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8 Tips When Shopping for Life Insurance.

Life insurance can be a vital tool for financial planning, but finding coverage that meets your goals and budget can be challenging without guidance. Don't worry. A few simple steps will help you focus on the essential aspects of buying a policy that fits your needs.

1. *Verify whether you need life insurance coverage.*

Yes, life insurance is useful but it is not necessary for everyone. Consider purchasing a policy if any of these conditions apply to your situation.

- Someone depends on you financially and would likely still need significant financial resources after your death.
- Your estate won't have enough liquid assets (cash, investments, property, or other saleable items) to cover its taxes and debt, eroding the inheritance you plan to leave behind.
- You wish to cover your funeral and burial expenses at least so that your assets remain intact for your legacy and heirs.

Otherwise, it is possible you don't need life insurance. You may also consider life insurance as a viable strategy to leave a charitable legacy for a cause you support.

2. *Calculate how much life insurance coverage you need.*

This part of the process can be daunting for many people, but it need not be. Take a quick snapshot of your finances and answer the following three crucial questions:

What financial resources will be available to your survivors or heirs after your death? Look at three primary categories of resources:

- Social security and other retirement-related survivor benefits;
- group life insurance (e.g. a policy you may have through an employer); and

Mike's Notes



Kailee Mills Foundation

Kailee was a Klein Collins student and on October 28, 2017; In the blink of an eye, a 16-year-old daughter was gone. She had just left her home with her friends to go to a Halloween party. She was riding in the backseat, and only traveling a mile away from home to a friend's house. They were only a few blocks away from home when the car she was riding in veered off the road. The car rolled over, Kailee was ejected from the backseat of the car, and died instantly. Her three friends walked away with only minor cuts and bruises. Kailee was the only one in the car not wearing a seat belt.

Just seconds before the crash, Kailee removed her seat belt to slide over in the backseat and take a selfie with her friend. It was that split second that shattered the hearts of so many.

Car crashes happen more often than we are consciously aware of. You hear they weren't wearing their seat belt and died.

Please always remember:

- Always put on your seat belt—whether you are the driver or a passenger— and make sure everyone is buckled up BEFORE the vehicle is in motion.
- Talk to your children and CONTINUE talking to them about the importance of wearing a seat belt and what the risks are when you do not wear one.
- It only takes three seconds to fasten your seat belt. Those three seconds can change your life and the lives of those who know and love you.
- It takes NO effort to keep your seat belt on. Stay buckled in until your vehicle is safely in park.
- Drive responsibly. It's not worth your life or your passenger's life.
- Adults, it is our responsibility to set the example for the youth around us. Buckle up: every rider, every ride.

Earlier this year, ABM Insurance & Benefit Services sponsored a team and was also a hole sponsor for the Annual Kailee Mills Foundation golf tournament.

Taylor Thornton was our representative (he hit a hole in one at this event last year) he helps our insurance team with Commercial Insurance and is a vital agent for ABM Insurance & Benefit Services.

The golf tournament was at Blackhorse golf course on April 10th. "Our team didn't play as good as we wanted to, so we didn't place or anything. But, it was fun day." said Thornton.



- other assets and financial resources

When will these resources become available? For example, social security survivor benefits are payable immediately to a surviving spouse if there are dependent children. If not, social security may not be available to your spouse until after age 60.

Determine what your survivor's financial needs may be after your death. For simplicity, you might focus on three categories of requirements: final expenses, debts, and income needs.

Next, subtract your survivors' financial resources from their financial needs to determine how much coverage to buy. Many people are underinsured, often because they skip these steps or take a shortcut (such as simply buying a multiple of annual income). For more help in determining the right amount of life insurance, see: *How Much Life Insurance Do I Need?*

3. Decide on your financial goals for your life insurance.

The overall reason for buying life insurance is to leave behind financial resources for who or what is important to you. Premiums payments to the insurance company go toward the death benefit, the financial payout after your death. Many people plan for this money to take care of their final arrangements, cover living expenses for loved ones, or support a favorite cause. However, you can also use a life insurance policy to accumulate savings, maximizing the income you will have for your retirement or providing an income stream after your death for your survivors.

4. Determine what type of life insurance best meets your financial needs.

You may have heard about various categories of life insurance, including term life, whole life, and universal life. Each of these comes with fundamental distinctions. Consider how these differences might work for you.

Term life policies offer payment of a specified death benefit for a specific term of your life, such as five, ten, 15, or 20 years. Term life insurance coverage for most people tends to involve lower premiums; however, the longer the term, the more expensive your premiums may be. If you want insurance coverage for only a specific period or are on a limited budget, a term life policy may be a good fit. However, what if you want to purchase insurance coverage for several decades until your death. Or, perhaps you'd like the option to use some of your premiums to accumulate savings? A whole or universal policy might be a good option in either of these cases. Basic whole life insurance involves a fixed premium and promises a minimum rate of return on the dollars invested, which builds the policy's cash value. A universal life insurance policy may offer the potential to increase the death benefit or adjust premium payments.

5. Find out if you need to add any "riders" to the policy.

Life insurance policies offer primary benefits according to the type of policy you purchase. But your coverage can be expanded or personalized through riders, optional additions to a life insurance policy that provide supplemental coverage or benefits you wouldn't receive with a standard policy. Adding some riders may increase your premiums, while other riders might be free.

There are two riders that you may want to consider: waiver of premium and guaranteed insurability. Some policies come with one or both included with the basic contract, but if not, it is generally a good idea to add them. Waiver of the premium pays the life insurance policy premium for you if you are disabled. Guaranteed insurability permits you to add to the death benefit without providing additional evidence that you are in acceptable health.

6. Shop around to find the best life insurance coverage for you.

There are many ways to save money when buying life insurance, but they don't always entail paying a

lower premium immediately. Nonetheless, life insurance is a very competitive business, and, therefore, quotes can vary significantly between companies. Consider that what's important is that you get the coverage that fits your budget and financial goals. If you choose to work directly with an agent, make sure your agent knows about your financial situation and takes time to explain your options in easy to understand terms.

7. Decide whether to pay annual premiums at once or in installments.

You may have the option to pay an annual lump sum or spread out the yearly cost over smaller, more frequent payments. It may be more cost-effective to pay annually as often there may be a relatively large additional charge for paying in installments. Decided what works best for you.

8. Tell your beneficiaries about your life insurance policy.

Once the policy is purchased, tell your beneficiaries which company issued it, where to find the paper copy of the policy, and any specifics about what you want them to do with the death benefit. While it is rare for people to be unaware they are the beneficiary of a life insurance policy, it does happen, and benefits may go unclaimed. Don't forget to store your documents so that your beneficiaries can easily access them.

For help with your life insurance give our team a call at 1-800-362-2809 or visit ABM Insurance & Benefit Services at www.getagreatquote.com

Meet Our Representative



Debora Taylor

Name – Debora Taylor

Title – Account Manager

Email – debora@getagreatquote.com

How long have you worked at ABM – 5+ years, in the industry for over 30 years (2025)

What do you do at ABM – I work in the employee benefits division. We market and service all types of benefit plans for our client groups. From medical, dental, vision, disability, 401K, etc.

What do you love about your job – Being able to help take the stress off an annual benefits renewal from our client(s) who also wear 10 other hats. They trust that we are bringing the best benefit plans at the best possible rate for their employees. I also love helping the employees make their plan decisions, assisting in getting complicated claims paid correctly, finding the proper facilities for their situation among many other things.

Why do you think ABM is a great company – I love that I work for a small family agency. What we do really matters to our clients. They know that they will never be just a number amongst many others and get lost in the shuffle of a large firm. Mike Alexander, Jr., owner of ABM genuinely cares for all his employees.

Fun Fact- In 2015 I went on a 7-month sailboat trip to the Bahamas and back. Definitely an experience!

ABM Bad Joke Of The Month...

What happens when a frog crashes his car?

He gets toad.



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6 Things To Know and Do Before You Deal With a Home Insurance Claims Adjuster

Written by Ruthe Hall

When it comes to filing an insurance claim, the advice is to only file insurance claims in catastrophic situations, or when you can't self-absorb any losses. If that happens, you'll likely be dealing with a claims adjuster as part of your insurance company's claims process.

Claims adjusters are professionally trained to come to your property and assess damages for the insurance company. In this article, I'll review some things to know and do before you deal with a claims adjuster.

A homeowners insurance policy is an agreement between you and your insurer. You pay a premium, and in exchange, your insurer agrees to compensate you up to your coverage limit in the event of a covered event. But that doesn't mean anytime something goes wrong, they'll write a check.

Insurance companies rely on claims adjusters to investigate claims and determine just how much the insurance company should pay. So, before you deal with a claims adjuster, here are a few helpful things to know:

- Claims Adjusters Inspect Property Damages.

- Claims adjusters — also called insurance adjusters — help insurance companies “settle” claims, or figure out how much to pay a policyholder after property damages or loss.

Imagine this: a kitchen fire damages the structure of part of a home. In this situation, the homeowner can file an insurance claim to help cover the costs of repair. But the homeowner shouldn't expect the insurer to send a check for their full dwelling coverage limit — or any amount at all. The first step for the insurer is to make sure they're actually on the hook, or liable, for compensating you.

Insurance companies will only pay for damages that match your policy's agreement. They generally want to pay the lowest amount needed to make repairs. I say “needed” loosely because there are many factors that go into estimating that amount. And there are even more factors that impact what the final cost of repairs actually is.



A claims adjuster begins the settlement process with an investigation. They come to your property and use several tools — like cameras and measurement devices — to gather info on damages. During this process, you may need to call attention to things that they miss. And don't get rid of anything before it's documented!

After the adjuster makes notes, takes photos and asks you relevant questions, they work to convert damages into dollars. Programs like Xactimate help generate estimates for property claims. Finally, the insurance company will make a settlement — or payout — offer based on info gathered during the investigation.

There Are Three Kinds of Claims Adjusters.

The first thing to know is there are three kinds of claims adjusters: staff, independent, and public. A staff claims adjuster works for a single insurance company. When a claim is filed with that company, they send one of their staff adjusters out to investigate. You won't have to pay a staff claims adjuster because they are paid by the insurance company.

An independent claims adjuster will often work for several insurance companies as a sort of third-party investigator. Like staff claims adjusters, independent claims adjusters work on behalf of insurance companies. However, the key difference is that an independent claims adjuster is not a direct employee of an insurance company.

Finally, a public claims adjuster works for you — the policyholder. In the event of a major accident or natural disaster, it's common for public adjusters to contact you. Since they don't work for insurance companies, they're more likely to have your best interest in mind. That said, public adjusters also charge a percentage of your settlement, which I explain in more detail below.

Public Claims Adjusters Charge a Percentage.

You might be able to find public claims adjusters who are willing to do an initial property visit for free. But if you decide to work together — meaning they're willing to take on your claim and you want them to — you'll have to pay for services.

Fees are typically taken as a percentage of your settlement and can range anywhere from 5%–20%. Where you live impacts how much you'll pay though, as the fees that public claims adjusters charge vary from state to state.

When dealing with a public claims adjuster, you may hear the terms fee limit or fee cap. This simply refers to the highest amount that a public adjuster can charge for working a claim. In Florida, for example, public adjusters have a 10% fee limit for "claims based upon a declared emergency...made during the first year after the declaration of the emergency."

It's not uncommon to feel disappointed by a settlement offer your insurer makes based on the investigations of a staff or independent claims adjuster. If this happens to you, it might be worth hiring a public claims adjuster. Even with their fees, they might help you save a significant amount of money down the line by making sure your insurance company pays you a fair settlement.

Before you hire a public claims adjuster, always check their credentials. Make sure they are licensed to work in whatever state they're practicing. Then look for any reviews or references. To get started, check out the National Association of Independent Insurance Adjusters (NAIIA), your state's insurance department, and the Better Business Bureau.

Things To Do Before You Deal With a Home Insurance Claims Adjuster

Before a claims adjuster arrives, your insurance company might ask you to complete a proof of loss form.

This form is important and allows you to itemize your losses. But this isn't the only thing you'll want to do to prepare. Dealing with damages or loss to your property can be traumatic. It's very important to prepare and be as engaged with the claims process as possible though. Your complete recovery – financial and emotional – depends on it. So, what can you do to make things easier if you find yourself needing to work with a claims adjuster?

Make a List of Everything. Even though it's the claims adjuster's job to document things, they don't know your property like you do. Before one gets to your home, make a list of everything! Be meticulous about recording damages as you see them — make notes, take photos and even grab your phone to record videos that show things from different angles. Don't worry about doing too much. As a rule: It's better to have proof and not need it than to need proof but not have it.

It's never too soon to start keeping track of your things! Don't wait for disaster to strike. Whether you're a scribble-notes-on-paper person or you love a good spreadsheet, do what is easiest for you to keep organized. Clark recommends doing a video walkthrough:

It's also a good idea to itemize your possessions. To do this, keep track of:

- What the item is
- When you purchased the item
- How much you paid
- How much you estimate a repair/replacement will cost

And if something has already happened and you're getting ready to meet with a claims adjuster, be prepared to keep notes of every interaction you have with the insurance company representatives. This includes:

- Date and time of interaction
- Name of representative(s) spoken with
- Details of discussion

Again, while you might not need all of this information, it's better to have it just in case you do. Especially if — at the end of an investigation — your insurance company offers you a low settlement. More on what to do if you get a low settlement offer below.

Gather Your Receipts. Along with any insurance paperwork, keep all your documents related to the contents of your home and any work you've had done on it. Receipts go a long way in proving the value of your belongings. You can keep a folder with receipts. Or maybe you want to take photos with your phone and keep a digital folder. Again, do this in the way that is easiest for you so that — if the time comes for you to submit documentation to your insurer — you're prepared.

Prepare for the Settlement Offer. Even if you do everything your insurance company asks of you, there's a chance they'll offer you a settlement that's lower than you're expecting. While getting a low offer doesn't feel good, mentally preparing for the possibility means you're less likely to be caught off guard if it happens. And there are things you can do if you're facing a low offer from your insurer. First, know that you don't have to rush and accept an offer. Ask questions and request explanations for estimates your insurer provides.

Things You Can Do if You Don't Agree With the Settlement Offer...

If you and the insurance company can't reach an agreement, you can escalate the issue. If you've been dealing with an insurance agent, ask them to connect you with the company's claims department manager. You can also check if your policy allows for independent appraisal after a loss. If so, inform your insurance company that you're going to proceed with an independent appraisal. This is different from a public claims adjuster because an appraiser isn't necessarily looking out for you. An appraiser is simply meant to be an impartial third party that determines the value of your property or the costs

for replacement or repair. When you get an insurance appraiser involved, the third party will ultimately have the binding decision when it comes to your claim. However, there's a chance it won't work out in your favor, but it might be worth it if you think the insurance company is shortchanging you with their offer. And of course, you can also choose to get a public claims adjuster involved. If you're unhappy with a settlement offer, a public claims adjuster can hold your hand through a dispute process against your insurer. They can also help you move forward with negotiations, supplemental claims and more.

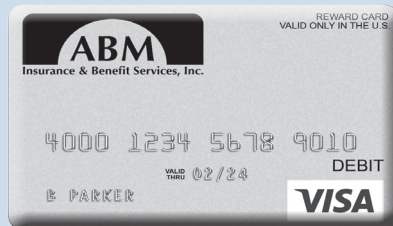
Hopefully, you won't find yourself in a situation where you need to file a claim with your insurance company. But, there are things you can do now to prepare so that — if disaster strikes — you have a clear path forward. Take stock of your valuable items and any upgrades you've made to your home, and update this list once a year. This can be used as proof of item value in the future if anything gets damaged. As a bonus, when it's time to update your home insurance or if you're wondering how much homeowners insurance you need, this list will help you make sure you have enough. And if you need to file a claim in the future, be prepared to work with a claims adjuster and advocate for yourself to make sure you get a fair settlement.

If you would like to be more prepared on adjusters coming to evaluate a claim you may have, please feel free to call one of our experts with any questions before the adjuster arrives. You can reach us at 1-800-362-2809 or send us a note via www.getagreatquote.com

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Be sure to ask about our bonus referral program which rewards our clients who send us business with \$25 Visa Gift card to use at your favorite store or restaurant.

Testimonial



I just wanted to take a minute to let you know how appreciative we were of the help we received in enrolling William (Glenn) in insurance.

Debora Taylor on Friday and Michelle Vincent today on enrolling William (Glenn) in insurance: *Customer service is not always easy, but these women were stellar in their performance. It takes a good team to be successful.*

Thank you again,

-J. Sullivan