

3 Principles of Financial Document Organization



Your investments produce a lot of paperwork that contain critical tax and performance information. Here are some ideas to help manage all of that material.

Follow these three steps to make it easier to find your investment information:

1. Collect.
2. Sort.
3. Review.

You'll always know the status of your investment accounts and can be assured you can determine your gains or losses when you sell. Smead recommends using FasTab Hanging Folders to keep track of your investment records.

Collect

- Create a filing system that allows you to quickly find information about all of your investments.
- In addition to monthly reports on your holdings, most stocks, mutual funds and other investment vehicles send you their latest published information including a prospectus and quarterly, semi-annual and annual reports.
- It's important to keep all transaction and earnings data for each investment. Recreating the information for tax reporting years later can be very difficult without detailed records.
- Do not count on your broker or mutual fund company to have this information available for you.

Sort

- Use FasTab Hanging Folders to create your investment filing system. The built-in tab makes it easy to create new folders and read file headings in the drawer.
- Use different colored FasTab Hanging Folders to separate information by broker or investment type.
- Create a folder to hold the current prospectus, quarterly or annual report from the broker or mutual fund company.



- File all information from each grouping together in a file drawer. Use a new folder each month for transaction and summary reports. The colored folders make it easy to keep information for each group together and help avoid misfiled data.

Review

- When an updated publication arrives from an investment, discard the old publication, replacing it with the new one.
- Read and compare monthly summaries and transaction reports before filing them. Make a note to act upon anything that you are concerned about.

