

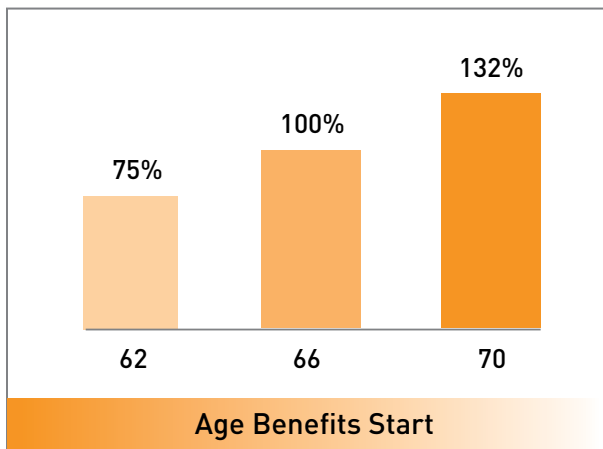
THINKING ABOUT RETIREMENT?

Here's an important question:



When Should I Take Social Security?

You can start as early as age 62. But your monthly benefit will be higher — for the rest of your life — if you can wait.



To calculate your retirement benefit, Social Security uses a **full retirement age** based on your birth year. It is the age when you become eligible for full, unreduced benefits. Your full retirement age is 66 or 67, depending on when you were born.

When is your full retirement age?	
If you were born in:	Your full retirement age is:
1943-54	66
1955	66 and 2 months
1956	66 and 4 months
1957	66 and 6 months
1958	66 and 8 months
1959	66 and 10 months
1960 or later	67

If you take Social Security before your full retirement age, your benefits are **reduced**.

If you wait after your full retirement age — up to age 70 — your benefits are **increased**.

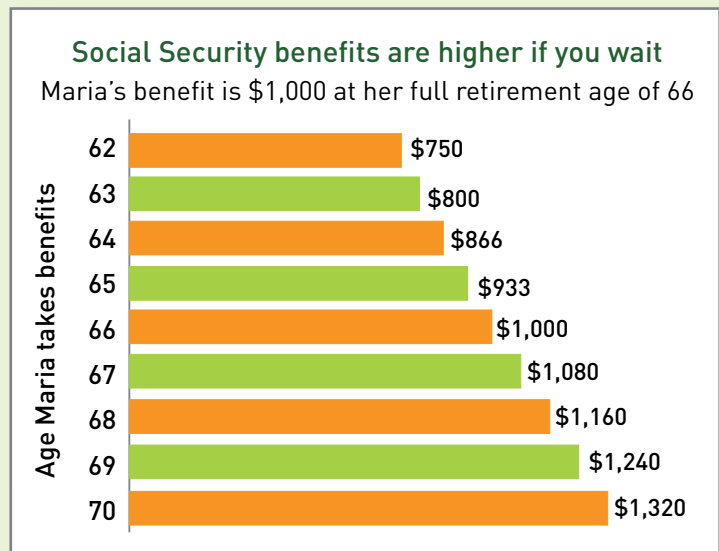
Waiting even a year or two helps.

Here's an example:

Maria has earned a monthly benefit of \$1,000 at her full retirement age, 66.

If she takes Social Security early, at 62, her monthly benefit will be \$750.

But if she can wait until 70, her monthly benefit will be \$1,320.



Maria's benefit at age 70 is 76% higher than if she had started taking benefits at age 62.

Waiting — if you can — can make a big difference in your retirement benefits.

But what if I need Social Security early?

Take it – you’ve *earned* it – and it’s there for you if you need it.

But if you have a choice, waiting will give you a bigger monthly benefit for the rest of your life.

Working longer can further increase your benefits.

Working beyond age 62 can help you increase your benefits even more – because benefits are based on your average earnings over your highest 35 years of earnings.

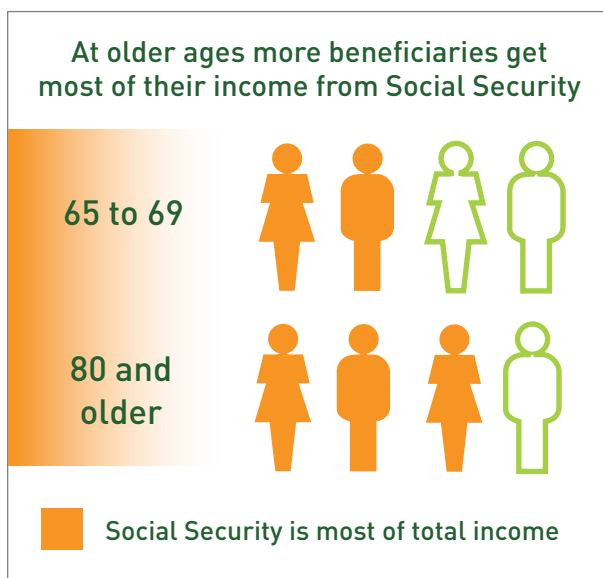
If your earnings after 62 are higher than when you were younger, working longer can increase your benefits when you retire.

For more information about your future benefits, see the Social Security Administration’s **benefit calculators** at www.ssa.gov/OACT/quickcalc/index.html

The longer you live, the more important Social Security is likely to be.

Income from savings and other sources of retirement income may decline as you age. But Social Security lasts for life and keeps up with increases in the cost of living. That is why more beneficiaries count on Social Security for most of their income as they get older.

Beneficiaries who rely on Social Security for most of their total income increase from half of 65 to 69 year-olds to three out of four of those 80 and older.



And if you are married, you have two lives to plan for.

Chances are, either you or your spouse will live past age 85. If you are the higher earner, waiting to take Social Security means providing a higher survivor benefit for your spouse if she or he outlives you.

Think of Social Security as insurance against outliving your money.

When you wait to start Social Security, you gain more insurance protection.

Social Security will still be there for you if you wait to start benefits.

Since 1935, Social Security has never missed a payment – and its finances are much stronger than many people think. Without any changes, the program can pay full benefits for the next 20 years. Congress has amended Social Security many times to meet new needs and serve new generations – and legislation, when needed, has preserved benefit levels for those already retired or nearing retirement age. Policymakers have many options to adjust revenues, benefits, or both to ensure that all future benefits will be paid in full and on time.

For more information, view NASI’s additional materials:

When To Take Social Security:

www.nasi.org/WhenToTakeSocialSecurity

Understanding Social Security:

VIDEO: Social Security: Just the Facts
<http://bit.ly/SSFacts>

VIDEO: Social Security: Americans Agree
<http://bit.ly/AmericansAgree>

NATIONAL
ACADEMY
OF SOCIAL
INSURANCE

1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20036
202-452-8097
www.nasi.org