

How do I compare information from different time periods?

Sometimes a snapshot of how you're doing today doesn't tell you everything you want to know. Sometimes you want to compare today's data with past data so you can track where you've improved and spot new areas to focus your efforts. Quicken includes comparison reports and graphs to help. You can compare income and expenses as well as current and average spending. You'll also be able to compare cash flow for two periods.

You can [create](#) a number of reports to find out how you're spending your money. Click the topic below for the report you want more information about.

- **Current Spending vs. Average Spending by Category report or graph**

This report or graph compares current expenses from one time period with the average spending for another time period, grouped by category. It also includes the corresponding subcategories. This report can help identify if the areas where you are spending more than you used to have steadily increased or decreased over time, or if an occurrence (such as party supplies for a celebration) caused the change. It includes the corresponding subcategories.

You can spot spending changes in the column that highlights the differences between the two periods. You can [customize](#) the report to display the difference between the two periods in dollars, as a percentage, or both. (INF in the Difference column means that the first amount is zero.)

After you select the starting time period in the Date range field, Quicken displays relevant comparison periods in the Compare to field. For example if you want to see how much you spent by category for the current month, Quicken lets you compare this amount with the amount you spent for the last 3, 6, or 12 months. If, on the other hand, you want to see how much you spent by category for the current year, Quicken lets you compare this amount with the amount you spent last year, or for the last 3 or 5 years.

- **Current Spending vs. Average Spending by Payee report or graph**

This report or graph compares current expenses from one time period with the average spending for another time period, grouped by payee. It can help identify if the areas where you are spending more than you used to have steadily increased or decreased over time, or if an occurrence (such as a visit to the furniture store) caused the change.

You can spot spending changes in the column that highlights the differences between the two periods. You can [customize](#) the report to display the difference between the two periods in dollars, as a percentage, or both. (INF in the Difference column means that the first amount is zero.)

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- **Cash Flow Comparison report**

This report compares your inflow and outflow (by category, tag, payee, or account) for two time periods. For example, you can compare your inflow and outflow for this month with those for this month last year.

You can [customize](#) the report to display the difference between the two periods in dollars, as a percentage, or both. (INF in the Difference column means that the first amount is zero.)

If you purchased Quicken Home & Business, you can use this report for your business finances as well.

- **Income and Expense Comparison by Category report**

This report compares your income and spending by category for two different periods. It also includes the corresponding subcategories. This report can show you if, and in which areas, you're spending more or earning more than a year ago. The report shows a breakdown of your finances by category and lets you define two different periods to display side by side. It also shows you the difference between the two periods.

You can [customize](#) the report to display the difference between the two periods in dollars, as a percentage, or both. (INF in the Difference column means that the first amount is zero.)

This comparison report is organized by income and expense. It includes bank, cash, and credit card accounts only. You can change these settings by customizing the report.

- **Income and Expense Comparison by Payee report**

This report compares your income and spending by payee for two different periods. It can show you if, and at which establishments, you're spending more or earning more than a year ago. The report shows a breakdown of your finances by payee and lets you define two different periods to display side by side. It also shows you the difference between the two periods.

You can [customize](#) the report to display the difference between the two periods in dollars, as a percentage, or both. (INF in the Difference column means that the first amount is zero.)

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