

# Washington

## Budgeting for the Future

Score  
**7.5**

Ranked  
**4th**

A CBPP survey identified the degree to which states use the most effective tools to chart their fiscal course accurately and make corrections when needed. Washington's score of 7.5 out of 10 on this survey gave it a ranking of 4th among the states.

For additional information see [full report](#).

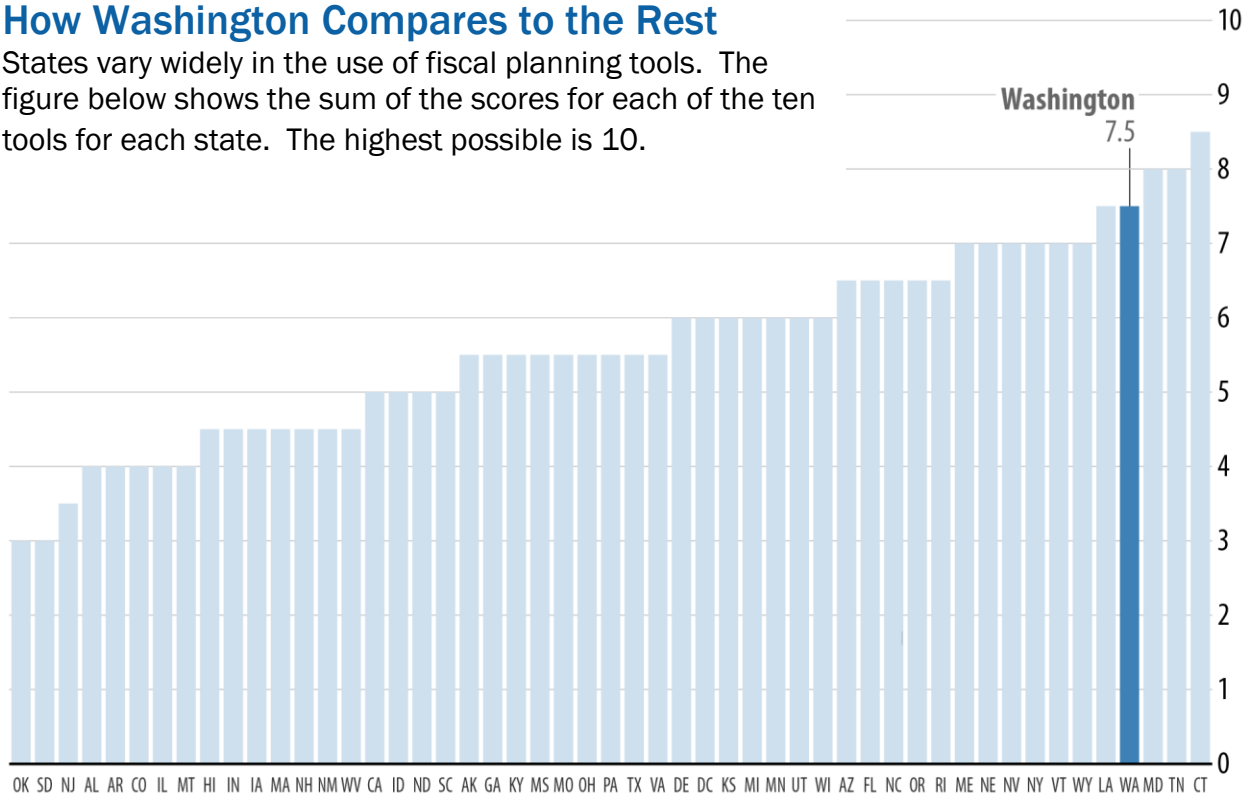
## Which Tools Does Washington Use?

Does not use (0)    Needs improvement (.5)    Well designed (1)

Map of the future?	Credible projections?	Staying on course?
<p><b>Multi-year forecasts of revenues and spending</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Detailed and accessible projections of revenues and spending for at least five years into the future.</p>	<p><b>Independent consensus revenue forecast</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>A formal mechanism to create consensus among the executive and legislative branches on a revenue forecast for upcoming years.</p>	<p><b>Well-designed rainy day funds</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>A reserve fund designated for situations where state revenues drop or expenditures increase unexpectedly that is funded adequately.</p>
<p><b>Fiscal Notes with Multi-Year Projections</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Fiscal notes that regularly include estimated savings or costs for the current year and for at least five years into the future.</p>	<p><b>Legislative fiscal office</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The budget and other bills that require increased spending and revenues are reviewed and analyzed by a non-partisan fiscal agency.</p>	<p><b>Oversight of tax expenditures</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Published information on the costs of tax expenditures and expiration dates after a set number of years.</p>
<p><b>Current services baselines</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>An estimate of how much it will cost a state to continue to deliver the same quantity and quality of services to residents it is delivering currently.</p>	<p><b>Pension oversight</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Regular accessible reviews of methods used to determine future pension funding by independent authorities.</p>	<p><b>Pension funding and debt level reviews</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Adequate pension contributions and oversight of investments as well as guidelines for the amount of debt that can be incurred.</p>
		<p><b>Budget status reports</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Regular reports on revenue and spending projections in order to determine if the budget is on track.</p>
<b>Total score: 7.5 (out of 10)</b>		

## How Washington Compares to the Rest

States vary widely in the use of fiscal planning tools. The figure below shows the sum of the scores for each of the ten tools for each state. The highest possible is 10.



## Room for Improvement Across the Country

Sound budget planning is not a regional practice. In all parts of the country, some states are doing a good job while others need considerable improvement. The map below shows how Washington compares to its neighbors.

