

## Talking About Investing: Retirement Planning?

Hi. My name is Toby and I'm your “teacher” at Bite-Sized-English.com. I'm 29 years old and that means I'm almost halfway to my “retirement.” Retirement is the part of your life when you stop—or slow down—working and start 'relaxing.' In Germany, it's normal to start retirement when you're sixty-five or sixty-seven years old.

When I was twenty, I thought of **investing** as something for rich people with too much money. Now, though, I think that I am getting closer to retirement, and maybe I should make some **investments** to prepare for retirement. Most **investors**, I now think, aren't investing because they are rich. I think they're investing to reach some kind of **goal**: to be ready for retirement, to help their children go through college, to buy a house someday.

And I have goals like that. I want to retire with enough money to travel and read and spoil my grandchildren. And before I have grandchildren, I want to help my (future) children out. So, I guess I should be an investor, too. The problem is just that I don't know what investments to make.

I'm not smart enough—or patient enough—to spend a lot of time **analyzing stocks and bonds**. And I think I need to be both smart and patient to do well in the stock market. I have a hard time imagining myself **buying and selling** anything—but especially things like stocks—very well.

For a while, I tried to buy and sell used books and I learned something: there's a good reason that I'm a teacher and not a businessman. I was able to make decent **returns** on the investment I made in the books, but it took a lot of time and energy.

Of course, not everything about retirement is difficult. There are retirement programs: in the U.S., we call the government's program “Social Security” and in Germany everyone is required to pay for “retirement insurance.” And I know that I'll have a certain 'minimum' income, but I want more! Unfortunately, I don't know what the best way is to get more money.

So, while I'm thinking about retirement **planning**, what are your financial goals? Are any of the readers and listeners out there professional investors? All of us, I think, hope to live long enough to reach retirement. What are your plans? Are you saving? Investing? Do you think that buying your own home is a good investment? Will you be using a retirement plan? Let me know!