

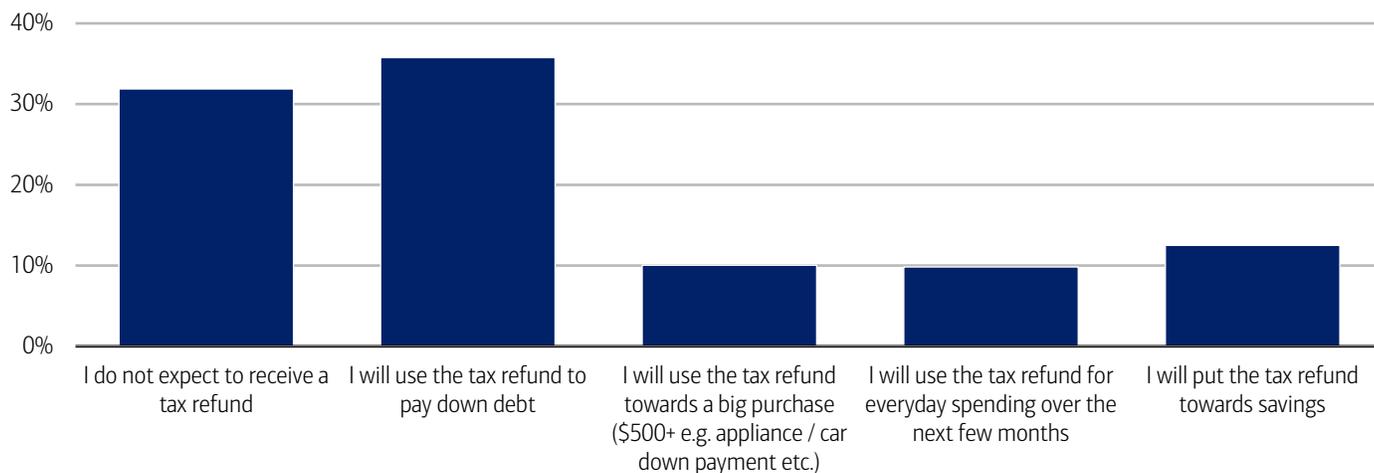
## Daily Insights

# How consumers plan to use their 2026 tax refunds

25 February 2026

**32% of respondents do not expect a tax refund, while 36% expect to use the refund to pay down debt**

What do you plan to do with your tax refund?



Source: BofA Global Research, SurveyMonkey

BANK OF AMERICA INSTITUTE

According to BofA Global Research’s latest payment priority survey, a majority of respondents expect to receive a tax refund this year. And for those who do, that money may offer some added financial cushion: BofA Global Research estimates refunds will be about 26% higher in 2026 compared to last year.

The survey also finds that 36% of respondents plan to use their refund to pay down debt, while roughly 20% expect to spend it – either on a big purchase or for everyday expenses. Given that most consumers are already managing affordability pressures, maintaining their savings levels, and keeping up with credit card debt, this range of anticipated use cases reinforces the idea that tax refunds can meaningfully support deposits and spending over the next several months.

For more on tax refunds, read our [February Consumer Checkpoint](#).

## Methodology

The fourth annual Bank of America payment priority survey was conducted in February 2026, surveying 1,007 individuals owing more than two types of debt.

### Contributors

**Liz Everett Krisberg**

Head of Bank of America Institute

**David Michael Tinsley**

Senior Economist, Bank of America Institute

### Sources

**Chris Flanagan**

Strategist, BofA Global Research

# Disclosures

These materials have been prepared by Bank of America Institute and are provided to you for general information purposes only. To the extent these materials reference Bank of America data, such materials are not intended to be reflective or indicative of, and should not be relied upon as, the results of operations, financial conditions or performance of Bank of America. Bank of America Institute is a think tank dedicated to uncovering powerful insights that move business and society forward. Drawing on data and resources from across the bank and the world, the Institute delivers important, original perspectives on the economy, sustainability and global transformation. Unless otherwise specifically stated, any views or opinions expressed herein are solely those of Bank of America Institute and any individual authors listed, and are not the product of the BofA Global Research department or any other department of Bank of America Corporation or its affiliates and/or subsidiaries (collectively Bank of America). The views in these materials may differ from the views and opinions expressed by the BofA Global Research department or other departments or divisions of Bank of America. Information has been obtained from sources believed to be reliable, but Bank of America does not warrant its completeness or accuracy. These materials do not make any claim regarding the sustainability of any product or service. Any discussion of sustainability is limited as set out herein. Views and estimates constitute our judgment as of the date of these materials and are subject to change without notice. The views expressed herein should not be construed as individual investment advice for any particular person and are not intended as recommendations of particular securities, financial instruments, strategies or banking services for a particular person. This material does not constitute an offer or an invitation by or on behalf of Bank of America to any person to buy or sell any security or financial instrument or engage in any banking service. Nothing in these materials constitutes investment, legal, accounting or tax advice. Copyright 2026 Bank of America Corporation. All rights reserved.