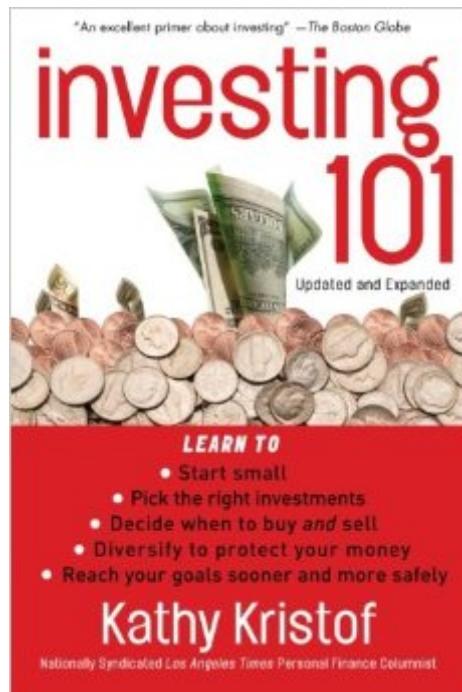


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Investing 101



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Synopsis

People wanting basic advice about stocks, bonds, mutual funds, retirement planning, and tax strategies are often frustrated by information overload. Picking the right book seems as daunting as deciding what to do with their savings and investments. *Investing 101: Updated and Expanded* removes both roadblocks, putting people on a path that they can understand and stick with. Kristof is renowned for taking the mystery and anxiety out of investing by keeping choices manageable. Kristof walks readers through the entire investment cycle and the way they think of their financial lives, rather than presenting stand-alone concepts like stocks and real estate. This expanded edition has new information about 529 college savings plans, annuities, Roth IRAs, reverse mortgages, and why declining markets can be good for you. It includes a cautionary look at home mortgages as investments. There's even a portfolio for the lazy investor. Kristof's loyal readership and the success of this book's first edition demonstrate that she understands what's on the minds of investors as intimately as she knows what's happening in financial markets. Winner: Cover and Interior Design, The Bookbinders Guild of New York/2009 New York Book Show Awards

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Customer Reviews

This review is about the updated and expanded 2008 edition of *Investing 101* by Kathy Kristof, nationally syndicated Personal Finance Columnist for the Los Angeles Times. I approached this book from two perspectives, first, as a teacher (retired) of technical subject matter and, second, as a self-reliant investor (active) who is living out of his retirement funds. View One As a teacher, I had three objectives for students who took my courses. I expected students who completed my courses

to come away with: (1) an appreciation for the discipline, (2) an understanding of the subject matter, and (3) a proficiency for putting the discipline into practice. If I were teaching Investing 101, could I realistically expect my students to achieve these same objectives with Kristof's composition as their textbook? The answer is Yes, Yes, and Yes. (And, yes, I know that Investing 101 was not written as a textbook, but please bear with me for the sake of this review.) First, I believe my Investing 101 students will come away with a positive attitude toward the discipline of do-it-yourself investing. The FUD factor (fear, uncertainty, and doubt about private investing) is more than adequately addressed by Kristof in the first chapter of her book. I am convinced that an attitude check at the beginning of my make-believe course compared with the same attitude check at the end of the course would show that anxieties toward individual investing will be allayed because of Kristof's practical advice.

I found this book like I always find the better books on investment- by browsing the shelves at my local library. When I found this book, I recalled the author from my many days reading the LA Times business section, in which she writes a very useful column, and on that basis, even though I am well beyond the basics, decided to give her book a quick read. Well, as luck would have it, a 'quick read' turned into three days of note-taking, with heavy emphasis on the first few chapters. Although I am far from a beginning investor, and still consider myself to be an amateur at The Grand Game, I found that this book, while pitched at the novice, actually assisted me tremendously in re-considering the investment conundrum. Kristof is right when she says that one's investments should match one's stated goals for the future. Everything begins and ends with the goals that you have for yourself, and these goals should in turn determine what sort of investments that you should consider pursuing. Kristof is also on the money when she says that emotional spending more often than not leads to indebtedness. I believe that her best advice in the book is non-financial in that she advocates the beginner taking control over his or her future, and by extension, actively investing is one of the means by which he or she can obtain this. That said, I did not agree with everything that she said in the book. For example, I regard her advice on diversification to be useful only to those that have a lot of money and truly do not know what they are doing. I don't think that you have to have a hand in every little thing that's out there, from stocks to bonds to real estate to commodities (like gold).

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