

Freedom Account Quick Start Guide

A simple first step toward organized, prepared, and calmer money management

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Page 1 — Understand the Freedom Account System

What is a Freedom Account?

A Freedom Account helps you prepare for expenses that may be irregular, occasional, unexpected, or easy to forget. It is for things like car repairs, insurance, gifts, taxes, vacations, medical costs, or home maintenance — not regular monthly bills such as groceries, rent or mortgage payments, or utilities.

**Your bank moves and holds the real money.
The Freedom Account app helps you plan and track what that money is for.**

Your bank may show one savings balance, but the app helps you divide that money into meaningful purposes.

Sub-Account	Money Reserved
Car Maintenance	750.00
Home Maintenance	1,200.00
Gifts / Holidays	400.00
Vacation	1,500.00
Insurance	900.00

Set up your real-world money path first

The app helps you plan, organize, and track your money, but it does **not** transfer money between bank accounts.

Before using the system with real money, set up a transfer path/link between your regular checking account and the savings or holding account you plan to use for Freedom Account money. This link is what allows money to move between checking and the account holding your Freedom Account savings. You stay in control of how and when real money is moved between linked accounts. A **high-yield savings account (HYSA)** is often a good choice when practical because it can keep planned expense money separate while potentially earning more interest. You may also use a credit union savings account, local bank savings account, or another separate account you choose for Freedom Account money.

- **Checking:** income, regular bills, debit activity, checks, and credit card payments.
- **FA savings/holding account:** planned or likely irregular expense money, often held in a HYSA when practical.
- **Freedom Account app:** tracks what that savings money is for.

Transfers between checking and your Freedom Account savings/holding account often take about **2–3 business days**, but timing can vary by provider. Plan ahead so money is available before a bill or credit card payment is due.

Credit cards are a payment tool, not the plan

Many people use credit cards for convenience, rewards, purchase protection, or online payments. That can still fit with the Freedom Account system.

The credit card may be how you pay. The Freedom Account is how you prepare.

For example, you might pay for a car repair with a credit card. But if the money was already set aside in your Freedom Account savings, you can transfer the amount to checking and pay the credit card bill without stress. That is very different from using a credit card as a bailout because no money was prepared.

How this works with checking and savings

A common workflow: income goes into checking; planned Freedom Account deposits transfer from checking to your Freedom Account savings/holding account; deposits are recorded in the Register; planned expenses are transferred back to checking before payment; expenses are recorded in the Register.

Car repair example: If you have 800.00 reserved and a repair costs 300.00, transfer 300.00 from your Freedom Account savings/holding account to checking, pay the bill or card, enter **-300.00** under Car Maintenance, and mark **R** only after the transaction clears or is confirmed.

Keep FA savings separate from Emergency Fund

Your **Freedom Account savings** is for irregular, occasional, unexpected, or easy-to-forget expenses — things like car repairs, insurance, gifts, holidays, vacations, home maintenance, medical costs, and other expenses you can reasonably expect over time. Regular monthly expenses usually belong in your monthly budget instead.

Your **Emergency Fund** is for true emergencies or income disruption.

When possible, keep these funds separate so you can see what money is reserved for planned expenses and what money is protected for real emergencies.

The more planned expenses you prepare for, the less often normal life feels like an emergency.

Recommended first-time workflow

1. **Start with Demo / Training Data.** Explore Spending Plan setup, Register activity, the 10-10-80 Monthly Budget, Calendar reminders, and printable reports with safe sample data.
2. **Print example reports if helpful.** Demo reports help you understand the system before entering real data.
3. **Explore how deposits work.** Your bank may show one transfer from checking to savings, while the app divides that amount into several sub-accounts.
4. **Explore how expenses work.** Many users transfer money from their Freedom Account savings/holding account to checking first, then pay the bill or credit card.
5. **Use Reset All before entering real data.** Reset All clears demo data so you can start fresh.
6. **Enter your real Spending Plan.** Start simple. You can add more categories later.
7. **Begin using the Freedom Account Register.** Track opening balances, deposits, expenses, interest, transfers, and reconciled transactions. Double-click a Date cell or click the small calendar icon to open the Register popup calendar for Paste Date, Auto Deposit, and Record Interest.

How deposits work

In the Spending Plan, the app calculates how much should go into each sub-account. In the Register, an Auto Deposit can split one real-world bank transfer into the correct categories.

Sub-Account	Deposit
Car Maintenance	75.00
Home Maintenance	100.00
Gifts / Holidays	50.00
Vacation	125.00
Insurance	150.00

The bank tracks the transfer. The app tracks the purpose.

Deposit goal rhythm: Monthly is common, but some users choose Bi-Monthly, Bi-Weekly, or Weekly to match paycheck timing. This can move planned money to your Freedom Account savings/holding account sooner. A HYSA is often a good choice when practical, but other separate savings accounts can also be used. Moving the money sooner can reduce the temptation to spend checking money before it reaches its Freedom Account job.

Changing the deposit goal affects future Auto Deposits only. It does not rewrite past Register deposits. If the same Auto Deposit appears to be posted twice for the same date and amount, the app warns you before recording another one.

Start small and build confidence

You do not need to create every possible sub-account on day one. Many users begin with just 2 or 3 common irregular expenses that are most likely to happen in their life.

- Christmas, holiday, or birthday gifts
- Car repairs and maintenance
- Vacation
- Insurance

- Home repairs
- Medical or dental expenses
- Clothing
- Taxes

Starting small helps you learn without feeling overwhelmed. As confidence grows, add more sub-accounts. Each new category gives more future money a clear purpose and creates more freedom because the money is already set aside.

Good habits

- Save your work often.
- Create backup copies before major changes.
- Use the Register regularly.

- Keep bank, checking, and Freedom Account records aligned.
- Plan ahead for transfers from your Freedom Account savings/holding account.
- When your plan is stable, consider scheduled automatic transfers.
- Review scheduled transfers after Spending Plan changes.
- Start small and build confidence over time.

For existing Excel Freedom Account users

This newer app is designed to feel familiar to Excel Freedom Account users while adding safer validation, clearer backup/restore tools, printable reports, and a more guided learning experience. For more detail, use the full Help Center.

How expenses work

When a planned expense is coming due, make sure enough money is available in checking. Many users transfer the needed amount from their Freedom Account savings/holding account to checking first, then pay the bill or credit card.

Category	Expense
Car Maintenance	-300.00

This reduces the category balance so you can see what remains reserved for future expenses.

Internal transfer: Useful when one category has extra money and another category needs help. Example: move 50.00 from Vacation to Car Maintenance by entering **-50.00** in Vacation and **50.00** in Car Maintenance on the same Register row. The Total stays 0.00, so the overall Freedom Account balance does not change — only which category holds the money.