
Sherwood Investment Services
Financial Planning & Investment Management
Eric Linger, Principal
Registered Investment Advisor

425-898-8989
Sherwood-Investments.com
elinger@Sherwood-Investments.com

23705 NE 61st Street
Redmond, WA 98053

The Savvy Investor
Social Security – Two Simple Rules

The rules regarding Social Security can be confusing. But there are two rules which cover many common situations.

Rule No. 1

First, if you file for Social Security before Full Retirement Age (FRA), you must file for any and all benefits you are potentially due, both on your record and on a spouse's account. This usually means that you can NOT file for reduced benefits on a spouse's Social Security record and then later file for full benefits on your own record. Conversely, you can NOT file for reduced retirement benefits on your own record and later switch to full benefits on a spouse's record — unless your spouse is not yet getting Social Security at the time you apply for your own reduced retirement. (This unrestricted application rule does NOT apply to benefits for widows and widowers.)

Rule No. 2

The second basic Social Security rule is that if you wait until your full retirement age to file for benefits, the first rule (above) goes out the window. In other words, at age 66, you can file for one benefit and later —at age 70 — switch to higher benefits. Obviously, waiting to claim Social Security gives you more flexibility.

Bottom Line

Waiting until your FRA to claim Social Security Benefits gives you flexibility that you do not get if you file before FRA. But this alone should not determine the best age to claim benefits.

We specialize in helping people plan and invest for retirement