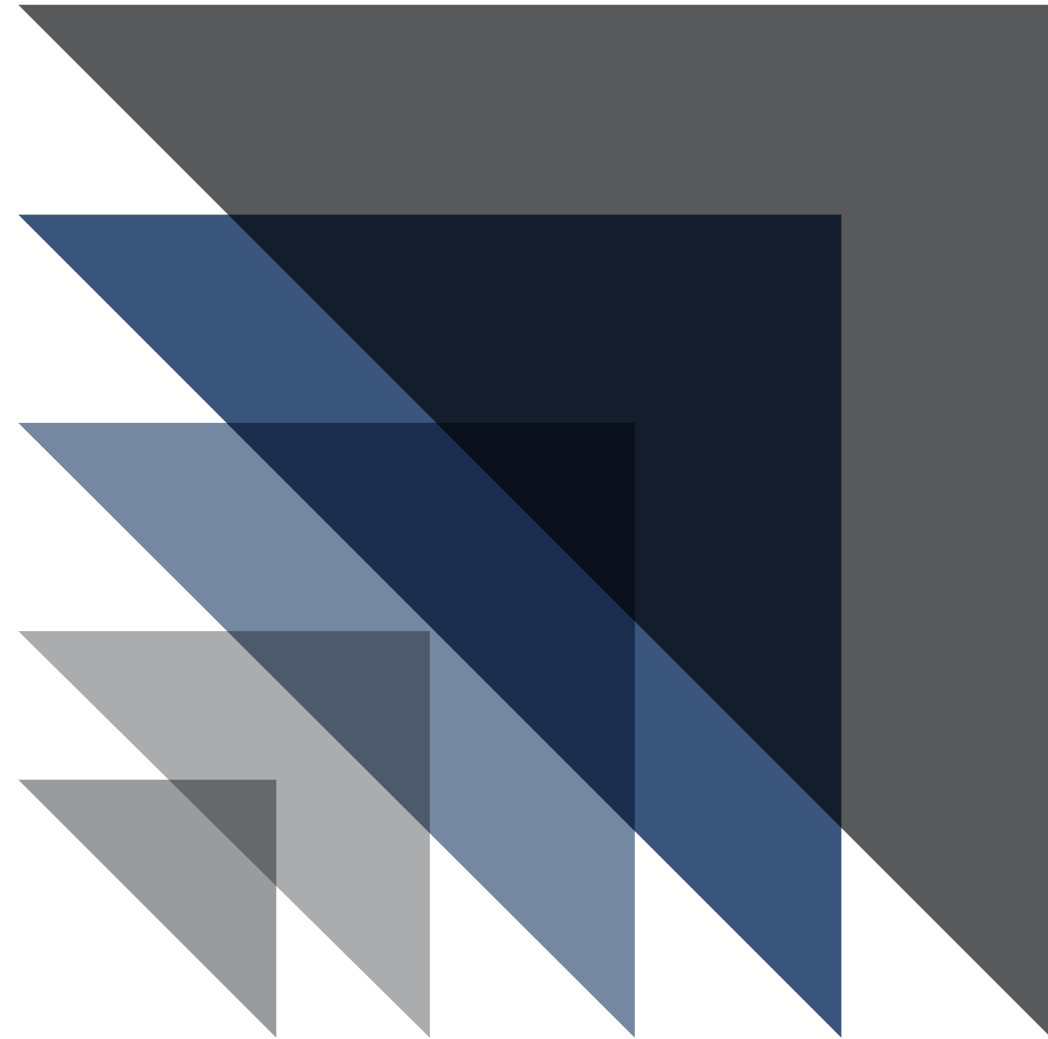


---

## PURSUING A BETTER INVESTMENT EXPERIENCE

Key Principles to Improve Your Odds of Success



# 1 EMBRACE MARKET PRICING

The market is an effective information-processing machine. Millions of participants buy and sell securities in the world markets every day, and the real-time information they bring helps set prices.

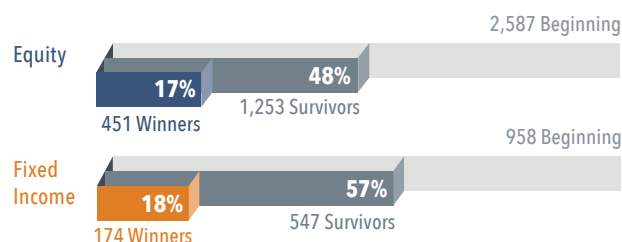
World Equity Trading in 2016 (daily average)



# 2 DON'T TRY TO OUTGUESS THE MARKET

The market's pricing power works against mutual fund managers who try to outperform through stock picking or market timing. As evidence, only 17% of US equity mutual funds and 18% of fixed income funds have survived and outperformed their benchmarks over the past 15 years.

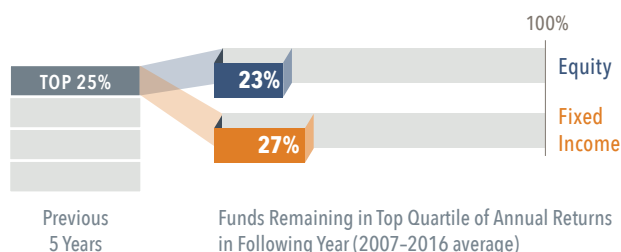
US-Based Mutual Fund Performance, 2002-2016



# 3 RESIST CHASING PAST PERFORMANCE

Some investors select mutual funds based on past returns. However, research shows that most funds in the top quartile (25%) of previous five-year returns did not maintain a top-quartile ranking for one-year returns in the following year. Past performance offers little insight into a fund's future returns.

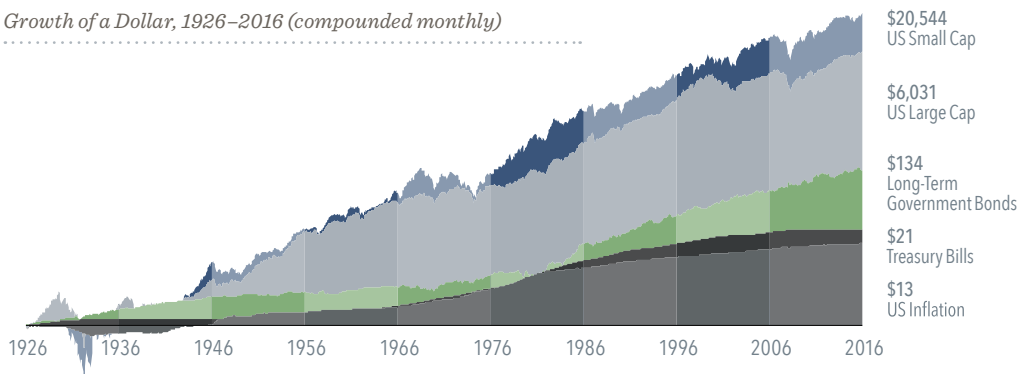
Percentage of Top-Ranked Funds That Stayed on Top



# 4 LET MARKETS WORK FOR YOU

The financial markets have rewarded long-term investors. People expect a positive return on the capital they supply, and historically, the equity and bond markets have provided growth of wealth that has more than offset inflation.

Growth of a Dollar, 1926-2016 (compounded monthly)



# 5 CONSIDER THE DRIVERS OF RETURNS

Academic research has identified these equity and fixed income dimensions, which point to differences in expected returns. Investors can pursue higher expected returns by structuring their portfolio around these dimensions.

Dimensions of Expected Returns



Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Indices are not available for direct investment. Index performance does not reflect the expenses associated with the management of an actual portfolio.

## 6 PRACTICE SMART DIVERSIFICATION

Diversification helps reduce risks that have no expected return, but diversifying within your home market is not enough. Global diversification can broaden your investment universe.

### Home Market Index Portfolio



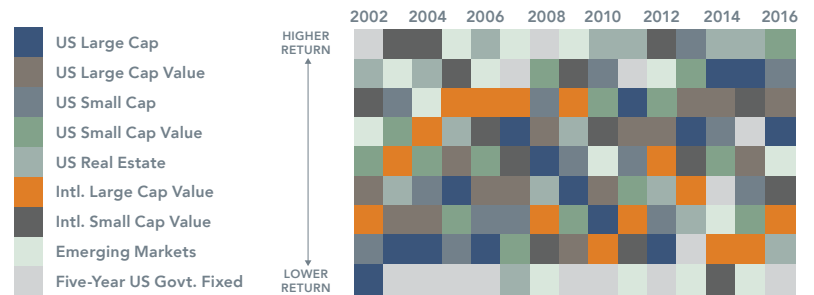
### Global Market Index Portfolio



## 7 AVOID MARKET TIMING

You never know which market segments will outperform from year to year. By holding a globally diversified portfolio, investors are well positioned to seek returns wherever they occur.

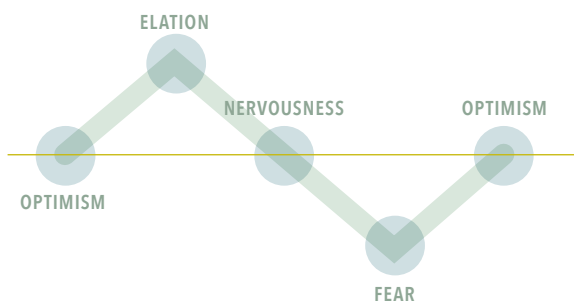
### Annual Returns by Market Index



## 8 MANAGE YOUR EMOTIONS

Many people struggle to separate their emotions from investing. Markets go up and down. Reacting to current market conditions may lead to making poor investment decisions.

### Avoid Reactive Investing



## 9 LOOK BEYOND THE HEADLINES

Daily market news and commentary can challenge your investment discipline. Some messages stir anxiety about the future, while others tempt you to chase the latest investment fad. When headlines unsettle you, consider the source and maintain a long-term perspective.

RETIRE RICH

SELL STOCKS NOW!

THE LOOMING RECESSION

THE TOP 10 FUNDS TO OWN

MARKET HITS RECORD HIGH!

HOUSING MARKET BOOM!

## 10 FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL

A financial advisor can offer expertise and guidance to help you focus on actions that add value. This can lead to a better investment experience.

- Create an investment plan to fit your needs and risk tolerance
- Structure a portfolio along the dimensions of expected returns
- Diversify globally
- Manage expenses, turnover, and taxes
- Stay disciplined through market dips and swings

**Disclosures:**

**Exhibit 1:** In US dollars. Source: World Federation of Exchanges members, affiliates, correspondents, and non-members. Trade data from the global electronic order book. Daily averages were computed using year-to-date totals as of December 31, 2016, divided by 250 as an approximate number of annual trading days.

**Exhibit 2:** The sample includes funds at the beginning of the 15-year period ending December 31, 2016. Each fund is evaluated relative to the Morningstar benchmark assigned to the fund's category at the start of the evaluation period. Surviving funds are those with return observations for every month of the sample period. Winner funds are those that survived and whose cumulative net return over the period exceeded that of their respective Morningstar category benchmark.

**Exhibit 3:** At the end of each year, funds are sorted within their category based on their five-year total return. Funds in the top quartile (25%) of returns are evaluated again in the following year based on one-year performance in order to determine the percentage of funds that maintained a top-quartile ranking. The analysis is repeated each year from 2007–2016. The chart shows average persistence of top-quartile funds during the 10-year period.

**Source (Exhibits 2 and 3):** US-domiciled open-end mutual fund data is from Morningstar and Center for Research in Security Prices (CRSP) from the University of Chicago. Index funds and fund-of-funds are excluded from the sample. Equity fund sample includes the Morningstar historical categories: Diversified Emerging Markets, Europe Stock, Foreign Large Blend, Foreign Large Growth, Foreign Large Value, Foreign Small/Mid Blend, Foreign Small/Mid Growth, Foreign Small/Mid Value, Japan Stock, Large Blend, Large Growth, Large Value, Mid-Cap Blend, Mid-Cap Value, Miscellaneous Region, Pacific/Asia ex-Japan Stock, Small Blend, Small Growth, Small Value, and World Stock. Fixed income fund sample includes the Morningstar historical categories: Corporate Bond, Inflation-Protected Bond, Intermediate Government, Intermediate-Term Bond, Muni California Intermediate, Muni National Intermediate, Muni National Short, Muni New York Intermediate, Muni Single State Short, Short Government, Short-Term Bond, Ultrashort Bond, and World Bond. See Dimensional's "Mutual Fund Landscape 2017" for more detail. Benchmark data provided by Bloomberg Barclays, MSCI, Russell, Citigroup, and S&P. Bloomberg Barclays data provided by Bloomberg. MSCI data © MSCI 2017, all rights reserved. Frank Russell Company is the source and owner of the trademarks, service marks, and copyrights related to the Russell Indexes. Citi fixed income indices © 2017 by Citigroup. The S&P data is provided by Standard & Poor's Index Services Group.

**Exhibit 4:** In US dollars. US Small Cap is the CRSP 6–10 Index. US Large Cap is the S&P 500 Index. Long-Term Government Bonds is the IA SBBI US LT Govt TR USD. Treasury Bills is the IA SBBI US 30 Day TBill TR USD. US Inflation is measured as changes in the US Consumer Price Index. CRSP data is provided by the Center for Research in Security Prices, University of Chicago. The S&P data is provided by Standard & Poor's Index Services Group. Long-term government bonds and Treasury bills data provided by Ibbotson Associates via Morningstar Direct. US Consumer Price Index data is provided by the US Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics.

**Exhibit 5:** Relative price is measured by the price-to-book ratio; value stocks are those with lower price-to-book ratios. Profitability is a measure of current profitability, based on information from individual companies' income statements.

**Exhibit 6:** Number of holdings and countries for the S&P 500 Index and MSCI ACWI (All Country World Index) Investable Market Index (IMI) as of December 31, 2016. The S&P data is provided by Standard & Poor's Index Services Group. MSCI data © MSCI 2017, all rights reserved. International investing involves special risks such as currency fluctuation and political instability. Investing in emerging markets may accentuate these risks.

**Exhibit 7:** In US dollars. US Large Cap is the S&P 500 Index. US Large Cap Value is the Russell 1000 Value Index. US Small Cap is the Russell 2000 Index. US Small Cap Value is the Russell 2000 Value Index. US Real Estate is the Dow Jones US Select REIT Index. International Large Cap Value is the MSCI World ex USA Value Index (net dividends). International Small Cap Value is the MSCI World ex USA Small Cap Value Index (net dividends). Emerging Markets is the MSCI Emerging Markets Index (net dividends). Five-Year US Government Fixed is the Bloomberg Barclays US TIPS Index 1–5 Years. The S&P data is provided by Standard & Poor's Index Services Group. Frank Russell Company is the source and owner of the trademarks, service marks, and copyrights related to the Russell Indexes. Dow Jones data provided by Dow Jones Indices. MSCI data © MSCI 2017, all rights reserved. Bloomberg Barclays data provided by Bloomberg. Chart is for illustrative purposes only.

Guardian Wealth Strategies, LLC is an independent, fee-only, SEC Registered Investment Advisor (RIA).

Guardian Wealth Strategies | 6465 Wayzata Boulevard | Suite 320 | Minneapolis, MN 55426 | [www.myguardianwealth.com](http://www.myguardianwealth.com)

