

The Callan Periodic Table of Investment Returns

Annual Returns for Key Indices Ranked in Order of Performance (2002–2021)

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed 22.37%	Emerging Market Equity 55.82%	Real Estate 37.96%	Emerging Market Equity 34.00%	Real Estate 42.12%	Emerging Market Equity 39.38%	U.S. Fixed Income 5.24%	Emerging Market Equity 78.51%	Small Cap Equity 26.85%	U.S. Fixed Income 7.84%	Real Estate 27.73%	Small Cap Equity 38.82%	Real Estate 15.02%	Large Cap Equity 1.38%	Small Cap Equity 21.31%	Emerging Market Equity 37.28%	Cash Equivalent 1.87%	Large Cap Equity 31.49%	Small Cap Equity 19.96%	Large Cap Equity 28.71%
U.S. Fixed Income 10.26%	Small Cap Equity 47.25%	Emerging Market Equity 25.55%	Real Estate 15.35%	Emerging Market Equity 32.17%	Dev ex-U.S. Equity 12.44%	Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed 4.39%	High Yield 58.21%	Real Estate 19.63%	High Yield 4.98%	Emerging Market Equity 18.23%	Large Cap Equity 32.39%	Large Cap Equity 13.69%	U.S. Fixed Income 0.55%	High Yield 17.13%	Dev ex-U.S. Equity 24.21%	U.S. Fixed Income 0.01%	Small Cap Equity 25.52%	Large Cap Equity 18.40%	Real Estate 26.09%
Real Estate 2.82%	Real Estate 40.69%	Dev ex-U.S. Equity 20.38%	Dev ex-U.S. Equity 14.47%	Dev ex-U.S. Equity 25.71%	Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed 11.03%	Cash Equivalent 2.06%	Real Estate 37.13%	Emerging Market Equity 18.88%	Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed 4.36%	Dev ex-U.S. Equity 16.41%	Dev ex-U.S. Equity 21.02%	U.S. Fixed Income 5.97%	Cash Equivalent 0.05%	Large Cap Equity 11.96%	Large Cap Equity 21.83%	High Yield -2.08%	Dev ex-U.S. Equity 22.49%	Emerging Market Equity 18.31%	Small Cap Equity 14.82%
Cash Equivalent 1.78%	Dev ex-U.S. Equity 39.42%	Small Cap Equity 18.33%	Large Cap Equity 4.91%	Small Cap Equity 18.37%	U.S. Fixed Income 6.97%	High Yield -26.16%	Dev ex-U.S. Equity 33.67%	High Yield 15.12%	Large Cap Equity 2.11%	Small Cap Equity 16.35%	High Yield 7.44%	Small Cap Equity 4.89%	Real Estate -0.79%	Emerging Market Equity 11.19%	Small Cap Equity 14.65%	Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed -2.15%	Real Estate 21.91%	Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed 10.11%	Dev ex-U.S. Equity 12.62%
High Yield -1.37%	High Yield 28.97%	Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed 12.54%	Small Cap Equity 4.55%	Large Cap Equity 15.79%	Large Cap Equity 5.49%	Small Cap Equity -33.79%	Small Cap Equity 27.17%	Large Cap Equity 15.06%	Cash Equivalent 0.10%	Large Cap Equity 16.00%	Real Estate 3.67%	High Yield 2.45%	Dev ex-U.S. Equity -3.04%	Real Estate 4.06%	Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed 10.51%	Large Cap Equity -4.38%	Emerging Market Equity 18.44%	Dev ex-U.S. Equity 7.59%	High Yield 5.28%
Emerging Market Equity -6.16%	Large Cap Equity 28.68%	High Yield 11.13%	Cash Equivalent 3.07%	High Yield 11.85%	Cash Equivalent 5.00%	Large Cap Equity -37.00%	Large Cap Equity 26.47%	Dev ex-U.S. Equity 8.95%	Small Cap Equity -4.18%	High Yield 15.81%	Cash Equivalent 0.07%	Cash Equivalent 0.03%	Small Cap Equity -4.41%	Dev ex-U.S. Equity 2.75%	Real Estate 10.36%	Real Estate -5.63%	High Yield 14.32%	U.S. Fixed Income 7.51%	Cash Equivalent 0.05%
Dev ex-U.S. Equity -15.80%	Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed 19.36%	Large Cap Equity 10.88%	High Yield 2.74%	Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed 8.16%	High Yield 1.87%	Dev ex-U.S. Equity -43.56%	Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed 7.53%	U.S. Fixed Income 6.54%	Real Estate -6.46%	U.S. Fixed Income 4.21%	U.S. Fixed Income -2.02%	Emerging Market Equity -2.19%	High Yield -4.47%	U.S. Fixed Income 2.65%	High Yield 7.50%	Small Cap Equity -11.01%	U.S. Fixed Income 8.72%	High Yield 7.11%	U.S. Fixed Income -1.54%
Small Cap Equity -20.48%	U.S. Fixed Income 4.10%	U.S. Fixed Income 4.34%	U.S. Fixed Income 2.43%	Cash Equivalent 4.85%	Small Cap Equity -1.57%	Real Estate -48.21%	U.S. Fixed Income 5.93%	Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed 4.95%	Dev ex-U.S. Equity -12.21%	Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed 4.09%	Emerging Market Equity -2.60%	Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed -3.09%	Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed -6.02%	Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed 1.49%	U.S. Fixed Income 3.54%	Dev ex-U.S. Equity -14.09%	Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed 5.09%	Cash Equivalent 0.67%	Emerging Market Equity -2.54%
Large Cap Equity -22.10%	Cash Equivalent 1.15%	Cash Equivalent 1.33%	Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed -8.65%	U.S. Fixed Income 4.33%	Real Estate -7.39%	Emerging Market Equity -53.33%	Cash Equivalent 0.21%	Cash Equivalent 0.13%	Emerging Market Equity -18.42%	Cash Equivalent 0.11%	Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed -3.08%	Dev ex-U.S. Equity -4.32%	Emerging Market Equity -14.92%	Cash Equivalent 0.33%	Cash Equivalent 0.86%	Emerging Market Equity -14.57%	Cash Equivalent 2.28%	Real Estate -9.04%	Gbl ex-U.S. Fixed -7.05%

The Callan Periodic Table of Investment Returns conveys the strong **case for diversification** across asset classes (stocks vs. bonds), capitalizations (large vs. small), and equity markets (U.S. vs. global ex-U.S.). The Table highlights the uncertainty inherent in all capital markets. Rankings change every year. Also noteworthy is the difference between absolute and relative performance, as returns for the top-performing asset class span a wide range over the past 20 years.

A printable copy of The Callan Periodic Table of Investment Returns is available on our website at callan.com/periodic-table/.

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The Callan Periodic Table of Investment Returns 2002–2021

Callan's Periodic Table of Investment Returns depicts annual returns for 8 asset classes and cash equivalents, ranked from best to worst performance for each calendar year. The asset classes are color-coded to enable easy tracking over time. We describe the well-known, industry-standard market indices that we use as proxies for each asset class below.

- **Large Cap Equity (S&P 500)** measures the performance of large capitalization U.S. stocks. The S&P 500 is a market-value-weighted index of 500 stocks. The weightings make each company's influence on the Index performance directly proportional to that company's market value.
- **Small Cap Equity (Russell 2000)** measures the performance of small capitalization U.S. stocks. The Russell 2000 is a market-value-weighted index of the 2,000 smallest stocks in the broad-market Russell 3000 Index.
- **Developed ex-U.S. Equity (MSCI World ex USA)** is an index that is designed to measure the performance of large and mid cap equities in developed markets in Europe, the Middle East, the Pacific region, and Canada.
- **Emerging Market Equity (MSCI Emerging Markets)** is an index that is designed to measure the performance of equity markets in 25 emerging countries around the world.
- **U.S. Fixed Income (Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index)** includes U.S. government, corporate, and mortgage-backed securities with maturities of at least one year.
- **High Yield (Bloomberg High Yield Bond Index)** measures the market of USD-denominated, non-investment grade, fixed-rate, taxable corporate bonds. Securities are classified as high yield if the middle rating of Moody's, Fitch, and S&P is Ba1/BB+/BB+ or below, excluding emerging market debt.
- **Global ex-U.S. Fixed Income (Bloomberg Global Aggregate ex US Bond Index)** is an unmanaged index that is comprised of several other Bloomberg indices that measure the fixed income performance of regions around the world, excluding the U.S.
- **Real Estate (FTSE EPRA Nareit Developed REIT Index)** is designed to measure the stock performance of companies engaged in specific real estate activities in the North American, European, and Asian real estate markets.
- **Cash Equivalent (90-day T-bill)** is a short-term debt obligation backed by the Treasury Department of the U.S. government.

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