

Money made clear™ from the Financial Services Authority (FSA) is about helping people to be better informed when it comes to money.

Money made clear™ comes in the form of:

- a website with information and useful interactive tools (see page 3);
- printed guides on a range of subjects (see page 6); and
- trained staff who can answer your questions over the phone (see page 7).

Our information is clear, impartial and written in plain English. Our website was the first to receive the Plain Language Commission's Gold Standard Award and all of our printed guides are accredited by the Plain Language Commission.

## Key points

- We – the FSA – were set up by government to regulate financial services and protect your rights.
- Because we're the regulator, we're not selling anything – all our information is impartial.

No selling.  
No jargon.  
Just the facts  
about  
Money made clear.

# Money made clear website

When it comes to money, our impartial information and tools can help you work out what's right for you. Go to [www.money made clear.fsa.gov.uk](http://www.money made clear.fsa.gov.uk).

If you're not sure where to start, use our **hub pages**:

- Everyday money;
- Cards & loans;
- Mortgages & homes;
- Insurance;
- Pensions & retirement;
- Savings & investments; and
- Tax & benefits.

Alternatively you can read one of our **online, step-by-step guides**, which include key life stages such as starting a job, buying a home, having a baby, and retiring soon.

Or for more specific topics, take a look at Dealing with debt, Getting help with money decisions, Shopping around or Staying safe against scams.

Use our selection of **interactive tools** and **calculators** to help you get to grips with your money (see page 4) and our impartial **comparison tables** to help you compare the features and costs of different products (see page 5).

You can also view, download or order our **printed guides** – see page 6.

And to help you understand money jargon, our **Jargon made clear** explains key words and phrases in straightforward, easy-to-understand language.



## Moneymadeclear website

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### Interactive online tools

Our interactive online tools are simple and easy to use. They can help you with your budgeting, borrowing, planning for the future and shopping around for financial products.

Everything you input is confidential – we won't see your information or pass it on to anyone else.

- **Financial healthcheck** – for help in sorting out your priorities. Just answer a few simple questions and we'll make some suggestions on how you can get your finances into better shape.
- **Debt test** – if you're worried about your finances, find out if you're likely to run into borrowing problems.
- **Budget calculator** – use this to work out your budget, see how much money you have left at the end of each week or month, and help you plan ahead.

- **Mortgage calculator** – find out what your monthly repayments are likely to be for the amount you want to borrow, and the effect of future changes in interest rates.
- **Loan calculator** – work out your monthly repayments for various loan amounts, repayment periods and annual percentage rates (APRs).
- **Pension calculator** – see how much income you might get from your pension fund when you retire based on what you save now and in the future. Available from August 2009.
- **Stakeholder pensions** – find out if a stakeholder pension may be right for your retirement plan with our decision trees.

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You can find these tools at [www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk](http://www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk) and click on **All tools & calculators**.

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### Comparison tables

It pays to shop around before buying a financial product. Our online comparison tables show data from the majority of firms – not just the 'best buys' or those paying to be featured in the results.

They let you compare the features and costs of a wide range of financial products, including:

- mortgages;
- pension annuities;
- savings accounts (including cash ISAs);
- stakeholder and personal pensions;
- payment protection insurance (PPI) including mortgage payment protection insurance (MPPI);
- unit trust and open-ended investment company ISAs;
- investment bonds; and
- endowments.

Answer a few questions to get a table of products which will help you find what you're looking for. When you get to the table of products, you can sort the results according to different features, and shortlist the products that are of interest to you.

You can print out your results, save them or email them to yourself, so that you can refer back to them if you need to.

Our impartial tables are updated daily and, as the regulator, we're not selling you anything.

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You can find these tables at [www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk](http://www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk) and click on **All comparison tables**.

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# Moneymadeclear printed guides

If you'd rather have your information in printed format, try our free Moneymadeclear™ printed guides. They cut out the jargon and give you just the facts to make an informed decision.

Our guides are written in plain English, and include key things to think about, next steps to take, questions and answers, a Jargon buster to clarify some of the financial jargon, and a Useful contacts section for details of other organisations where you can get help.

They cover a range of subjects in the following series:

- Everyday money;
- Buying a home;
- Saving and investing;
- If things go wrong; and
- Pensions and retirement.

For a list of our current guides in these series, see pages 8 and 9.

To view or order any of our printed guides, go to [www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk](http://www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk) and click on **Free printed guides**.



# Moneymadeclear helpline

Our trained staff can answer general enquiries about financial products and services as well as giving you guidance about your money to help you work out what's right for you.

Being impartial, we don't recommend products or companies. If we're not able to help you directly, we'll give you details of another organisation that may be able to help resolve your query. You can also call us regarding the following.

## To check if a firm is regulated

If you're thinking of using a financial services firm, always make sure the firm is regulated by us to ensure you're protected if things go wrong. Regulated firms and their agents must meet certain standards set by us. You can call us or go to **Check our Register** on our website.

## To report a misleading financial advert

If you think that a financial advert or promotion is misleading, you can tell us about it either online or by phone (select option 3).

## To tell us about a scam

We would also like to hear from you if you've been approached by firms offering you great deals that sound too good to be true, or pressurising you into buying shares or other investments. For information about scams see *Staying safe against scams* on our website.

Call us on **0300 500 5000** (call rates may vary).

## Complaints and compensation

We don't investigate individual complaints or deal with compensation. If things go wrong and you've used a regulated firm, you may be able to go to the Financial Ombudsman Service for complaints.

If the firm has stopped trading or can't pay claims against it, you may be able to get compensation from the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) – see *Useful contacts*.

# Useful contacts

Call rates may vary – check with your telephone provider.

## Financial Services Authority (FSA)

To order other Money**made**clear™ guides, check our Register, report misleading financial adverts or other promotions, or for general information or guidance

Helpline: 0300 500 5000  
Typetalk: 1800 1 0300 500 5000  
(Calls should cost no more than 01 or 02 UK-wide calls, and are included in inclusive mobile and landline minutes.)

## Financial Ombudsman Service

South Quay Plaza  
183 Marsh Wall  
London  
E14 9SR  
0845 080 1800  
[www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk)  
Consumer leaflet: 'Your complaint and the Ombudsman'

## Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS)

7th Floor, Lloyds Chambers  
Portsoken Street  
London  
E1 8BN  
020 7892 7300  
[www.fscs.org.uk](http://www.fscs.org.uk)  
Consumer guide: 'How we can help'

Here's a list of our current Money**made**clear™ guides.

### General

- About the Financial Services Authority
- About Money**made**clear

### Everyday money

- Making the most of your money
- Making your budget work for you
- Basic bank accounts
- Borrowing money

- Proving your identity
- Insurance
- Credit unions

### Buying a home

- Mortgages
- Paying your mortgage – You can afford your mortgage now, but what if...?
- Dealing with your mortgage shortfall
- Problems paying your mortgage
- Home purchase plans

### Saving and investing

- Saving and investing
- Getting financial advice

### If things go wrong

- Making a complaint
- Endowment mortgage complaints
- The State Second Pension – were you wrongly advised to contract out?

### Pensions and retirement options

- Pensions
- Stakeholder pensions and decision trees
- The State Second Pension – should you be contracted out?
- Pension transfers – the risks of salary-related occupational pension transfers
- Important information about your yearly pension statement
- Retiring soon
- Your pension – it's time to choose
- Retirement options
- Income withdrawal
- Managing in retirement
- Equity release schemes – raising money from your home

To order, call our helpline or go to [www.money\*\*made\*\*clear.fsa.gov.uk](http://www.money<b>made</b>clear.fsa.gov.uk) and click on **Free printed guides**.