FREE INVESTOR EDUCATION GUIDE

THE ONE-HOUR MARKET METHOD

A practical guide to researching stocks, understanding trading strategies, and building a consistent market routine.



YOUR HOUR, IN FOUR PARTS

10 min	Understand the market
20 min	Build your watchlist
20 min	Evaluate the details
10 min	Create your research plan

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INTRODUCTION

00 A SMARTER MARKET ROUTINE STARTS WITH ONE HOUR

The financial markets generate an endless stream of information. Earnings announcements, economic reports, analyst opinions, price movements, and breaking headlines compete for investors' attention.

With so much information available, it's easy to confuse staying informed with making progress.

But effective market research isn't necessarily about spending more time watching charts or following every headline. It's about knowing what to look for, where to focus your attention, and how to organize the information you find.

That's the idea behind The One-Hour Market Method.

This guide introduces a structured approach to researching the market in four manageable steps. Rather than reacting to every price movement or headline, you'll learn how to build a research routine that helps you evaluate information, identify questions worth investigating, and understand the risks associated with different trading strategies.

You don't need advanced technical knowledge to get started. You don't need expensive software or a complicated collection of indicators.

YOU NEED A PROCESS.

The One-Hour Market Method divides a research session into four parts:



10 MIN	**Understand the Market**	Review the broader environment
20 MIN	**Build Your Watchlist**	Identify companies worth researching
20 MIN	**Evaluate the Details**	Examine fundamentals, charts, and risks
10 MIN	**Create Your Research Plan**	Organize findings and next steps

This framework is intended as a starting point, not a rigid formula. Some investments require considerably more research, and some days may offer little reason to take action.

The objective is simple: make your research time more focused, consistent, and useful.

CHAPTER 1 MINUTES 0–10

01 THE FIRST 10 MINUTES: UNDERSTAND THE MARKET

Before researching an individual company, it helps to understand the broader environment in which it operates.

A company may report encouraging business results while its share price declines. Another company may experience rising share prices despite little change in its underlying business.

These situations can occur because individual securities are influenced by forces beyond company performance. Interest rates, economic expectations, industry developments, investor sentiment, and overall market conditions can all affect price movements.

Your first ten minutes are about gaining perspective.

START WITH THE MAJOR MARKET INDEXES

Broad market indexes provide a useful snapshot of how different groups of companies are performing. Three commonly followed U.S. indexes include:

S&P 500

Tracks approximately 500 leading U.S. companies and is widely used as a benchmark for large-cap equities.

Nasdaq Composite

Includes thousands of Nasdaq-listed securities and has substantial exposure to technology-oriented companies.

Dow Jones Industrial Average

Tracks 30 established U.S. companies across several industries.

You don’t need to memorize every daily movement. Instead, consider what these indexes may reveal about the overall market environment.

- Are major indexes moving in similar directions?
- Are certain areas of the market behaving differently?
- Is volatility unusually elevated?

These observations can provide useful context for your research.

LOOK BEYOND THE HEADLINES

Financial headlines often focus on dramatic price movements or short-term predictions. However, a headline rarely provides enough information to evaluate an investment. For example, consider a hypothetical headline:

HYPOTHETICAL HEADLINE

“Technology Shares Fall as Investors Reassess Growth Expectations.”

Before drawing conclusions, ask:

- Is the movement concentrated in one industry or spread across the broader market?
- Did a specific economic announcement influence expectations?
- Are investors responding to changes in company fundamentals or broader sentiment?
- Is this development relevant to the companies on my watchlist?

These questions encourage analysis rather than reaction.

PAY ATTENTION TO ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Several economic indicators can influence financial markets.

Interest rates	Changes in borrowing costs may affect corporate spending, consumer behavior, and company valuations.
Inflation	Rising prices can influence business expenses, consumer purchasing power, and monetary policy.
Employment	Labor market conditions can provide clues about economic activity and consumer demand.
Economic growth	Measures such as gross domestic product can help investors understand the broader business environment.

You don’t need to become an economist. The goal is to recognize how these factors may influence different industries and investment strategies.

10 MIN YOUR FIRST 10-MINUTE CHECKLIST

Before moving on, answer three questions:

1. What is the general market environment?
2. Which industries or themes appear worth further research?
3. Is there an economic development that could affect my existing watchlist?

Write down your observations. They will provide context for the next stage of your research.

CHAPTER 2 MINUTES 10–30

02 THE NEXT 20 MINUTES: BUILD A WATCHLIST WORTH FOLLOWING

One of the most common challenges for individual investors is deciding what deserves their attention.

Thousands of publicly traded companies compete for research time. Without a structured approach, it's easy to jump from one headline to another without developing a meaningful understanding of any particular business.

A watchlist helps solve that problem. Rather than attempting to follow everything, you create a manageable collection of companies or securities that merit further investigation.

START WITH BUSINESSES YOU CAN UNDERSTAND

A useful starting point is identifying companies whose products, services, and business models you can explain. Consider questions such as:

- What does the company sell?
- Who are its customers?
- How does it generate revenue?
- What distinguishes it from competitors?
- What factors could support or weaken demand?

If you cannot explain how a business operates, additional research may be necessary before evaluating its investment potential.

LOOK FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENTS

Companies change over time. New products, management decisions, industry competition, financial results, and regulatory developments can all influence future performance.

These developments are sometimes called catalysts. **A catalyst is an event or change that could influence how investors evaluate a company.** Examples include:

Earnings announcements
Financial results may reveal changes in revenue, profitability, expenses, or management expectations.

Product developments
A new product or service may create opportunities, but commercial success is never assured.

Industry changes
Shifts in technology, consumer demand, or regulation can influence competitive conditions.

Corporate decisions
Acquisitions, partnerships, restructuring, or leadership changes may affect business operations.

Not every catalyst is positive. A development that initially attracts attention may also introduce uncertainty or risk.

CREATE A FOCUSED WATCHLIST

You do not need dozens of companies to begin developing a research routine. A smaller list may make it easier to understand each company's business and monitor important developments. For each company, record:

RESEARCH ITEM	WHAT TO RECORD	RESEARCH ITEM	WHAT TO RECORD
Company	Name and trading symbol	**Research catalyst**	Development worth investigating
Industry	Primary business sector	**Key question**	What you still need to understand
Business model	How the company generates revenue	**Main risk**	Factor that could weaken the thesis

SEPARATE INTERESTING STORIES FROM RESEARCHABLE BUSINESSES

An exciting industry doesn't automatically make every company operating within it attractive. A company may participate in a growing market while facing substantial competition, financial challenges, or operational risks.

HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLE

A hypothetical robotics company might operate in an industry with promising long-term applications. However, that does not tell you whether the company has:

- A commercially viable product
- Reliable customers
- Sustainable revenue
- Sufficient financing
- A defensible competitive position

A compelling industry narrative is a reason to investigate, not a substitute for investigation.

20 MIN YOUR 20-MINUTE WATCHLIST CHECKLIST

Choose a small number of companies or securities to research further. For each one, identify:

1. What the business does.
2. Why it deserves further attention.
3. What information could support or challenge the initial research idea.
4. What risks require closer examination.

Your watchlist is a research tool, not a list of recommendations.

CHAPTER 3 MINUTES 30–50

03 THE NEXT 20 MINUTES: EVALUATE THE OPPORTUNITY

Once you've identified a company worth researching, the next step is understanding what the available information may reveal.

This stage combines three areas. Each provides a different perspective.

1	2	3
Business fundamentals	Price behavior	Risk and uncertainty

No single metric, chart pattern, or indicator can determine what a security will do next.

PART ONE: UNDERSTAND THE FUNDAMENTALS

Fundamental analysis examines a company's financial condition, business performance, and potential challenges. Several basic measures can provide a useful starting point.

Revenue

Revenue represents the money a company generates from selling goods or services before expenses are deducted.

- Is revenue growing, declining, or remaining relatively stable?
- What is driving changes in revenue?
- Does the company depend heavily on a small number of customers?

Revenue growth can be encouraging, but it does not automatically translate into profitability.

Earnings

Earnings generally refer to a company's profit after expenses, although different earnings measures may be used in financial reporting.

- Is the business profitable?
- Are expenses growing faster than revenue?
- Are results influenced by unusual or nonrecurring items?

Cash Flow

Cash flow provides information about money entering and leaving a business. A company can report accounting profits while experiencing cash flow challenges. Understanding the distinction can help investors evaluate financial resilience.

Debt

Debt can help finance growth, acquisitions, or business operations. However, borrowing also creates financial obligations.

- How much debt does the company carry?
- What are its interest obligations?
- Could borrowing costs or refinancing needs create challenges?

PART TWO: UNDERSTAND BASIC CHART ANALYSIS

Price charts display how a security has traded over a particular period. They can help investors examine historical price behavior, volatility, and trading activity. However, charts do not predict future prices with certainty. Here are several foundational concepts.

Trend	The general direction of price movement over a period. Prices may move upward, downward, or sideways. Trends can change unexpectedly, particularly when new information becomes available.
Support	A price area where buying interest has previously been sufficient to slow or interrupt a decline. A support level is not guaranteed to hold.
Resistance	A price area where selling interest has previously slowed or interrupted an advance. A resistance level does not prevent a security from moving higher.
Trading volume	The number of shares or contracts traded during a period. Changes in volume can provide context about market activity, but volume alone does not explain why a price moved.
Volatility	The degree to which prices fluctuate. Higher volatility may create larger price movements in either direction and can increase trading risk.

PART THREE: COMPARE THE EVIDENCE

HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLE

Imagine you're researching a hypothetical company called **Harbor Technology**. The company has introduced a new business product and attracted attention from financial media. Before forming an opinion, you review several areas.

Business	Does the new product address a meaningful customer need?
Financials	Is the company generating sufficient revenue to support its operations?
Competition	Are larger or better-funded competitors pursuing the same market?
Price behavior	Has the share price already moved significantly in response to expectations?
Risk	What could happen if adoption is slower than anticipated?

The point isn't to reach a quick conclusion. It's to develop a more complete understanding of the business and the uncertainty surrounding it.

QUESTIONS WORTH ASKING BEFORE ANY TRADING DECISION

1. What evidence supports the idea?
2. What information might contradict it?
3. What assumptions am I making?
4. What could cause a substantial loss?
5. Does the strategy fit my experience, objectives, and financial circumstances?
6. What additional research would be necessary?

Sometimes the most useful conclusion is that more information is needed. Other times, the research may suggest that an opportunity is not worth pursuing. Both are valid outcomes.

CHAPTER 4 BACKGROUND

04 UNDERSTANDING TRADING STRATEGIES AND OPTIONS

Different market participants approach securities in different ways.

Some focus on long-term business ownership. Others study shorter-term price movements, economic developments, or specific trading strategies. Understanding the distinctions can help you evaluate educational material and recognize the risks involved.

INVESTING VERSUS TRADING

Long-term investing generally involves purchasing assets with the intention of holding them over an extended period. Research often emphasizes business quality, financial performance, valuation, diversification, and long-term objectives.

Trading generally involves buying and selling assets over shorter periods, although the exact timeframe can vary considerably. Trading research may place greater emphasis on price movements, market conditions, liquidity, and risk controls.

Neither approach eliminates the possibility of loss. Shorter-term trading can also involve higher transaction costs, greater monitoring demands, and increased sensitivity to market volatility.

COMMON TRADING APPROACHES

POSITION TRADING

WEEKS TO MONTHS+

Position traders may hold securities for weeks, months, or longer while evaluating broader trends and developments.

SWING TRADING

DAYS TO WEEKS

Swing traders generally seek to evaluate price movements over periods ranging from several days to several weeks.

DAY TRADING

SAME DAY

Opening and closing positions within the same trading day. It requires substantial attention, involves significant risk, and may be unsuitable for inexperienced market participants.

These approaches differ in time commitment, risk exposure, and required knowledge.

Note: A one-hour research routine should not be confused with a promise that every trading strategy can be managed in one hour.

OPTIONS: THE BASICS

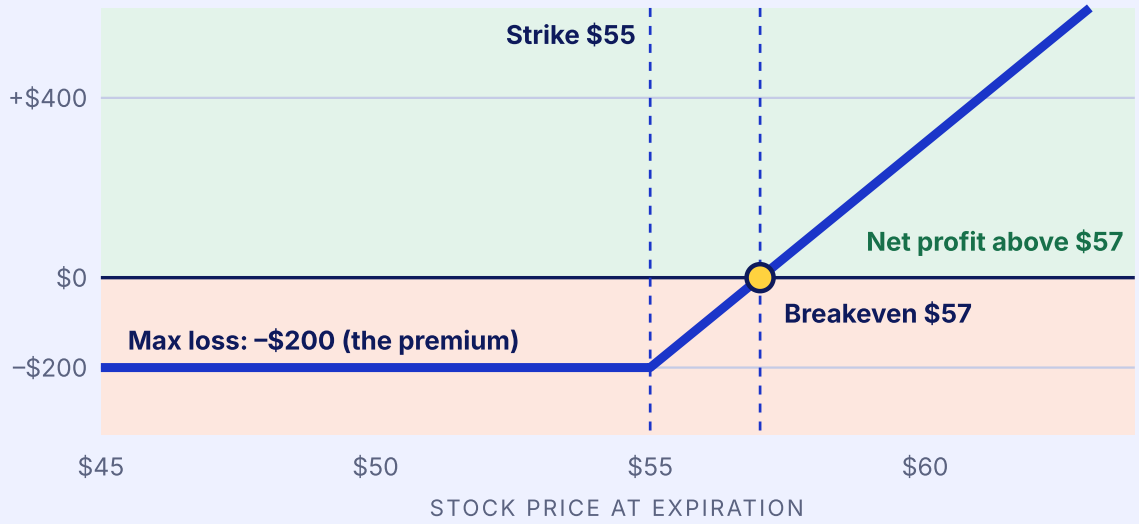
Options are financial contracts whose value is linked to an underlying asset, such as a stock or exchange-traded fund. They can be used for different purposes, including hedging and speculation. However, options introduce additional complexity and can involve substantial risk.

Call option	A standard equity call option gives its buyer the right, but not the obligation, to purchase the underlying shares at a specified price before or at expiration, depending on the contract's exercise terms.
Put option	A standard equity put option gives its buyer the right, but not the obligation, to sell the underlying shares at a specified price before or at expiration, depending on the contract's exercise terms.
Strike price	The specified price at which the underlying asset may be purchased or sold through exercise of the option.
Expiration date	Options have expiration dates after which the contracts generally cease to exist.
Premium	The price paid by an options buyer and received by an options seller. For a purchased option, the premium paid is generally the maximum loss, excluding fees, provided the position is not subsequently exercised into an underlying position that creates additional exposure.

A SIMPLE HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLE

Suppose a stock is trading at $50 per share. An investor purchases a call option with a $55 strike price for a premium of $2 per share. A standard U.S. equity options contract generally represents 100 shares.

STRIKE PRICE	PREMIUM	MULTIPLIER	TOTAL PAID*
$55	$2/sh	100 sh	$200



Net profit or loss per contract at expiration, excluding fees and other costs. *Excluding fees.

- At expiration, the stock would need to trade above **$57** per share for the call buyer to have a net profit, excluding fees and other costs.
- If the stock finishes at or below **$55**, the call expires without intrinsic value and the buyer generally loses the entire $200 premium.
- If the stock finishes between **$55 and $57**, the option has intrinsic value, but the buyer still has a net loss after accounting for the premium.

This example illustrates why correctly anticipating the direction of a stock's movement does not necessarily result in a profitable options trade. Timing, expiration, premiums, and price movement all matter.

WHY OPTIONS REQUIRE ADDITIONAL CAUTION

Options are not simply another way to purchase shares. Important risks include:

Time decay	An option's time value generally declines as expiration approaches, all else being equal.
Volatility changes	Changes in expected volatility can influence option premiums, sometimes significantly.

Expiration risk	An option may expire worthless, resulting in the loss of the entire premium paid.
Leverage	Options can provide exposure to price movements with less initial capital than purchasing the underlying shares, but leverage can magnify percentage losses.
Selling options	Certain options-selling strategies can create losses substantially greater than the premium received. Uncovered call selling, for example, can involve theoretically unlimited loss potential.

Before trading options, investors should understand the specific contract, exercise and assignment mechanics, liquidity, costs, and potential losses.

Options education is a starting point, not a substitute for comprehensive risk assessment.

CHAPTER 5 MINUTES 50–60

05 THE FINAL 10 MINUTES: CREATE YOUR RESEARCH PLAN

The last part of the One-Hour Market Method is about organizing what you've learned.

This step is easy to overlook. Research can produce a large amount of information, but without a clear record, it becomes difficult to distinguish meaningful findings from passing impressions. A simple research journal can help.

RECORD WHAT YOU FOUND

For each company or market topic, document:

JOURNAL ENTRY	WHAT TO CAPTURE
Research subject	What did you examine?
Initial observation	Why did it attract your attention?
Supporting information	What facts or evidence appear relevant?
Conflicting information	What facts might challenge your initial interpretation?
Risks	What could go wrong?
Open questions	What do you still need to investigate?
Next step	Should you continue researching, revisit the topic later, or remove it from your watchlist?

SEPARATE RESEARCH FROM ACTION

Not every research session should result in a trade. A structured process may help you recognize when information is incomplete, when risks are difficult to evaluate, or when a strategy does not fit your circumstances. Deciding not to act can be a reasonable outcome.

The objective is to improve the quality of your research, not increase the frequency of your trades.

REVISIT YOUR ASSUMPTIONS

Markets change, and so do companies. A research idea that appeared interesting at one point may become less compelling as new information emerges. Revisit your notes periodically. Ask whether the original evidence remains valid and whether new developments change the risk assessment.

A useful process should allow you to change your mind.

06 CHAPTER 6 AVOID THESE FIVE COMMON RESEARCH MISTAKES

Even experienced market participants can fall into habits that weaken their decision-making. Recognizing these patterns can help improve the quality of your research.

1 Following Headlines Without Context

A dramatic headline may attract attention without explaining the underlying business or economic significance.

A better approach: Identify the original source, review the broader context, and determine whether the development materially changes your research.

2 Confusing a Popular Theme With a Strong Company

A growing industry does not guarantee that every participant will succeed.

A better approach: Evaluate the company's financial condition, competitive position, and business model independently of the industry narrative.

3 Relying on a Single Indicator

One financial metric or chart pattern rarely tells the entire story.

A better approach: Compare multiple sources of information and consider evidence that challenges your assumptions.

4 Ignoring Downside Risk

It's easy to focus on what might go right while overlooking what could go wrong.

A better approach: Identify potential losses, uncertainty, liquidity constraints, and strategy-specific risks before considering action.

5 Mistaking Activity for Progress

Constantly monitoring prices or making frequent trades does not necessarily improve investment outcomes.

A better approach: Develop a consistent research process and evaluate its usefulness based on the quality of your analysis, not the number of transactions.

CHAPTER 7 IN PRACTICE

07 PUTTING THE ONE-HOUR MARKET METHOD TOGETHER

Here's how the entire framework works in practice. Imagine you're beginning a market research session.

0–10 MINUTES

Review the Market

You examine broad market indexes, economic developments, and major industry themes.

You notice that several industrial companies are receiving attention because of changes in business spending expectations. You record the theme for further investigation.

10–30 MINUTES

Build Your Watchlist

You identify two hypothetical industrial companies operating in related markets. You review their business models, financial disclosures, and competitive positions.

One company appears to have an established customer base, while the other is still working toward commercial scale. Both may warrant additional research, but for different reasons.

30–50 MINUTES

Evaluate the Details

You review revenue trends, financial obligations, and historical price behavior. You identify several unanswered questions about profitability and customer concentration.

You also consider whether the securities' volatility would create risks that are difficult to manage.

50–60 MINUTES

Record Your Findings

You summarize the evidence, list the unanswered questions, and decide what to research next.

You do not make a trade.

Instead, you've developed a clearer understanding of the companies and identified the information needed for a more complete evaluation. That is a productive research session.

The method is designed to organize your thinking, not force a decision.

BONUS

ONE-HOUR MARKET RESEARCH WORKSHEET

PRINT & REUSE

Use this worksheet to organize a research session.

Part 1: Market Overview — 10 MIN

Date

General market observations

Economic or industry developments worth noting

Part 2: Watchlist Research — 20 MIN

Company or security

Industry

Business model

Reason for researching

Key development or catalyst

Part 3: Evaluation — 20 MIN

Revenue or business trends

Financial risks

Price behavior or volatility observations

Evidence supporting the research idea

Evidence challenging the research idea

Part 4: Research Plan — 10 MIN

Most important finding

Questions requiring additional research

Next research step

Date to revisit

A–Z

QUICK REFERENCE

MARKET RESEARCH TERMS

CATALYST
A development that may influence how investors evaluate a company or security.

DIVERSIFICATION
Spreading exposure across different assets or investments to help manage concentration risk. Diversification does not eliminate the risk of loss.

EARNINGS
A measure of company profitability, depending on the accounting definition used.

LIQUIDITY
The ease with which an asset can be bought or sold without materially affecting its price.

MARKET CAPITALIZATION
The total market value of a company's outstanding shares.

PREMIUM
The amount paid by an options buyer or received by an options seller.

RESISTANCE
A price area where selling interest has historically slowed an advance.

RISK TOLERANCE
An investor's willingness and ability to accept potential losses and fluctuations in value.

SUPPORT
A price area where buying interest has historically slowed a decline.

VOLATILITY
The degree of variation in an asset's price over time.

WATCHLIST
A collection of securities or market topics selected for continued research.

BETTER RESEARCH STARTS WITH A BETTER ROUTINE

Financial markets will always offer more information than any individual can reasonably follow.

There will be new headlines, competing opinions, unexpected developments, and changing market conditions. Trying to keep up with everything can become exhausting.

A structured research routine offers another approach. By dedicating time to understanding the broader market, identifying companies worth studying, evaluating available evidence, and documenting your findings, you can make the research process more manageable.

The One-Hour Market Method is not intended to predict market movements or guarantee better investment results. It's a framework for organizing your time and asking more useful questions.

You may find that some topics require far more than an hour of investigation. You may also find that the best decision is to wait, continue learning, or avoid a particular strategy altogether. That's part of the process.

YOU DON'T NEED TO FOLLOW EVERYTHING. YOU NEED A THOUGHTFUL WAY TO DECIDE WHAT DESERVES YOUR ATTENTION.

IMPORTANT DISCLOSURES

This publication is provided for general educational and informational purposes only. It does not constitute personalized investment, financial, legal, or tax advice, nor does it represent a recommendation to buy, sell, or hold any security or financial instrument.

The examples in this publication are hypothetical and are provided solely to illustrate educational concepts. They do not represent actual securities, transactions, or expected results.

All investing and trading involve risk, including the possible loss of principal. Past performance does not guarantee future results.

Options trading involves significant risks and is not appropriate for all investors. Certain options strategies may result in the loss of the entire amount invested, while others may expose investors to losses exceeding their initial investment. Before trading options, investors should review the Options Clearing Corporation's Characteristics and Risks of Standardized Options and consider whether options trading is appropriate for their circumstances.

No research process, analytical framework, or trading strategy can guarantee profitable results or eliminate market risk.

Readers should conduct independent research and consult qualified financial professionals when appropriate.