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## Retirement & Market News

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### Social Security Announces 5.9 Percent Benefit Increase for 2022



Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for approximately 70 million Americans will increase 5.9 percent in 2022, the Social Security Administration announced today.

The 5.9 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) will begin with benefits payable to more than 64 million Social Security beneficiaries in January 2022. Increased payments to approximately 8 million SSI beneficiaries will begin on December 30, 2021.

[Read more.](#)

### End of Year Deadlines

For those of you planning to make a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) from your IRA for tax year 2021, this is a reminder that any distribution check(s) must be processed before year-end.

- If you are writing checks from your IRA for QCDs, plan to write those by mid-November so the charitable organizations can cash them by the end of November.
- If you wish to have Schwab write those checks, we need to get a form to you for your signature no later than the end of November. That will give us the month of December to withdraw any remaining amounts needed to satisfy your RMD.

### Market Summary as of October 31, 2021

Index/Market	YTD
S&P 500 Index	24.04%
DJ Industrial Average	18.77%
Russell 3000	22.77%
Russell 2000	17.19%
Nasdaq	20.88%
MSCI EAFE Index	11.01%
Barclays US Agg Bond	-1.58%
10-Year U.S. Treasuries (Yield)	1.63%
WTI Crude Oil	55.57%
LBMA Gold Price	-6.28%
CBOE Market Volatility	-28.53%

Index/Market	YTD
Consumer Disc	22.34%
Consumer Staples	8.76%
Energy	58.07%
Financials	38.56%
Health Care	19.31%
Industrials	19.15%
Information Technology	24.70%
Materials	18.91%
Real Estate	33.77%
Telecom Services	25.02%
Utilities	9.13%

Source: [Morningstar.com](https://www.morningstar.com)

October saw US stock indexes rise four weeks in a row, rebounding from declines in September. The Dow and S&P 500 reached record highs during the final week of October, surpassing highs set the previous week. It was the largest monthly increase in the S&P 500 since November 2020. Strong results reported by companies thus far into the earning season have fueled the markets causing forecasts to increase for those yet to release earnings.

## Bitcoin ETFs

With the mid-October launches of two Bitcoin ETFs, ProShares Bitcoin Strategy ETF (BITO) and Valkyrie Bitcoin Strategy ETF (BTF), owning Bitcoin became more accessible to investors but at a potential cost to fundholders.

[ProShares amassed \\$1.2 billion in investor assets](#) in its first week in the quickest billion-dollar fundraising on record. That success, analysts say, is almost certainly to come at fundholders' expense. ProShares funds invest in bitcoin futures contracts, agreements to

buy or sell the asset later for an agreed-upon price, rather than purchasing bitcoin directly through cryptocurrency exchanges. Once these contracts expire, the fund must roll over to contracts expiring the next month. Some investors are aware of this forced rollover and will buy the next month's futures first. That drives up the fund price and allows traders to profit by selling into the demand created during the rollover.

[According to Charlie Morris](#), founder and chief investment officer of ByteTree Asset Management, the annualized roll yield on bitcoin futures, or the gap between the front-month futures and bitcoin's price, averaged 8.4% over the past year. In other words, for every \$100 in gains made by bitcoin, an investor would net \$91.60 annually before fees. With volatility, the roll yield gap could widen and decrease the net return for investors.

## Year-End Mutual Fund Distribution Projections

With the strong performance of stocks overall this year, along with increased trading activity, we expect to see an increase in the distribution of net capital gains from many mutual funds in late November through December. Quite a few fund families have already announced their plans for distributions, and they are generally higher than those for 2020. There will not be tax implications for retirement accounts. However, there will be implications for taxable accounts such as those individually or jointly owned and for trust accounts. If you have any questions or would like to discuss how this may affect your tax planning, contact your advisor.

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# Cyber Security

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## Privacy Settings Refresh

While we all know it's crucial to keep our online personal data private, it can seem overwhelming and even futile to maintain any semblance of privacy control in our current digital world. [The Washington Post](#) has broken down a comprehensive list of privacy settings for the most popular services and gives you action items you can take today.

### Google

Google offers a [Privacy Checkup](#) that guides you through several security settings quickly, but it doesn't go deeper into the privacy settings available to you. Limiting Google's data collection does come with a few trade-offs, according to the company. Google services and ads you see may not be as targeted or personalized to you. One step you can take right now to pause Google's data collection:

- On the Web, go to [myaccount.google.com](https://myaccount.google.com) → Data & Privacy → Web & App Activity. You can also get here directly on the [activity controls page](#). Turn off the toggle for Web & App Activity so it is gray instead of blue. A pop-up will ask you to confirm you're ready to "pause" the data collection.

### Amazon

Amazon may be famous for its ever-expanding online marketplace, but it's perhaps more infamous for pushing the boundaries when it comes to consumer privacy. Whether you use Amazon's shopping services or in-home smart devices, here are two steps you can take right now to increase your privacy while using Amazon:

- Go to the Amazon homepage → All → Help & Settings → Your Account → Your lists. For each list, click on the three dots on the right and select Manage List. Set the Privacy setting to Private. This will ensure your Amazon wish lists are no longer public.
- [Amazon Sidewalk](#) was automatically enabled for all Ring and Echo users. This technology expands your in-home internet network for up to half a mile, reaching places outside of your control.
- If you've got Echo devices, go to the Alexa app on a phone, then tap the More icon. Then tap on Settings, then tap on Account Settings, then tap on Amazon Sidewalk. In there, make sure "Enabled" is set to off.
- If you've got Ring devices, go to the Ring app on a phone, then tap the three bars at the top left corner to get to the menu. Then tap Control Center, then scroll down to Amazon Sidewalk.

## Facebook

Social media platforms, particularly Facebook, are notorious for displaying ads to their intended audiences with uncanny accuracy. With three billion people connecting through Facebook, it may not be feasible for you to stop using the platform. However, you can reclaim some of your privacy while using the app. Facebook offers a "[Privacy Checkup](#)" and "[Privacy Shortcuts](#)" page that takes you through several privacy settings, but the [Washington Post compiled a comprehensive list here](#). Since Facebook profits off user data like previously visited websites and products purchased, you can reclaim some of your online privacy by changing your ad setting data:

- Go to Settings & Privacy → Settings → Ads → Ad Settings → "Data about your activity from partners."
- Turn this off for your Facebook and Instagram accounts. (The toggle is gray if off, blue if on.)

After downloading new apps, updating existing apps, or signing up for new services online, ensuring your privacy settings meet your comfort level should be a top priority. Scheduling a yearly online security audit can help you maintain control of your digital identity. For more cyber security tips, [click here](#).

## USPS Service Announcement



Effective October 1, 2021, the [United States Postal Service implemented new service standards for First-Class Mail](#). The postal service states that these new service standards will increase delivery reliability, consistency, and efficiency. However, there will be increases in transit times for some first-class mail.

As a reminder, Collegiate Capital offers access to your portfolio on CCMconnect®. The portal's documents

vault enables us to deliver statements and other reports to you promptly and efficiently. Please let us know if you no longer wish to receive quarterly statements or certain required disclosures by US Mail.

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## Firm News

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### CCM Website Update

Within the next several months, we will be launching an updated CCM website. The CCMconnect® portal and resources pages will still be available and easily accessible during this transition. If you've bookmarked any of these pages, you will still be able to access these as the URLs are not changing. We will update our services, about us, and home pages to feature more relevant information to our website visitors. We will also increase our website speed and make it more user-friendly to navigate. We look forward to sharing the updated website when it is ready!

coming  
soon

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