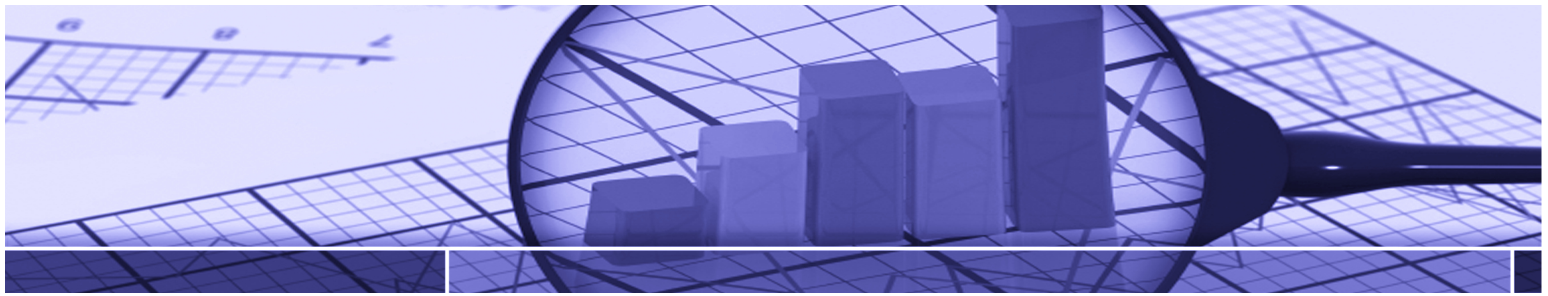

Nicholson Financial Services, Inc.
David S. Nicholson
Financial Advisor
89 Access Road
Ste. C
Norwood, MA 02062
781-255-1101
866-668-1101
david@nicholsonfs.com
www.nicholsonfs.com

RAYMOND JAMES®

Inflation-Fighting TIPS

It's easy to see how inflation affects your daily life. Gas prices are higher. Electric bills are steeper. Wallets are thinner. But what inflation does to your investments isn't always as obvious. Let's say your money is earning 4% and inflation is running between 3% and 4% (its historical average). That means your so-called "real return" — the stated return minus inflation — is only 1% at best. After you subtract any account fees, taxes, and other expenses, you could actually end up with a negative number.

What can you do to keep from losing the race against inflation? One way is to buy investments that are designed to keep pace automatically.

Take stock of TIPS

Since the U.S. Treasury introduced them in 1997, Treasury Inflation-Protected Securities (TIPS) have become the most widely known example of what are generally referred to as "inflation-protected securities." TIPS may be attractive to long-term investors who want to preserve the purchasing power of their money over time. Investors also may like the security of knowing their investment is backed by the U.S. government as to the timely payment of principal and interest.

Like other Treasury bonds or notes, TIPS are basically loans to the U.S. government. You receive interest payments every six months based on a fixed interest rate specified in advance. With most bonds, it's easy to know the exact amount of money you'll receive each year. You simply multiply the principal — the amount of your initial investment — by the interest rate.

TIPS work a little differently. Instead of guaranteeing how much you'll be paid in interest, an inflation-protected security guarantees that your real return will keep up with inflation. The interest rate stays fixed; what you won't know is the exact dollar amount of the payments you'll receive. If inflation goes up, your return will increase to match it. With TIPS, you're trading the certainty of knowing exactly how much you'll receive for the knowledge that your investment will maintain its buying power, as long as you hold the bond until it matures.

How do TIPS work?

TIPS pay slightly lower interest rates than equivalent Treasury securities that don't adjust for inflation. The reason for that reduced rate? Your TIPS principal is automatically adjusted twice a year to match any increases or decreases in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), a widely used measure of inflation. If the CPI increases, the Treasury recalculates your principal to reflect the increase.

For example, let's say you buy $20,000 worth of TIPS that pay a fixed interest rate of 2.5%. Over the next six months, the CPI rises at an annual rate of 3%. Your $20,000 principal would go up by 1.5% (half of the 3% annual inflation rate) to $20,300.

This adjustment will affect the amount of your semi-annual interest payments. Even though the interest rate stays the same, it's applied to the recalculated amount of your principal. In this example, the 2.5% interest rate would be applied to the new $20,300 figure. The actual dollar amount paid in interest goes up because it's based on a higher principal; instead of $250, your next semi-annual payment would be $253.75. If inflation goes up again, your next payment will be higher still. (The return on a specific bond may be different, of course, since this is only a hypothetical illustration designed to show how the return on a TIPS is calculated.)

If the CPI figure is lower in six months, your principal will be adjusted accordingly when it's recalculated; that in turn will affect the amount of your next interest payment. If there's a period of deflation and the CPI is actually a negative number, your principal and interest payment would both drop.

The inflation adjustment feature means that if you hold a TIPS until it matures, your repaid principal will likely be higher than when you bought the bond. Even if the CPI turns negative and the economy experiences deflation, the amount you'll receive when

the bond matures will be the greater of the inflation-adjusted figure or the amount of your original investment.

Calculating the TIPS Advantage

How do you know whether owning a TIPS makes sense? Subtract the TIPS interest rate from the rate for an equivalent bond without the inflation-protection feature. If the inflation rate is higher than the difference between the two rates, the TIPS may have an advantage.		
If a TIPS pays ...	And equivalent non-TIPS yield is ...	Inflation rate needed for a TIPS advantage is ...
2.5%	4.5%	More than 2%
3%	6%	More than 3%

Things to think about

You can still lose money with a TIPS if you don't hold it until it matures. Inflation rates rise and fall, and as with any bond, the returns offered by other investments can affect the market value of your TIPS. Also, if inflation turns out to be less over time than you had anticipated when you invested, the total return on a TIPS could actually be less than that of a comparable Treasury security without the inflation-adjustment feature.

If the inflation rate over time isn't high enough to make up for the difference between the lower interest rate of a TIPS and that of an investment without inflation protection, the TIPS has no advantage. That's why TIPS may be appropriate for only part of your bond holdings.

There's another catch. You'll also need to think about the federal taxes that will be due each year on the interest and any increases in your principal. Even though the Treasury records the changes in your principal every six months, you don't actually receive that money until the TIPS matures. However, the government still taxes that increase each year as if you've received the cash. Many investors prefer to postpone that tax bill by holding TIPS in a tax-deferred account such as an IRA.

How can I buy TIPS?

You can buy TIPS individually, with maturities of 5, 10, or 30 years, and in $100 increments (although individual brokers may have higher minimum purchase requirements). You could choose a selection of TIPS that mature at different times. When the shorter-term bonds mature, you could reinvest that principal into either another TIPS or some other type of bond. Known as "laddering," this strategy gives you flexibility as interest rates change. If interest rates are higher than the bond that's maturing, you can invest at a higher rate; if rates are lower, you might prefer an investment that offers a higher return. Also, if you will need some of your principal for a specific goal, such as college tuition, you can select maturity dates that return your principal at the right time.

Another possibility is a mutual fund, which may invest in TIPS only or mix them with inflation-protected securities from other entities, such as foreign governments. Typically, a fund invests in a variety of debt instruments to balance the higher interest rates usually offered by longer-term bonds with the flexibility of shorter maturities. A TIPS mutual fund pays out not only the interest but also any annual inflation adjustments, which are taxed as short-term capital gains. Some exchange-traded funds (ETFs) also invest in an index composed of TIPS with various maturities.

Note: *Before investing in a mutual fund, carefully consider its investment objectives, risks, fees, and expenses, which are contained in the prospectus available from the fund or your financial professional. Review it carefully before investing.*

Your financial professional can help you decide which choices may be appropriate as you race to keep up with rising costs. However, there is no guarantee that working with a financial professional will improve investment results.

Securities offered through Raymond James Financial Services, Inc. Member FINRA/SIPC. Nicholson Financial Services, Inc. is not a registered broker/dealer, and is independent of Raymond James Financial Services. Investment Advisory Services are offered through Raymond James Financial Services Advisors, Inc.

This information, developed by an independent third party, has been obtained from sources considered to be reliable, but Raymond James Financial Services, Inc. does not guarantee that the foregoing material is accurate or complete. This information is not a complete summary or statement of all available data necessary for making an investment decision and does not constitute a recommendation. The information contained in this report does not purport to be a complete description of the securities, markets, or developments referred to in this material. This information is not intended as a solicitation or an offer to buy or sell any security referred to herein. Investments mentioned may not be suitable for all investors. The material is general in nature. Past performance may not be indicative of future results. Raymond James Financial Services, Inc. does not provide advice on tax, legal or mortgage issues. These matters should be discussed with the appropriate professional.

Prepared by Broadridge Investor Communication Solutions, Inc. Copyright 2022