



# The Money Monsters Defense

Check your defenses, then feel the fee monster bite with the calculator.

**INFLATION** I know the real return on every account

Rate minus inflation. Negative = a loss called safe.

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**TAXES** Tax-advantaged accounts come first

401(k), IRA, HSA, Roth before any taxable brokerage.

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**TAXES** I hold winners past 12 months

Long-term gains: 20%. Short-term: up to 37%.

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**BEHAVIOR** My rules are written before the next drop

The behavior gap cost the average investor \$1.63M per \$100K over 30 years.

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**BEHAVIOR** I check long-term money quarterly, not daily

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Feel the fee monster: a future portfolio of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

What a 1% fee eats over 20 years

Same market, one point of fees. Swap to index funds when the gap clears 0.5%.

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**It's not what you make. It's what you keep.**

Four monsters: inflation, taxes, behavior, fees.