

## Catch Up On Your Retirement Savings

*Six common problems and how to solve them. It's never too late to build your nest egg.*

By Mary Beth Franklin

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When your wallet is pinched each time you fill your gas tank or grocery cart, it's tempting to cut back on retirement savings. In fact, in a recent AARP survey of workers 45 and older, one-third of those who responded said they had stopped contributing to their retirement plans and another 23% had tapped their retirement funds prematurely.

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But the long-term impact of doing either of those things can be devastating -- especially if, like Rebecca Edgar of San Diego or Sam Ardery of Bloomington, Ind., you're already behind in saving for retirement. Edgar, 40, is recently divorced and is starting her nest egg from scratch. Ardery, 50, is still recovering from a failed real estate venture more than a dozen years ago.

But in both cases, they (and others interviewed by Kiplinger's) are able to tap sometimes-unexpected resources that can help them play catch-up. And you can benefit from their experiences. You may not be able to alter major economic trends, such as rising inflation, a volatile stock market and declining home values. But you can focus on key elements within your control: how much money you save, where you invest it and when you plan to retire.

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