

The S3 Time-Segmented Bucket Planner

Mastering the Mountain Descent of Retirement Distribution

Created by SafeSimpleSound Financial Planning

Financial Excellence • Educational Generosity

Your S3 Retirement Structure Guide

What You'll Discover:

- **Safe:** How to create an “immunity shield” against short-term market crashes.
 - **Simple:** A visual way to organize your money based on *when* you need it, not just *how* it grows.
 - **Sound:** The mathematical confidence to spend your savings without the fear of running out.
 - **Advantage:** How to integrate the precision of math with the reality of human emotion using the “Both/And” approach.
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The “Mountain Descent” Philosophy

Accumulating wealth is like climbing a mountain—the goal is to get to the top. Distributing wealth is the descent. The risks are different; gravity (market volatility and withdrawals) is working against you.

At SafeSimpleSound (S3), we don't rely on “average returns” alone, because you can't pay your bills with an average. We use a Time-Segmented Framework (Buckets) to ensure that no matter what the market does today, your paycheck for tomorrow is secure.

The Core Conflict: Growth vs. Safety

- **The Dilemma:** If you keep everything safe (cash), inflation destroys your purchasing power. If you keep everything growing (stocks), a market crash can destroy your retirement if you are forced to sell.
- **The S3 Solution:** We don't choose *either* Safety *or* Growth. We choose **Both**, separated by time.

Your Bucket Planning Workshop

Phase 1: Foundation (The “Now” Bucket)

Safe Foundation Priority: Immediate Liquidity & Psychological Security.

This bucket protects you from “Sequence of Returns Risk”—the danger of having to sell stocks when the market is down just to pay bills.

- **Time Horizon:** Years 1–2
- **Purpose:** To pay your monthly bills regardless of Wall Street chaos.
- **Asset Type:** Cash, Money Market, High-Yield Savings.

Your Action Step:

1. Calculate your Annual Income Gap (Expenses minus Pension/Social Security):
\$ _____
2. Multiply by 2 Years: \$ _____
3. This is your “Now” Bucket Goal.

Insight: When the market drops, you don't panic. You simply spend from this bucket and give your growth assets time to recover.

Phase 2: Integration (The “Soon” Bucket)

Simple Systems Priority: Reliable Income & Stability.

This bucket buys you patience. It bridges the gap between your cash and your long-term growth, acting as a buffer against prolonged recessions.

- **Time Horizon:** Years 3–10
- **Purpose:** To replenish Bucket 1 and provide yield.
- **Asset Type:** Bonds, Dividend Stocks, Fixed Income, CD Ladders.

Your Action Step:

1. Take your Annual Income Gap: \$_____
2. Multiply by 8 Years: \$_____
3. This is your “Soon” Bucket Goal.

Insight: This “Simple” middle ground prevents the emotional urge to sell high-growth assets at the wrong time.

Phase 3: Optimization (The “Later” Bucket)

Sound Wisdom Priority: Long-Term Growth & Inflation Protection.

Because we have covered the first 10 years of income in Buckets 1 and 2, this money can be invested for maximum growth. It has the luxury of time to recover from volatility.

- **Time Horizon:** Year 11+
- **Purpose:** To hedge against inflation and leave a legacy.
- **Asset Type:** Global Equities, Real Estate, Growth Funds.

Your Action Step:

1. Total Investable Assets: \$_____
2. Subtract Bucket 1 and Bucket 2: -\$_____
3. The Result is your “Later” Bucket.

Insight: This is where “Sound” wealth is built. Volatility here doesn’t matter, because you won’t touch this money for a decade.

The Both/And Strategy Check

Does your current portfolio match this structure?

Use this checklist to identify if your current strategy is “Constitutional” or if it exposes you to unnecessary risk.

Principle	Traditional “Average Return” Approach	S3 Time- Segmented Approach	Your Status
Safe Foundation	Money is mixed together; you might sell stocks in a crash.	Bucket 1 ensures 2 years of bills are cash-secure.	<input type="checkbox"/> Secure <input type="checkbox"/> At Risk
Simple Clarity	Constant worry about “what the market did today.”	You only worry about Bucket 1 refilling; the rest is working.	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear <input type="checkbox"/> Anxious
Sound Wisdom	Hoping average returns work out over time.	Bucket 3 has a 10+ year runway to endure cycles.	<input type="checkbox"/> Planned <input type="checkbox"/> Hoping

Solving the “Rigid Rules” Paradox

Many retirees try to use the 4% Rule (withdraw 4% annually) but panic when the market drops 20%.

The S3 Resolution: We use Buckets (Structure) to buy the patience required for the 4% Rule (Math) to work. You don’t have to choose between a rigid rule and emotional investing. You use the structure to protect the math.

Insights Summary

Key S3 Differentiator: We replace the anxiety of “Market Timing” with the structure of “Time Segmentation.” We don’t predict the market; we prepare your liquidity.

Educational Generosity Promise: Even if you manage your own investments, organizing them into these three timeframes will immediately lower your financial stress.

Stakeholder Synthesis: This plan protects your current lifestyle (Safe), your future buying power (Sound), and your peace of mind (Simple).

Your Next Steps

Immediate Action (Next 7 days): Identify your “Income Gap” and ensure you have at least 1 year of cash in a high-yield savings account (Bucket 1 start).

Foundation Building (Next 30 days): Review your bonds and fixed income. Do they cover years 3–10 of your income needs? If not, you may be taking too much risk.

Professional Support: If you aren’t sure which assets belong in which bucket, or how to handle Tax Efficiency (which account to pull from first), we can help you build your custom plan.

About SafeSimpleSound Financial Planning

Our Promise: We help you navigate the “Descent” of retirement with a foundation-first approach that prioritizes the reliability of your income over the vanity of your returns.

Educational Generosity Commitment: We believe financial clarity is a right. This framework is yours to keep and use.

Contact Us: www.safesimplesound.com/contact

Our Philosophy: www.safesimplesound.com/philosophy

This document embodies S3's commitment to educational generosity. Whether you become a client or not, this framework provides genuine value for your retirement journey.

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