

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## How to Extend the Life of Your Office Equipment with Simple Maintenance Tips

Our Friends · Monday, February 3rd, 2025

Be it a big or small business, office equipment is one of the major investments. Starting from printers and computers to scanners and copiers, all these machines are vital to running smooth daily operations. On the other hand, frequent breakdowns and need for replacement tend to dent finances fast. Proper maintenance not only saves money but also ensures smooth, continuous business operations. A few simple, yet effective care routines can help your business extend the life of office equipment and keep everything running in top condition for years to come.

### Keeping Your Devices Clean for Optimal Performance

Some of the worst enemies of office machines include dust, dirt, and debris. These eventually build up inside and around the equipment, causing overheating, malfunctioning, and inefficiency. Cleaning of the surface regularly, vacuuming airway vents, and blowing of compressed air in devices like keyboards, printers, and photocopiers can avert unnecessary wear and tear. Something as basic as keeping food and drinks away from desks will also minimize the probability of an unplanned spill on a device. A clean office isn't just a pretty one; it is actually one of the keys to keeping the machines running.

### Using Equipment Properly to Prevent Unnecessary Damage

Most office equipment breakdowns are caused by misuse, not defective manufacturing. Workers frequently abuse devices by overloading printers, using the wrong weight of paper, or turning computers off incorrectly. A paper shredder will wear out rapidly or jam if employees try to shred too many sheets of paper at a time or run the wrong material through it, but with a good quality **paper shredder** and proper handler, they can last significantly longer. Basic training and clear instructions in using office equipment properly avoid unnecessary wear and tear and prolong the active life of the machines concerned.

### Regular Update on Software for Smooth Running

Software plays a major role in keeping office equipment up to date, preventing gadget malfunctioning. Older software means poor performance, glitchy, and other problems in compatibility. The regular updating of drivers, firmware, and security patches keeps devices at peak performance. This holds very true with computers, printers, and all those machines on a network since they are so heavily dependent on software to operate correctly. Automatic settings

for updates could help businesses stay on top of these crucial maintenance tasks without manual intervention.

## Power Management to Reduce Wear and Tear

Electric surges, along with bad shutdowns of the machine, can seriously be damaging to such office machines. The use of surge protectors protects sensitive apparatus from voltage fluctuations, while configuration of uninterruptible power supply systems for main computers and server equipment may allow for graceful shutdowns. Similarly, equipment which is not utilized should always be turned off and this greatly minimizes wear besides increasing its lifetime. Most modern appliances also come with energy-saving modes that, besides prolonging the machine's life, lower the cost of electricity in the long run.

## Routine Inspections to Catch Issues Early

Like all mechanical devices, office equipment benefits from periodic checkups. Minor problems, such as unusual noises, paper jams, or slowing down, could be the signal of greater ones that will develop if unaddressed. A quick look every few weeks lets businesses take care of minor concerns before they become huge repairs. Scheduling periodic professional maintenance of high-value pieces of equipment, like printers and copiers, also ensures that everything continues to function correctly.

It doesn't mean only saving the equipment from breakdown but is all about enhancing efficiency and cutting costs over time. Reduced disruptions, lowered repair costs, and prolonged equipment lifespan are advantages of a proactive maintenance strategy for any business. The following are simple hacks that would ensure reliability, functionality, and cost-effectiveness of office tools for a longer period in every office.

*Photo by Andrea Piacquadio via Pexels*

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## How Drones Are Transforming Marketing and Advertising for Businesses

Our Friends · Monday, February 3rd, 2025

In today's digital world, businesses are always on the lookout for means to capture the attention of and better engage their target audience. It has made drone technology one of the most sensitive tools in the marketing and advertising space. Through interesting and striking aerial views and

angles, drones provide a whole new dimension for presenting products, services, and experiences. As drones continue to evolve, so do the ways in which they are used for businesses to interact with their clientele, offering increasing levels of innovation, efficiency, and insight enabled by data.

## Aerial Photography and Videography

A major way that drones are making a change for marketing is within the use of **drone photography** and videography. Aerial shots create a sense of grandeur and perspective not possible with ground-based photography. Be it to shoot expansive real estate, a packed audience at some music festival, or a dramatic landscape for some tourism campaign, drones offer unrivaled shots that will just leave your target audience speechless. These stunning visuals, complemented by a fascinating storyline, will elevate any marketing campaign and create increased buzz on social media, television, and online ads.

## Cost-Effective Marketing Solutions

Historically, aerial photography was done with very expensive equipment and professional crews, making the service inaccessible to most small and medium-sized businesses. This dynamic has changed with drones, which have become an affordable way to capture high-quality aerial footage. For instance, a small business can now afford to capture stunning aerial footage for promotional videos, product launches, or events. Due to the relatively inexpensive nature of drone technology, businesses can have high-production value content without having to sell the farm in order to afford it, making it ideal for companies with smaller marketing budgets.

## Increased Consumer Engagement

In various ad campaigns, it has been shown that implementing drones is a highly engaging way to connect with consumers. From live events, experiential marketing, and interactive campaigns, drones bring that level of excitement and innovation which is relatively rare in older forms of advertising. For example, drone light shows have evolved as a good alternative to fireworks for outdoor shows, visually enamoring crowds by the hundreds. Consumers are more likely to share unique and eye-catching content, and with the use of drones in campaigns, the visuals obtained prove to be highly shareable and help extend a business's reach.

## Real-Time Data Collection and Insights

Drones are not just about delivering stunning visuals but a way for businesses to garner valuable data. With proper equipment and software, a drone is able to capture crucial information that may influence marketing strategies. Drones fitted with sensors and cameras, for instance, estimate the flow of people attending an event, customer behavior at a retail location, and crowd size. All data is captured in real time, therefore helping the business make better decisions in their marketing strategy adjustment. Sometimes, understanding consumer interaction with a campaign or product holds the key to creating a far more targeted and successful marketing strategy.

## Social Media Buzz and Viral Campaigns

Drones are just the perfect tool to make something go viral, especially on social media platforms. Whether it is that gobsmacking shot, some crazy drone stunt, or an innovative marketing idea with the facilitation of drones, a business can surely leverage the power of virality on social media. Videos shot from drones easily catch the attention of viewers because of their uniqueness and

tendency to look different from conventional videos. In cases where the drone footage or any campaign of a business catches people's attention, it spreads through platforms in no time, increasing the visibility, brand awareness, and probably the virality too.

As this technology keeps evolving, the prospects of using drones for marketing or advertising purposes also keep increasing. Businesses are now trying to experiment with drones regarding live streaming events, immersive experiences, and even content creation out of the box. Moving ahead with improvements in artificial intelligence, machine learning, and automation, it is most likely that drones would find an even better place in marketing campaigns, thus giving businesses wider opportunities to approach customers in fresh ways. Considering the fact that the technology will keep developing and spreading, it goes without saying that drones will soon turn a point in the future of marketing and advertising.

*Photo by Pok Rie via Pexels*

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## Why Is IT Governance Important in Modern Companies?

Our Friends · Monday, February 3rd, 2025

IT governance is a structured framework that ensures an organization's IT operations align with its overall business objectives. This alignment is crucial for maintaining efficiency, minimizing risk, and delivering value. By providing clear policies and decision-making processes, IT governance supports strategic goals while managing resources responsibly.

### Defining IT Governance

IT governance refers to the practices and policies organizations use to manage and control their IT operations. It focuses on ensuring IT resources are used efficiently, risks are minimized, and investments provide measurable returns. Effective governance integrates IT decisions with business strategies, creating a cohesive operational environment.

Key principles of IT governance include accountability, strategic alignment, performance measurement, and value delivery. These principles guide organizations to optimize IT's impact on business outcomes.

### The Benefits of IT Governance

IT governance provides a range of benefits for modern companies:

## **1. Improved Decision-Making**

IT governance establishes clear roles and responsibilities. Decision-making becomes systematic and informed, reducing the likelihood of conflicts or resource misallocation.

## **2. Risk Management**

A well-structured governance framework helps identify potential IT risks early. It ensures organizations are prepared to address issues like cybersecurity threats, system failures, and compliance violations.

## **3. Enhanced Resource Utilization**

Governance frameworks promote efficient use of IT resources, ensuring investments are directed toward projects that provide maximum value.

## **4. Strategic Alignment**

IT governance bridges the gap between business goals and technology operations. This alignment ensures that IT initiatives directly support corporate objectives, increasing the overall efficiency of operations.

## **5. Compliance**

With regulatory requirements becoming more stringent, IT governance ensures companies meet all legal and industry standards. This reduces the risk of penalties and builds trust with stakeholders.

# **Challenges in IT Governance**

Despite its benefits, IT governance has its challenges:

## **1. Resistance to Change**

Employees may resist new policies or frameworks, especially if they are used to less structured systems. Addressing this resistance requires communication and training.

## **2. Resource Constraints**

Implementing IT governance requires time, skilled personnel, and financial investment. Smaller companies may find it difficult to allocate these resources effectively.

## **3. Complexity**

Managing a governance framework can be complex, especially for larger organizations with multiple IT operations. Ensuring coherence across departments requires consistent effort and oversight.

## **4. Measurement Difficulties**

Determining the success of IT governance initiatives can be challenging. Organizations often rely on metrics like ROI or performance benchmarks, but these may not capture the full impact of

governance frameworks.

## Best Practices for Effective IT Governance

To maximize the effectiveness of IT governance, organizations can adopt these best practices:

### 1. Executive Support

Strong leadership is critical. Executives should actively endorse governance policies and participate in their implementation.

### 2. Clear Policies and Objectives

Organizations must define policies and objectives in simple, actionable terms. This clarity reduces confusion and ensures consistent adherence.

### 3. Regular Monitoring

Frequent audits and reviews help track the progress of IT governance initiatives. These activities identify gaps and areas for improvement.

### 4. Employee Training

Educating employees about IT governance fosters a culture of compliance and accountability. Training ensures all stakeholders understand their roles in the governance framework.

### 5. Technology Integration

Modern tools can streamline governance processes. For instance, [CranstonIT's site](#) highlights IT support services that improve infrastructure efficiency, ensuring seamless integration of governance principles.

## Examples of IT Governance in Action

### 1. Regulatory Compliance in Finance

Financial institutions use IT governance to comply with regulations like GDPR or SOX. Governance ensures that data handling processes meet legal standards.

### 2. Healthcare IT Frameworks

Hospitals and clinics implement governance to manage patient data securely. These frameworks ensure compliance with privacy laws like HIPAA while enabling efficient operations.

### 3. Retail IT Operations

Retailers use governance to optimize supply chain systems. By aligning IT projects with inventory management goals, they reduce operational costs and improve customer satisfaction.

## IT Governance Frameworks

Organizations often rely on established frameworks to implement IT governance:

## 1. COBIT

COBIT provides a comprehensive model for IT management and governance. It focuses on linking business goals with IT operations.

## 2. ITIL

ITIL emphasizes best practices for IT service management. It ensures that IT services align with business needs and deliver value effectively.

## 3. ISO/IEC 38500

This standard provides guidelines for corporate IT governance. It emphasizes accountability, strategy, and performance measurement.

## The Future of IT Governance

As technology continues to evolve, IT governance will remain a critical factor for organizational success. Emerging trends such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and blockchain present new opportunities and challenges. Governance frameworks will need to adapt to these advancements, ensuring they continue to deliver value and mitigate risks.

Organizations should prioritize flexibility in their governance models to accommodate changing technologies and business requirements. By doing so, they can maintain a competitive edge in a rapidly shifting market.

*Photo by Christina Morillo via Pexels*

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## Why Online Radio Is the Future of Audio Broadcasting

Our Friends · Monday, February 3rd, 2025

In recent years, audio broadcasting has seen significant changes due to the advent of digital technology. It led to the emergence of online radio as a prominent player in the field of audio transmission methods known for its convenience and ease of access. The reasons behind radio's potential as the big thing in audio broadcasting become evident when considering its many benefits and advantages. Let us study them.

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## Transforming the Way People Listen to Audio Content

When traditional radio stations were around, they only reached listeners within specific geographical areas. However, with **online radio**, that's a thing of the past. Now, people can tune in from anywhere and enjoy a wide array of audio content as long as they have an internet connection. They can choose to listen to content from around the globe and enjoy diverse cultural experiences.

To listen to traditional radio, you need certain equipment. Online platforms eliminate this requirement by providing access through smartphones and other devices, such as tablets and computers. These devices seamlessly provide access to a range of channels, enhancing users' overall experience and making online radio a popular choice among individuals.

## Diverse Content and Personalization

Today's audience wants content that matches their tastes and preferences. Online radio meets this need by offering a range of genres and styles. From music to discussions, this platform has something for everyone. Listeners can readily discover shows that match their hobbies and passions.

Adding a personalized touch increases the attractiveness of content. Online platforms frequently employ algorithms to recommend content tailored to user preferences, fostering stronger connections between viewers and content creators and leading to increased engagement and audience retention.

## High Audience Engagement

Compared to radio stations, where communication is one-way and limited, online platforms offer a more interactive experience by allowing broadcasters to engage with their audience directly. Integration with social media enhances this interactivity by facilitating communication. Listeners can express their views, ask for specific songs to be played, and join conversations on topics of interest. This level of engagement helps create a feeling of belonging and cultivates listener loyalty.

Live streaming and podcasts provide interesting ways to engage with content online. They allow users to select from live broadcasts or on-demand shows based on their schedules and preferences. This adaptability caters to diverse needs and tastes.

## Affordable Broadcasting Options

Running a radio station involves expenses, but online radio presents a cost-effective option. Because of low operating costs, focused content creation is possible in radio broadcasting. This streamlined approach enables content creators to flourish alongside established networks.

There are plenty of ways to make money online these days! Advertisers love reaching out to people to make their ads more effective and relevant. Moreover, streamers can earn money through subscriptions or donations, making the broadcasting business more stable and profitable in the long run.



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## Digital Solutions to Support the Environment

Switching to broadcasting brings many benefits as it reduces the reliance on physical infrastructure and minimizes resource consumption compared to traditional radio platforms for online broadcasting. This diminishes the necessity for such facilities, aligning with global sustainability initiatives by providing an environmentally friendly option.

Online radio uses minimal energy, as [cloud-based solutions effectively cut energy costs](#). This move benefits broadcasters and the environment by promoting responsible digital platform usage.

## Future of Online Radio

Despite its many advantages, online radio usage has certain problems. One is that it faces competition from various digital platforms in a crowded digital arena. Broadcasters need to be creative to capture their audience's attention and stay current by constantly adapting to evolving audience tastes.

However, the outlook for online radio looks bright as technology advances and enhances the features of these platforms. New developments like Augmented Reality (AR) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) could lead to new opportunities in this field. These advancements will help online radio stay ahead in the world of broadcasting.

## Summary

The emergence of online radio signifies a transformation in audio broadcasting. Its easy access to a wide range of content and engaging interactive elements make it a popular option among global audiences everywhere. With technological advancements, online platforms stand ready to influence the trajectory of broadcasting in the coming days. Welcoming this evolution opens up possibilities for both content creators and listeners.

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## Kari Gunter-Seymour: Two Poems

Kari Gunter-Seymour · Sunday, February 2nd, 2025

### Where I Come From

A deluge of droplets  
after months of scalding sun,  
the little that's left of us stomping

two-by-two through swollen waters.

Oh the corporate histories  
written here, eulogized  
in ruin and rust, a land plucked  
and pimped, targets stapled  
to our hillbilly backs.

Drylanders, smug, clueless  
shake confused heads, ask  
why don't you move?

Here our measuring cups  
are Holy Writ, our covenants  
carried on tongues, roots  
pleached, washed in the blood,  
a chemistry of all who dwelt before us.

Here even toddlers know  
the alchemy of survival,  
how to spit-chew a jewelweed poultice  
to sooth a bite or sting,  
yarrow fronds to calm a scraped knee.

A gang of crows chase a hawk,  
insects I will never learn all the names of  
skate the surface of this drowned ground  
thinking they can trust the journey.

A kingfisher swoops in like King Coal,  
swallows up all he possibly can,  
swaggers his fat belly skyward.

\*

## The Heft of Heedfulness

I study the way a hummingbird stands  
on the air. A radiance raptures

the lace of branches, lights up the creek bed,  
rouses a drowsy valley.

I live like a bramble weed,  
wild, yearning,

careful not to wake the spirits  
as if my body knows something I don't.

Where does love go  
when it goes,

time a dandelion fluff  
puffed asunder?

I hum for those I have lost,  
count stars between sunrises,

close my eyes, thumb past the strictures  
that silence me, my sleep

sleeping without me, this land  
both cradle and grave.

*(Featured image from Pexels)*

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## Lucky Murdock: Three Skomps & Guidelines

Lucky Murdock · Friday, January 31st, 2025

### SKOMP! (EXPERIMENTAL POETRY)

“I started this experiment sometime during grad school. I believe it was 2018. My foremost goal with this project was to unblock my creative urges. What I created is something I would describe as “noise poetry.” SKOMP! incorporates improvisation, the subconscious, and unflinching honesty.”

\*

### GUIDELINES FOR WRITING A SKOMP

#### **Awareness**

You must have a concept of self in order to write a skomp.

#### **Intent**

A skomp should be done with intent.

#### **Commitment**

You should never delete any part of a skomp, only entire skomps.

#### **Focus**

You should not step away before finishing a skomp.

**Title**

The purpose of a skomp's title is to frame its reception.

**Form**

A skomp is always a sonnet.

**Rules**

Rules are for nerds.

**Conflict**

A skomp should be in conflict with itself.

**Meaning**

A skomp's meaning is subjective and is inflicted by its audience, not its author.

\*\*\*

**Skomp for Gertrude Stein**

holdyourbereath  
 holdyournekstringshold  
 ydol holdyourhandstrings  
 don'thold myhand don't  
 hold scissors whenyourundowntheupescalator  
 don'thold the left handles  
 don't help thosewith knoe knees  
 havecofee have tea  
 have cocaineonyour breath  
 withGertrudeStein with Gertrude Stein with Gert  
 rudeStein theplastics  
 the plastics we meadeinthe  
 1960s are aging getting older so they'l be  
 toxic rainbowsinthefloor

\*

**Sonnet for the End of the World**

manwhat the fuckin hams  
 the world justupand ands  
 it ands as in yes, and  
 in somefarcical enveneveloent  
 hope dampenere ringwallid  
 lead poised halibutangry  
 peopledying fuckyou  
 you rich fuck  
 fuck you  
 you other rich fuck  
 the world is goddamn ending  
 and you're con'rd

that virus gon' get  
ur guts

\*

## Shatter

waitforthat bi bulb to  
pop in your facehold glass sprinkles  
inyour pulmones in your alveoli ravioli  
medical dictionarty art diction  
thepop the old pops tink tink  
plow the tissuepaperof your eyelids  
withrazorfrisbeeze hacking up black tar  
tlelevision is the television of the tlelel  
atlaltl hurls mas into sa asinglepoint  
will my shoes outlast my feet?  
atlas wrapsup space into a tiny  
little bound section of hell  
iron wafflwes make bagandbangbagsand  
bagandabagandbagsandopenlooseandbagsandbangsandloosewaste

\*

*(Featured image of deconstructed typewriter from [pxhere](#))*

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## Understanding the Fees and Costs Involved in a Personal Injury Case

Tod Hardin · Friday, January 31st, 2025

Did you recently suffer a serious injury in a car accident or other type of serious accident? Have you been seriously injured by the negligence of another person? In this case, you may be wondering whether you need a personal injury attorney to pursue fair compensation.

There is usually no charge for a consultation with a lawyer who reviews the details of your accident and determines whether you need legal representation. This initial meeting allows you to learn about your legal options. You can also meet the lawyer, learn about possible fees and costs of filing the case, and then figure out whether you and the lawyer are the right match.

[Contingency fees are common in personal injury cases.](#) Aside from that, there are other fees and costs to consider. This article will help you understand everything about contingency fees and other costs involved in filing a personal injury claim.

## Understanding Legal Fees in Personal Injury Claims Cases

It is common for attorneys to charge different fees based on their type of practice. In some cases, the fees clients pay for legal services are determined by the agreements they sign. Several factors can influence an attorney's fees, including the lawyer's experience and ability, the amount of time spent on a case, and the difficulty of the case.

Making informed decisions requires understanding different types of fees. You should read the fee agreement carefully before you hire an attorney. It is always advisable to speak to more than one attorney before choosing the right personal injury lawyer.

### How Do Legal Fees Work?

A legal fee is the cost of hiring an attorney to represent you in a court case. Fees can be upfront, hourly, or contingent. Additional legal costs may be associated with going through the civil court system. The amount an attorney charges for their services should be clearly stated in their contracts. If you wish to hire an attorney, ensure you understand the fee arrangement to avoid misunderstandings.

### Consultation Fees: What Are They?

During consultations, lawyers learn about their clients' situations and decide whether they can help. These meetings allow clients to get to know their attorneys, ask questions, and decide whether to hire them.

A majority of lawyers do not charge for the first consultation, especially in cases involving personal injury. Still, verifying whether the attorney charges a consultation fee before the meeting is necessary.

### How Does a Contingency Fee Work?

In a contingency fee agreement, clients agree to pay their attorneys a percentage of the settlement or verdict.

Personal injury lawyers typically charge between 30 and 40 percent. When cases go to trial, contingency fees are usually higher.

After receiving the award, attorneys deduct contingencies and expenses. Managing cases, especially those that go to trial, is expensive. Among the costs covered by attorney fees are:

- Costs of hiring expert witnesses
- Court reporters and depositions
- Costs incurred when filing legal documents
- Copying medical records
- Office staff costs
- Costs incurred during trial preparation

Contingency fee lawyers charge fees only if they get compensation for you. However, you may still be responsible for some of the expenses listed. Ensure that you fully understand the contingency arrangement before signing.

## Costs Vs. Fees: What's the Difference?

The words “costs” and “fees” have the same meaning to most people. However, they have very distinct meanings in the legal profession.

Attorneys typically charge a fee for handling cases. For instance, a contingency fee is the percentage of the recovery a plaintiff's attorney receives for working on his or her personal injury case.

Costs in litigation include pretty much everything else. Personal injury lawsuits usually incur costs from court filing, paying expert witnesses, and spending on administrative tasks such as deposition and information-gathering.

## Personal Injury Costs: Who Pays?

A client's costs associated with their personal injury case will ultimately be paid for by the client, which is determined by the specifics of their attorney fee agreement. The attorney will deduct those costs if the client receives a settlement or court award. In personal injury cases, attorney fee agreements usually state that the attorney will cover the case costs if the client does not receive money.

## Personal Injury Settlement: When Are Costs Deducted?

How much money you get after a successful personal injury case depends on when the fees are deducted. Hence, you need to discuss this with your lawyer. To better understand, here's a sample computation:

- The settlement amount is \$100,000.
- The percentage of your attorney's contingency fee is 30%.
- The costs of your case are \$15,000

After calculating your attorney's contingency fee percentage, you get \$55,000, and your lawyer gets \$30,000. On the other hand, if all costs of the case are deducted before the contingency fee, you will have \$85,000. Your lawyer gets 30% of that amount – which is \$25,500. You'll be left with \$59,500. This example shows a difference of \$4,500 due to the timing of the cost deduction.

## What Are the Best Ways to Keep Personal Injury Costs Down?

Some personal injury lawyers don't charge for photocopying and postage, but they're common expenses and rarely exceed a couple hundred dollars. Choosing a lawyer based on such meager savings might not be wise.

Sheriff's fees, court filing fees, deposition transcript fees, and mediation fees must be paid when a personal injury lawsuit is filed. Taking depositions of witnesses and parties is essential at this point, or the insurance adjuster will think your lawyer isn't serious. Transcripts must be prepared and paid for if a lawyer takes a deposition.

Expert witnesses or consultants are required in most personal injury cases. Depositions and trials are not free for experts, including your treating physician. In some cases, doctors charge thousands of dollars to appear in depositions for personal injury claims.

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## Personal Injury Claims Costs Need a Realistic Approach

To get a handle on costs and expenses, personal injury claimants may want to take the following steps:

- Make a ballpark estimate of the costs.
- Understand what the costs may be going toward.

In your interview with prospective lawyers, ask them how much they anticipate the costs if a settlement can be reached without going to court and how much the costs might be if a suit is needed.

It's important to understand that the cost of a personal injury lawyer depends on various factors, such as the nature of your case, your fee structure, and any additional expenses you incur. To ensure the best outcome, you need to know the exact fees and costs before hiring an attorney. Moreover, don't be afraid to ask about legal fees upfront.

*Photo at top: AndryPopov, Getty Images via Canva*

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## Luxurious Ways to Pamper Yourself Without Leaving the House

Our Friends · Friday, January 31st, 2025

Sometimes, home is where the heart – and the luxury – is. For introverts, indulgence doesn't have to involve leaving home. With premium subscription services and mystery boxes at your fingertips, the world's finest treats can come to you. Let's explore five ways to pamper yourself in style without ever stepping outside.

### Create a Sanctuary with Introverts Retreat

When solitude feels like bliss, nothing complements it better than a box designed just for you. Introverts Retreat delivers everything you need for a perfect night in. You get a carefully selected novel, a handcrafted soy candle, bath salts to melt the stress away, and gourmet snacks for that finishing touch.

Picture this: your favorite corner of the house, a warm glow from the candle, and a book that speaks to your soul. It's self-care elevated to an art form. If ever there were a subscription service that understood the power of a quiet evening, this is it.



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## Stay Ahead of the Curve with Breo Box

For the tech-savvy introvert, Breo Box turns staying in into an adventure. Every quarter, you receive a curated collection of cutting-edge gadgets and lifestyle products. Think smart home devices, innovative kitchen tools, or fitness gear you didn't even know you needed.

Unboxing Breo Box feels like unwrapping a little piece of the future. It's perfect for anyone who loves modern conveniences but doesn't want to scour the market for the latest trends. Let the luxury come to you, one smart gadget at a time.

## Embrace the Thrill with HypeDrop

What's better than a luxury surprise? HypeDrop offers online mystery boxes filled with high-end items, from premium sneakers to gadgets. The beauty lies in the anticipation. Will it be the rare collectible you've been dreaming of or something entirely unexpected?

For those who enjoy a touch of drama with their indulgence, HypeDrop caters to the elite with a **mystery box for the rich and famous**. Why settle for ordinary when you can unwrap something extraordinary?

## Nourish Your Mind and Body with Merkaela

Introverts who crave mindfulness will find solace in Merkaela's quarterly subscription. Each box is packed with natural, holistic products designed to soothe the soul and the senses. Herbal teas, meditation guides, and handcrafted soaps invite you to unplug and rejuvenate.

There's something magical about a service that prioritizes your well-being in such a tangible way. Merkaela doesn't just deliver products; it delivers peace of mind.

## Add Some Edge with Happy Rebel Box

Not every introvert fits the soft and serene stereotype. For those with a bold streak, Happy Rebel Box curates edgy, modern lifestyle essentials. Every quarter, you'll receive accessories, jewelry, and home goods that stand out from the crowd.

A statement piece for your living room or a unique addition to your wardrobe? If you like your luxury with a side of attitude, this box is for you.

## A Touch of Luxury at Your Fingertips

Indulging in luxury doesn't have to mean extravagant outings or exhausting trips. With these subscription services, pampering comes to you. From self-care to excitement, there's something here for every introvert looking to make their home a haven of indulgence.

Which one will you try first? Let the pampering begin.

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## The beginnings and rise of Tron Coin

Our Friends · Friday, January 31st, 2025

The cryptocurrency market is constantly changing and evolving, and this includes the introduction of new blockchains and tokens all the time. Tron is one of the latest additions to the marketplace in this regard, and it has already attracted quite a lot of attention from investors. In fact, many have started looking into the latest [Tron price](#) figures before making a transaction so that they can increase the likelihood of gains and minimize the probability of losses. But what exactly is Tron Coin, and what can the crypto trading community expect from it in the future?

### What is Tron?

Tron is a blockchain network that was built to create and deploy decentralized applications. In this sense, it is quite the same as all other systems of its kind, but the things that make it different are the very low fees and the increased scalability, two features that are highly prized among digital asset investors. All the DApps created on Tron are based on smart contract functionality, and its original purpose was to change how digital media is monetized or shared.

The idea is to eliminate all intermediaries and third-party entities when it comes to content creation so that the creators have the ability to interact with their audiences themselves. The beginnings of the Tron ecosystem were on the Ethereum blockchain, but the platform left for a dedicated blockchain later. It shouldn't come as a surprise that the two decentralized ledgers look pretty similar to one another as a result. Just as Bitcoin's original plan of creating a digital currency that can function just like fiat money didn't work, neither did Tron's vision for content creators. Since there was nowhere near as much traction among investors as the developers expected, Tron shifted to new functionality.

As a result, it was redeveloped as a DApp blockchain set to pave the way for a decentralized internet experience. Right now, its primary concern has become its ability to deliver a high-quality experience to all its users, meaning that the blockchain is constantly innovating areas such as speed and scalability so that the user interface and navigation are as hassle-free as they can get.

And like all other blockchains, Tron has its own native currency that is used to power the network and all the processes taking place on it. The cryptocurrency is also known as Tron, as well as TRX, is the fuel behind decentralized applications and the Tron smart contracts. In a nod to the blockchain's roots as part of the ETH ecosystem, TRX can also be used to create TRC-20 tokens that are very similar to the ERC-20 tokens hosted on Ethereum. Tron Coin is different from its peers because it can cover transaction fees anytime bandwidth points are insufficient. This means that the Tron network can process thousands of transactions every second for very low costs.

### The tech that powers Tron

The Tron blockchain uses smart contracts, a fully automatic and self-executing technology, as it

uses protocols that are entirely pre-determined. This means that developers can build and deploy their applications on the network by themselves. Game developers, for instance, can create play-to-earn games that can run on the platform, and all types of media can be added and stored while the audience rewards the creators simultaneously. It is truly a win-win situation for creatives.

There are only three fixed fees on the Tron blockchain: 0.1 TRX to create a new account, 1024 to issue a TRC-10, and 9999 to design a witness code. Other than that, the network typically doesn't charge any fees for transactions, but energy costs and bandwidth can apply. However, it is essential to mention that all investors have a free bandwidth of 5000 points when carrying out ventures on the blockchain. Tron uses a proof-of-stake protocol to verify transactions, but there are several other layers to the blockchain.

For instance, its architecture is split into three separate layers: the application, core, and storage. The first includes the decentralized applications, wallets, and interfaces. The core deals with smart contracts, management, consensus, and accounts. The storage, naturally, hosts the distributed state and blocks storages. The Tron Virtual Machine was developed to run the ecosystem. Its functionality includes running speedy transactions, low costs, and high efficiency. Tron has been criticized in the past for not offering some of the same innovations that other blockchains do, but the truth is that its unique features have already been built into the ecosystem.

With the potential to handle 2,000 transactions per second, elevated throughput is one of the main advantages Tron has to offer to its users. The stellar execution of the smart contracts makes scalability possible and ensures future growth won't be hindered in this regard. The very low fees naturally attract a lot of investors as well, as those on more well-known blockchains tend to be particularly elevated.

## The future of Tron

Before taking the plunge and buying a cryptocurrency, you should do your research and see what other investors and analysts have to say about it. Having a comprehensive view of the general movements of an asset class and at least a rough idea of what the future holds for it are crucial aspects that you should always take into consideration when interacting with a new marketplace. **TRX** has exhibited fairly robust performance so far, and its blockchain has become well-known among investors for its speed, low fees, and commitment to decentralization.

Tron is also becoming an increasingly important player in the world of decentralized finance, meaning there's a lot more potential for it to evolve in the future as engagement rates continue to increase due to this functionality. The Tron community is also incredibly loyal and dedicated to the blockchain, so there will always be a stable customer base for the token to rely on.

Right now, the crypto world is navigating one of its strongest bull runs in its history. The prices have been recording gains across the entire marketplace, and will likely remain strong over the upcoming months. However, it is still essential to come up with a comprehensive strategy that is personalized for your trading goals to avoid losses as much as possible.

Photo at top: [TabTrader\\_com](#) via [Unsplash](#)

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## Jordan Smith: Two Poems

Jordan Smith · Thursday, January 30th, 2025

### The Amateur of Consciousness

He pulls on his old jeans and then a sweater over yesterday's t-shirt  
And stands barefoot in the kitchen watching the coffee brew,  
Still lost a little in the dream's half-life

Where he half-heard her going down the stairs,  
And the greyhound's soft-shoe shuffle behind her on the steps,  
But he couldn't wake until the dream included her voice calling him.

And now, although it's unlikely she'll hear, a room away,  
He says, *I had a dream I couldn't shake*,  
And knows, if she hears him at all,

That he tries her patience, speaking so quietly, as the dream tried  
His impatient resistance to interpretation  
Or even attention so early in the morning,

Which is why he wants to tell it before it slips farther into guesswork  
And revision and detail,  
Into this sharp waking he's brewed for himself, knowing

How small and brief the space between them the dream takes up,  
A little steam  
Above the cup he carries now to sit beside the dog beside her.

\*

### Trillium

*For Malie*

It doesn't matter how often we walk this trail  
The greyhound at your side, down the old road below the ridge  
The moss-covered cistern, the untrustworthy bridge  
The path hollowing out under two arched pines above the Kill,

And it doesn't matter what we talk about, the garden's  
Failures and pleasures, the reverses of verse, the kids'  
Reverses and pleasures, or how the slow days slide

Through summer. If there's one thing I keep hidden,

That trillium just off to one side from where you look,  
That triple blood-purple flower we'd planned to find,  
Not here, but when we reach the lowlands where the pine  
Plantation makes for a cooler, quieter walk,

That also doesn't matter. But how we get there:  
Past the downed tree where you saw the snake's  
Ribbon of black and lace and then the climb up the stone-flecked  
Bluff where someone left a purple folding chair,

The root-crossed route along the edge of the ravine  
Our old dogs used to tumble down than scramble up,  
The morels' honey-combed inverted cups,  
The way things have of letting themselves be seen,

But not until we need them, not until  
Love calls them into being. *Birthroot. Wakerobin.*  
Just where we thought they'd be, as rare, as common  
As patient as a walk along these hills.

\*\*\*

*(Featured image from Pexels)*

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## 5 Essential Ways to Clean a Large Dog Bed

Our Friends · Thursday, January 30th, 2025

Cleaning a **Large Dog Bed** might seem like a daunting task, especially when it's bulky and covered in fur and odors. But keeping your dog's bed fresh and hygienic is essential for their comfort and health. Knowing the best methods to tackle this cleaning task can make the process easier and more efficient. This blog will share five essential ways to clean a large dog bed.

### 1. Vacuuming Regularly

Vacuuming is one of the easiest and most effective ways to clean your dog's bed. It removes dirt, hair, and debris that accumulate on the surface. Use a vacuum cleaner with a brush attachment to get into the fabric and remove hair from every corner of the bed.

For beds with large amounts of pet hair, it's important to vacuum at least once a week. This will prevent hair buildup, which can make the bed feel uncomfortable and attract more dirt.

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## 2. Spot Cleaning Stains and Spills

Dogs can be messy, so it's common for their beds to get dirty from accidents, spills, or muddy paws. Spot cleaning helps tackle stains and spills before they spread. Use a damp cloth or sponge with a mild detergent to gently scrub the stained area.

Avoid using harsh chemicals that could irritate your pet's skin. For tougher stains, you can create a cleaning solution with water and white vinegar. Apply it to the stain, let it sit for a few minutes, and then wipe it away with a clean cloth.

## 3. Machine Washing Removable Covers

Many dog beds come with removable covers that are machine washable. If your bed has one, this is a simple way to keep it clean. Remove the cover and check the care instructions on the label.

Most removable covers can be washed in cold water on a gentle cycle. Use a mild detergent that is safe for pets, as some detergents can cause skin irritation. After washing, air dry the cover or follow the instructions on the label for drying.

## 4. Deep Cleaning with a Pet-Safe Shampoo

Pet-safe shampoos are designed to clean the fabric without using harmful chemicals. Apply the pet-safe shampoo to the bed using a sponge or cloth, and scrub gently to clean the surface.

Afterward, rinse thoroughly with water to remove any remaining soap. For memory foam or other non-removable types of dog beds, avoid soaking the bed too much, as it can take a long time to dry.

Always make sure the bed is completely dry before letting your dog use it again to prevent mold or mildew.

## 5. Disinfecting the Dog Bed

To ensure that your dog's bed is not only clean but also germ-free, disinfecting is a key step. You can use a pet-safe disinfectant spray or a mixture of water and vinegar to disinfect the bed.

Lightly spray the disinfectant over the surface of the bed, focusing on areas where your dog sleeps most. Let the disinfectant sit for a few minutes before wiping it down with a clean cloth. This helps kill bacteria and viruses that might be lurking on the bed.

## Extend the Life of Your Dog Bed

Regular cleaning not only promotes better health but also keeps the bed in top condition for years to come. Make the effort today to maintain a clean, cozy space for your furry friend!

*Photo by Kristina Paukshtite via Pexels*

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## AND CULTURE

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# Make Your Kitchen the Star of Your Home with These Modern Design Trends

Our Friends · Thursday, January 30th, 2025

The kitchen is no longer just a place to cook; it's the hub of the home, where family and friends come together. Modern kitchen designs focus on creating a space that blends functionality, aesthetics, and comfort. With the right trends and thoughtful touches, you can transform your kitchen into a stunning centerpiece that reflects your style and enhances your everyday life.

## Open Layouts for Seamless Flow

Modern kitchens embrace open-concept layouts, seamlessly integrating the kitchen with dining and living areas. This trend eliminates barriers, making the space feel larger and more inviting. Adding a kitchen island with built-in seating enhances functionality and serves as a social hub for casual dining and conversation. For maximum comfort and usability, ensure your island matches the [standard kitchen counter height of 36 inches](#), which works well for most people.

## Minimalist Designs with Warmth

Simplicity is key in modern kitchen design. Clean lines, uncluttered countertops, and a minimalist aesthetic create a sleek and organized space. However, modern kitchens balance this simplicity with warmth by incorporating natural materials like wood, warm lighting, and soft textures. This combination ensures your kitchen feels both functional and welcoming.

## Bold Cabinetry and Color Choices

In modern kitchens, cabinetry has become a canvas for self-expression. Bold colors such as deep navy, emerald green, or charcoal black add personality and sophistication to the space. Matte finishes are especially popular, offering a refined look that resists fingerprints and smudges. Pair bold cabinetry with lighter countertops or backsplashes to create a striking contrast.

## Smart Technology for Modern Living

Technology plays a pivotal role in today's kitchens. Smart appliances, like refrigerators that track your groceries or ovens you can control from your phone, make daily tasks more convenient. Touchless faucets and voice-activated lighting add an extra layer of efficiency and luxury, turning your kitchen into a cutting-edge space.

## Statement Lighting as Art

Lighting does more than illuminate your kitchen—it makes a statement. Pendant lights over

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islands, modern chandeliers, or LED strips under cabinets create focal points while enhancing functionality. Choose lighting fixtures that complement your design style, whether industrial, contemporary, or rustic.

### **Natural Elements for a Balanced Look**

Bringing nature indoors is a key trend in modern kitchen design. Materials like stone countertops, wooden cabinets, and live plants create a connection to the outdoors. Large windows that flood the kitchen with natural light further enhance this earthy and serene aesthetic, making your kitchen a calming yet vibrant space.

### **Integrated Appliances for Streamlined Style**

Integrated appliances, designed to blend seamlessly with cabinetry, are a hallmark of modern kitchens. Hidden refrigerators, dishwashers, and even ovens maintain the space's clean lines, offering a cohesive and uncluttered look. This approach is perfect for homeowners who love sleek and polished designs.

### **Sustainable Choices for Eco-Friendly Living**

Sustainability is an essential consideration in modern kitchens. Green choices are stylish and practical, from energy-efficient appliances to eco-friendly materials like recycled countertops. These features reduce your carbon footprint and add lasting value to your home.

### **Personal Touches for Unique Charm**

No matter how on-trend your kitchen is, adding personal touches is crucial to making it feel like your own. Custom backsplashes, unique hardware finishes, or open shelving to display meaningful items can give your kitchen a distinctive charm that reflects your personality and lifestyle.

The kitchen is the heart of the home, and with the right design trends, it can truly shine. Whether it's bold cabinetry, integrated appliances, or sustainable materials, modern kitchens offer endless possibilities for style and functionality. A thoughtfully designed kitchen isn't just a place to cook—it's a space where memories are made, conversations flow, and life unfolds in beautiful, everyday moments. By blending aesthetics and practicality, your kitchen can become the centerpiece of your home, reflecting your personality and enhancing your daily life.

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## **Traditional Techniques and Cultural Influences That Shape**



# Casafina's Products

Our Friends · Thursday, January 30th, 2025

Craftsmanship in the homeware industry often tells a story rooted in heritage and tradition. Many companies blend age-old methods with unique touches to create distinctive pieces. This approach differentiates their products and anchors them deeply in their cultural backgrounds. Casafina is a prime example of a brand that embodies this philosophy. Exploring the traditional techniques and varied cultural influences shaping Casafina's product line reveals what makes its offerings unique.

## Heritage Craftsmanship

Casafina's products preserve craftsmanship by infusing each item with a sense of history. Artisans meticulously use age-old techniques passed down through generations to ensure high quality and authenticity. They incorporate hand-painting methods to enhance designs beyond what machines can achieve. This attention to detail results in pieces that exude charm and sophistication, which exemplifies the unique appeal of **Casafina dinnerware**.

## Cultural Inspirations

The collections at Casafina draw heavily from diverse cultural inspirations, which significantly shape their aesthetic appeal. The brand integrates traditions from various regions into its products, thus giving each piece a distinct identity and sense of place. For example, their designs' vibrant colors and bold patterns often mirror Mediterranean influences and capture the region's essence and warmth. This artistic approach transcends functionality by turning each item into an engaging experience that tells a story that connects the past with the present meaningfully.

## Eco-friendly Methods

Sustainability is central to Casafina's production process. The company prioritizes using locally sourced materials to minimize environmental impact and support local economies. This practice aligns with contemporary consumer values and mirrors the resourceful methods of traditional craftsmanship. By adopting eco-friendly techniques, Casafina upholds its legacy and is committed to preserving the planet. This dedication appeals to eco-conscious consumers who seek mindful consumption options without compromising quality.

## Craftsman Enclaves

Artisans from tight-knit communities craft each Casafina piece to ensure that every product carries the essence of human touch and dedication. The brand supports these communities by providing fair wages and safe working conditions, which helps sustain traditional craftsmanship for future generations. This collaborative effort creates a sense of pride and identity among artisans, who value the importance of their work. As a result, the passion and expertise of these craftsmen are evident in every **Casafina dinnerware** item, which offers consumers cookware treasures imbued with authenticity.

## Crafted with Both Practicality and Creativity

Casafina products skillfully balance practicality with aesthetic appeal by focusing on beauty and usability without compromise. For instance, their tableware enhances dining experiences by

combining elegance with functionality. This balance ensures that the items are visually appealing and meet everyday needs. Such thoughtful design reflects the brand's understanding of modern living trends, where form and function coexist harmoniously.

## Universal Attraction

Despite their strong connection to traditional methods and styles, Casafina's products have a broad appeal thanks to their timeless charm and versatility. These items blend seamlessly with various environments, whether in a rustic countryside home or a sleek urban loft. This adaptability attracts a diverse audience and allows individuals from different backgrounds to appreciate the craftsmanship and beauty of Casafina dinnerware.

## The Importance of Innovation

While traditional values are integral to Casafina's identity, embracing innovation is crucial for the brand's growth. Incorporating modern technologies enhances the durability and functionality of their products while staying true to their heritage. This blend of tradition and contemporary advancements ensures that Casafina's offerings remain relevant in the competitive market. By continuously improving its methods and strategies, Casafina leads the home goods industry by demonstrating that innovation and tradition coexist.

## In Summary

Casafina distinguishes itself in the homeware market by blending traditional methods and cultural influences. The brand emphasizes honoring heritage craftsmanship and drawing inspiration from various cultures while maintaining a strong commitment to sustainability. By supporting artisan communities and merging functionality with artistic design, the exceptional line of dinnerware ensures that each product is more than just an object—it tells a story. This approach solidifies Casafina's reputation as a symbol of quality and authenticity in homeware.

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## When Reality Demands Resilience

Ann Haskins · Wednesday, January 29th, 2025

Jazz dance for wildfire benefit in Lincoln Heights; a dance fest considers resilience in West LA; contemporary ballet in Beverly Hills and Laguna Beach; contemporary dance in University Park, Orange, Atwater Village, and downtown; cinematic dance in East Hollywood, a family-friendly lunar new year dance in Sierra Madre; plus a peek at next week.

## Live This Week

### What we are

In a prior, shorter version presented in the Brand Library's Dance Series, choreographer Boróka Nagy and the dancers of her contemporary **Re:born Dance Interactive** drew a standing ovation for *Home*, an exploration of family, resilience, and identity. The work has been expanded and takes the stage as part of the *Dance at the Odyssey Festival* co-curated by Barbara Mueller-Wittman. The festival paused during the worst of the fire and air emergencies, but is back up with *Home* taking on even deeper meaning than before. Odyssey Theatre, 2955 S. Sepulveda Blvd., WLA; Fri.,-Sat., Jan. 31-Feb. 1, 8 pm, Sun., Feb. 2, 2 pm, \$25. [Odyssey Theatre](#).



Re:born Dance Interactive. Photo by Jazley Faith

## Dance with a purpose

Two evenings offer dance, food, and drinks under the banner *Jazz Club* as **BrockusRED** combines performance, party and purpose to raise funds for acclaimed jazz dancer/teacher/choreographer **Hama** who lost his home in the recent fires. Brockus Project Space, 618 #B, Lincoln Heights; Sat., Feb. 1, 8 pm, Sun., Feb. 2, 6 pm, \$25. [Venmo](#).



BrockusRED. Photo courtesy of the artists

## Encore

Those who missed last year's highly-praised premiere of artistic director Melissa Barak's *Memoryhouse* for **Los Angeles Ballet**, have another chance with these encore performances. The title and much of the ballet's structure is drawn from British-German composer Max Richter's 2002 album. Barak kept the album's 18 tracks in order, retaining the electronic voices, sounds, and touches that are part of the original recording. The choreographer has described the work as an abstract consideration of World War II and particularly, the holocaust. At a time when the lies that fueled Nazi Germany are being shamelessly voiced again across multiple contexts, such considerations gain an unfortunate timeliness. Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd.; Beverly Hills; Thurs.-Fri., Jan. 30-31, 7:30 pm, Sat., Feb. 1, 2 & 7:30 pm, \$64-\$119. [The Wallis](#).



Los Angeles Ballet. Photo by Cheryl Mann

## **X marks the spot**

Marking its 20th anniversary, the *Laguna Dance Festival* presents another curated lineup of dancers and companies. The mainstage festival opens with two nights of the vibrant contemporary company **Ballet X** from Philadelphia (Thurs. & Fri.). **Stars of the Dance** (Sat. eve & Sun. mat.) includes dancers from Houston Ballet, Boston Ballet, Joffrey Ballet and JA Collective in classical and contemporary choreography including a world premiere by festival founder/artistic director Jodie Gates in collaboration with the Laguna Beach Music Festival. Full details and ancillary events at the website. Laguna Playhouse, 606 Laguna Canyon Rd., Laguna Beach; Thurs.-Sat., Feb. 6-8, 7:30 pm, Sun., Feb. 9, 2 pm, \$75, \$25 student. [Laguna Dance Festival](#).



Ballet X. Photo courtesy of the artists

## Bringing three

The New York-based **Doug Varone and Dancers** returns with three works from its namesake choreographer. Two recent works are *Double Octet* (2021) and *Restore* (2024), plus *Home* (1988) from the company repertoire. Chapman University, Musco Center for the Arts, 415 N. Glassell, Orange; Sat., Feb. 1, 7:30 pm, \$21.25 – \$58. [Musco Center](#).



Doug Varone & Dancers. Photo courtesy of the artists

## Enter through the alley

Opening 2025, *Work in Progress/LA* spotlights **Max Martin & Mandolin Burns** and **NICK + JAMES with Tara Jane O'Neil**. Organized by choreographers Kate Wallich, Stephanie Zaletel and Belize Wilhelm, this artist-run collective partners with this venue to “stir up deep dance discourse” in the LA dance community. The changing line up for the monthly Monday events runs through April. A peek and preview of what some of LA’s cutting edge choreographers are up to. G-Son Studios, 3218 Glendale Blvd., Atwater Village, 3218 Glendale Blvd. (enter through the alley), Atwater Village; Mon., Feb. 3, 7:30 pm, \$15. [WIP LA](#).



DIY DECAMERON’s Mandolin Noelani Burns. Photo courtesy of the artist

## Set adrift

In the West Coast premiere of *Weathering*, choreographer **Faye Driscoll** sets her dancers adrift on a raft, surrounded by the audience, to explore how large events impact individual bodies. The New York Times review found “the performers seem like the last holdouts of a civilization clinging to survival.” The media release cautions there is nudity and loud sounds. REDCAT, 631 W. 2nd St., downtown; Thurs.-Sat., Feb. 6-8, 8:30 pm, \$27, \$22 student. <https://www.redcat.org/events/2025/faye-driscoll>



Faye Driscoll. Photo by Maria Baranova

## Compare and contrast

Curated and hosted by lecturer Amy O’Neal, the series *Kaufman Converge* pairs two artists with contrasting dance aesthetics in a session that is part performance, part salon and part lecture. This event features **Teresa “Toogie” Barcelo** and **Rauf “Rubberlegz” Yasit**. USC, Gloria Kaufman International Dance Center, 849 W. 34th St., University Park; Tues., Feb. 4, 7 pm, free w/reservation at [Visions and Voices USC](#).





Rauf “Rubberlegz” Yasit. Photo courtesy of the artist

## Lions and puppets

As part of its lunar new year celebrations this family friendly event features a *Lion Dance* by the **East Wind Foundation** as well as a puppet making workshop with the Bob Baker Marionette Theatre. Sierra Madre Playhouse, 87 West Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre; Sat., Feb. 1, 11 am, \$12. [Sierra Madre Playhouse](#).



Dance Camera West 2025. Photo courtesy of the artists

## Cinematic dancing

The celebrated **Dance Camera West 2025** continues its five day festival with films from around the world and the U.S.A. Among films and documentaries from local dance figures, Keith Glassman’s documentary *Lives Beyond Motion* focuses on notable men who dance, and includes LA Dance Chronicle founder/editor Jeff Slayton who talks about a career that included dancing

with Merce Cunningham. In the wake of the wildfire devastation, the festival announced special ‘pay what you can’ and other steps including postponement of the David Rousseve retrospective to next year. Details on the festival and the myriad of programs available at the website. Screenings at Barnsdall Park, 4800 Hollywood Blvd., East Hollywood (venue for most events); Wed.-Sun., Jan. 29-Feb. 2, times, ticket price, and film specifics at website “schedule.” One event is at The Philosophical Research Society, 3910 Los Feliz Blvd., Los Feliz; Sat., Feb. 1, 7 pm, 20. [Dance Camera West](#).

### ***A Peek at Next Week***

**Spenser Theberge** — *Intimates* at Odyssey Theatre, 2955 S. Sepulveda Blvd., WLA; Fri.-Sat., Feb. 7-8, 8 pm, Sun., Feb. 9, 7 pm, \$25. [Odyssey Theatre Ensemble](#).

**Co-Show9** — *Performance and Party* at Pink Box Studio, 966 E. Pico Blvd., downtown Fashion District, Fri., Feb. 7, 8 & 10 pm, \$20-\$52. [Tickets](#).

**Alonzo King Lines** at Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa; Fri., Feb. 7, 7:30 pm, \$44.07-\$134.47. [SCFTA](#).



Alonzo King LINES Ballet. Photo by R J Muna

**An Evening of Dance** at Stomping Ground LA, 5453 Alhambra Ave., El Sereno; Fri.-Sat., Feb. 7-8, 6 pm, \$20. [Eventbrite](#).

**MashUp Contemporary Dance Company** — *Choreography Open Mic Night* at Frogtown Studio, 2926 Gilroy St., Elysian Valley; Sat., Feb. 8, 7 pm, \$15. [MashUp Dance](#).

**Kayamanan Ng Lahi Philippine Folk Arts** — *Pagdiriwang – A Celebration of Philippine Culture* at Sierra Madre Playhouse, 87 West Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre; Sat., Feb. 8, 11 am, \$12. [Sierra Madre Playhouse](#).

**Matthew Bourne** — *Old Friends* at Music Center, Ahmanson Theatre, 135 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Sat., Feb. 8, – Sun., March 9, official opening Thurs., Feb. 13, then Tues.-Fri., 8 pm, Sat., 2 & 8 pm, Sun., 1 & 6:30 pm, \$25 – \$195.50. [Center Theatre Group](#).

## The Role of Deposit Contributions in Car Finance Options

Our Friends · Wednesday, January 29th, 2025

For many buyers, purchasing a vehicle means big up front costs, something that can be a barrier for many. In order to overcome this, manufacturers and dealerships provide deposit contributions, a financial incentive to reduce the upfront cost and make car financing more feasible. In all, these contributions are extremely important in defining the terms of car finance deals, particularly for people looking at **zero deposit car financing**.

### What Are Deposit Contributions?

Deposit contributions are additional funds that the car manufacturer or dealership provides to help offset a buyer's initial payment on a car finance agreement. Unlike discounts, these contributions do not offer you a discount, they actually reduce the amount that you need to pay upfront. They're often tied to a particular type of financing, like Personal Contract Purchase (PCP) or Hire Purchase (HP). It also lessens the financial burden right off the bat, and makes financing packages more appealing.

### Lowering the Cost Barrier

Deposit contributions are one of the biggest advantages because they can reduce the initial financial investment. This can make zero deposit car financing options much more attainable for buyers considering buying a new or used vehicle. These contributions actually reduce the amount financed and therefore the monthly payments, which makes the deal more reasonable for a larger range of budgets.

### Attracting Buyers with Incentives

Deposit contributions help manufacturers and dealers stand out in a very competitive market. Often, these incentives are the deciding factor for buyers comparing financing packages. For example, a dealership that provides more deposit contribution may persuade a buyer to pass up a competitor with less attractive terms. This is not only a sales boost strategy, but it also creates brand loyalty, making customers feel that they are getting extra value.

### Reducing the Loan Amount

Deposits have a direct impact on the cost of financing and lowering the principal amount borrowed. Buying a smaller loan means less interest will be paid over the length of the agreement, which will save buyers money. In longer term agreements, interest costs can soon mount up and this benefit becomes more apparent.

### Additional Perks and Promotions

Normally, deposit contributions are bundled with other promotional offers, like low interest rates,

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free servicing packages and extended warranties. These added perks only serve to ramp up the value of the deal, making it hard to pass up.

## Balancing Short-Term and Long-Term Benefits

Deposit contribution reduces initial costs, but it also affects long term affordability. These incentives need to be evaluated by buyers carefully to determine how they will affect their monthly payments and ultimately total cost of ownership. Sometimes a more expensive vehicle can be made to work within the budget through a higher contribution.

## Are Deposit Contributions Right for You?

It's crucial to evaluate whether the deposited contributions of the deal correspond to your financial goals before you commit to a finance deal. It can help you to know the terms and conditions that are associated with these incentives. By comparing deals among several dealerships, you make sure you're getting the most benefit out of these contributions.

## Final Remarks

Deposit contributions are a force to be reckoned with in the car financing landscape and a really good thing, because they help buyers deal with upfront costs. They support making car ownership a reality for many by making both new and used vehicles more affordable. Coupled with flexible plans such as zero deposit car financing options, these contributions become even more attractive as a way to drive your dream vehicle.

*Photo by Mike Bird via Pexels*

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