

How your credit score is determined

Information about Credit

Advantages of Credit:

- Convenience
 - Buy now, pay back later
 - Widely accepted
 - Carry less cash - safe
 - Rewards programs
 - No need to show ID or give out personal info
 - Monthly statement has record of purchases
 - Can be an interest free loan if you pay in full when the bill arrives
- Fraud Protection

Disadvantages of credit

- Costly if you carry a balance
- Commits future income that may be needed for necessities
- Discourages comparison shopping
- Encourages impulse buying and/or overspending
- Items wear out sooner than the payments do
- Perks provide incentive to overspend

How to get credit

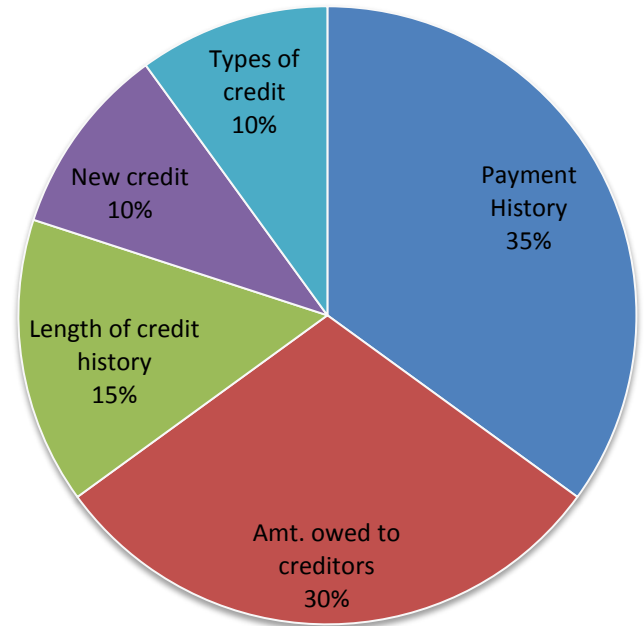
- Request a gas card (typically easier to get) – pay promptly and in full each month
- Pay all bills on time
- Pay off student loans
- Open a share draft account – do not bounce checks or get overdrawn
- Get a secured credit card if you can't get a regular card
- Obtain a small loan from a credit union and pay back promptly.

What to avoid

- Payday loans (they can cost you around 300% interest!)
- Refund anticipation loans
- Rent-to-own
- Pawn shops
- Car title loans
- Debt consolidation

Avoiding high fees on loans

- Ask for a date that is easy to remember – such as payday
- Use auto bill pay services
- Pay online
- If you pay late but always pay on time – as for the late fee to be waived



What you pay if you make minimum payments			
<i>Based on 18% interest; \$20 payment or 2% of balance</i>			
Amount Owed	Pay-off period	Interest Costs	Actual costs
\$1,800	22 years	\$3,800	\$5,600
\$3,900	35 years	\$10,100	\$14,000

Your 5-minute guide to credit scores

<http://articles.moneycentral.msn.com/Banking/YourCreditRating/your-5-minute-guide-to-credit-scores.aspx>

5 ways to kill your credit scores

<http://articles.moneycentral.msn.com/Banking/YourCreditRating/weston-5-ways-to-kill-your-credit-scores.aspx>

7 fast fixes for your credit scores

<http://articles.moneycentral.msn.com/Banking/YourCreditRating/weston-7-fast-fixes-for-your-credit-scores.aspx>

Is there a statute of limitations on debt?

<http://articles.moneycentral.msn.com/Banking/YourCreditRating/weston-is-there-a-statute-of-limitations-on-debt.aspx>



Online Personal Credit Report from Experian for

Experian credit report prepared for JOHN Q CONSUMER Your report number is 1562064065 Report date: 04/24/2007	Index: - Potentially negative items - Accounts in good standing - Requests for your credit history - Personal information - Important message from Experian - Contact us
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Report number:

You will need your report number to contact Experian online, by phone or by mail.

Index:

Navigate through the sections of your credit report using these links.

Experian collects and organizes information about you and your credit history from public records, your creditors and other reliable sources. Experian makes your credit history available to your current and prospective creditors, employers and others as allowed by law, which can expedite your ability to obtain credit and can make offers of credit available to you. We do not grant or deny credit; each credit grantor makes that decision based on its own guidelines.

To return to your report in the near future, log on to www.experian.com/consumer and select "View your report again" or "Dispute" and then enter your report number.

If you disagree with information in this report, return to the Report Summary page and follow the instructions for disputing.

Potentially negative items:

Items that creditors may view less favorably. It includes the creditor's name and address, your account number (shortened for security), account status, type and terms of the account and any other information reported to Experian by the creditor. Also includes any bankruptcy, lien and judgment information obtained directly from the courts.

Potentially Negative Items



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Public Records

Credit grantors may carefully review the items listed below when they check your credit history. Please note that the account information connected with some public records, such as bankruptcy, also may appear with your credit items listed later in this report.

MAIN COUNTY CLERK

Address: 123 MAINTOWN S BUFFALO , NY 10000	Identification Number: 1	Plaintiff: ANY COMMISSIONER O.
Status: Civil claim paid.	Status Details: This item was verified and updated on 04-2007.	
Date Filed: 10/15/2006	Claim Amount: \$200	
Date Resolved: 03/04/2007	Liability Amount: NA	
Responsibility: INDIVIDUAL		

Status:

Indicates the current status of the account.

Credit Items

For your protection, the last few digits of your account numbers do not display.

ABCD BANKS

Address: 100 CENTER RD BUFFALO, NY 10000 (555) 555-5555	Account Number: 1000000....	
Status: Paid/Past due 60 days.		
Date Opened: 10/2005	Type: Installment	Credit Limit/Original Amount: \$523
Reported Since: 11/2005	Terms: 12 Months	High Balance: NA
Date of Status: 04/2007	Monthly Payment: \$0	Recent Balance: \$0 as of 04/2007
Last Reported: 04/2007	Responsibility: Individual	Recent Payment: \$0
Account History: 60 days as of 12-2006 30 days as of 11-2006		



If you believe information in your report is inaccurate, you can dispute that item quickly, effectively and cost free by using Experian's online dispute service located at:

www.experian.com/disputes

Disputing online is the fastest way to address any concern you may have about the information in your credit report.

MAIN COLL AGENCIES

Address: PO BOX 123 ANYTOWN, PA 10000 (555) 555-5555	Account Number: 0123456789	Original Creditor: TELEWISE CABLE COMM.
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Status: Collection account. \$95 past due as of 4-2000.

Date Opened: 01/2005	Type: Installment	Credit Limit/Original Amount: \$95
Reported Since: 04/2005	Terms: NA	High Balance: NA
Date of Status: 04/2005	Monthly Payment: \$0	Recent Balance: \$95 as of 04/2005
Last Reported: 04/2005	Responsibility: Individual	Recent Payment: \$0

Your statement: ITEM DISPUTED BY CONSUMER

Account History:
Collection as of 4-2005

Accounts in Good Standing

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AUTOMOBILE AUTO FINANCE

Address: 100 MAIN ST E SMALLTOWN, MD 90001 (555) 555-5555	Account Number: 12345678998....
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Status: Open/Never late.

Date Opened: 01/2006	Type: Installment	Credit Limit/Original Amount: \$10,355
Reported Since: 01/2006	Terms: 65 Months	High Balance: NA
Date of Status: 04/2007	Monthly Payment: \$210	Recent Balance: \$7,984 as of 04/2007
Last Reported: 04/2007	Responsibility: Individual	Recent Payment: \$0

MAIN

Address: PO BOX 1234 FORT LAUDERDALE, FL 10009	Account Number: 1234567899876
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Status: Closed/Never late.

Date Opened: 03/1997	Type: Revolving	Credit Limit/Original Amount: NA
Reported Since: 03/1997	Terms: 1 Months	High Balance: \$3,228
Date of Status: 08/2006	Monthly Payment: \$0	Recent Balance: \$0 /paid as of 08/2006
Last Reported: 08/2006	Responsibility: Individual	Recent Payment: \$0

Your statement:
Account closed at consumer's request

Accounts in good standing:

Lists accounts that have a positive status and may be viewed favorably by creditors. Some creditors do not report to us, so some of your accounts may not be listed.

Type:

Account type indicates whether your account is a revolving or an installment account.

Requests for Your Credit History

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Requests Viewed By Others

We make your credit history available to your current and prospective creditors and employers as allowed by law. Personal data about you may be made available to companies whose products and services may interest you.

The section below lists all who have requested in the recent past to review your credit history as a result of actions involving you, such as the completion of a credit application or the transfer of an account to a collection agency, application for insurance, mortgage or loan application, etc. Creditors may view these requests when evaluating your creditworthiness.

HOMESALE REALTY CO**Address:**

2000 S MAINROAD BLVD STE
ANYTOWN CA 11111
(555) 555-5555

Date of Request:

07/16/2006

Comments:

Real estate loan on behalf of 3903 MERCHANTS EXPRESS M. This inquiry is scheduled to continue on record until 8-2008.

M & T BANK**Address:**

PO BOX 100
BUFFALO NY 10000
(555) 555-5555

Date of Request:

02/23/2006

Comments:

Permissible purpose. This inquiry is scheduled to continue on record until 3-2008.

WESTERN FUNDING INC**Address:**

191 W MAIN AVE STE 100
INTOWN CA 10000
(559) 555-5555

Date of Request:

01/25/2006

Comments:

Permissible purpose. This inquiry is scheduled to continue on record until 2-2008.

Requests Viewed Only By You

The section below lists all who have a permissible purpose by law and have requested in the recent past to review your information. You may not have initiated these requests, so you may not recognize each source. We offer information about you to those with a permissible purpose, for example, to:

- other creditors who want to offer you preapproved credit;
- an employer who wishes to extend an offer of employment;
- a potential investor in assessing the risk of a current obligation;
- Experian or other credit reporting agencies to process a report for you;
- your existing creditors to monitor your credit activity (date listed may reflect only the most recent request).

We report these requests **only to you** as a record of activities. We **do not** provide this information to other creditors who evaluate your creditworthiness.

MAIN BANK USA**Address:**

1 MAIN CTR AA 11
BUFFALO NY 14203

Date of Request:

08/10/2006

MYTOWN BANK**Address:**

PO BOX 825
MYTOWN DE 10000
(555) 555-5555

Date of Request:

08/05/2006

INTOWN DATA CORPS**Address:**

2000 S MAINTOWN BLVD STE
INTOWN CO 11111
(555) 555-5555

Date of Request:

07/16/2006

Requests for your credit history:

Also called "inquiries," requests for your credit history are logged on your report whenever anyone reviews your credit information. There are two types of inquiries.

i. Inquiries resulting from a transaction initiated by you. These include inquiries from your applications for credit, insurance, housing or other loans. They also include transfer of an account to a collection agency. Creditors may view these items when evaluating your creditworthiness.

ii. Inquiries resulting from transactions you may not have initiated but that are allowed under the FCRA. These include preapproved offers, as well as for employment, investment review, account monitoring by existing creditors, and requests by you for your own report. These items are shown only to you and have no impact on your creditworthiness or risk scores.

Personal Information

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The following information is reported to us by you, your creditors and other sources. Each source may report your personal information differently, which may result in variations of your name, address, Social Security number, etc. As part of our fraud prevention efforts, a notice with additional information may appear. As a security precaution, the Social Security number that you used to obtain this report is not displayed. The Name identification number and Address identification number are how our system identifies variations of your name and address that may appear on your report. The Geographical Code shown with each address identifies the state, county, census tract, block group and Metropolitan Statistical Area associated with each address.

Names:

JOHN Q CONSUMER

Name identification number: 15621

JONATHON Q CONSUMER

Name identification number: 15622

J Q CONSUMER

Name identification number: 15623

Social Security number variations:

999999999

Year of birth:

1959

Spouse or co-applicant:

JANE

Employers:

ABCDE ENGINEERING CORP

Telephone numbers:

(555) 555 5555 Residential

Address: 123 MAIN STREET
ANYTOWN, MD 90001-9999

Address identification number:
0277741504

Type of Residence: Multifamily

Geographical Code: 0-156510-31-8840

Address: 555 SIMPLE PLACE
ANYTOWN, MD 90002-7777

Address identification number:
0170086050

Type of Residence: Single family

Geographical Code: 0-176510-33-8840

Address: 999 HIGH DRIVE APT 15B
ANYTOWN, MD 90003-5555

Address identification number:
0170129301

Type of Residence: Apartment complex

Geographical Code: 0-156510-31-8840

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Personal information:

Personal information associated with your history that has been reported to Experian by you, your creditors and other sources.

May include name and Social Security number variations, employers, telephone numbers, etc. Experian lists all variations so you know what is being reported to us as belonging to you.

Address information:

Your current address and previous address(es)

Personal statement:

Any personal statement that you added to your report appears here.

Note - statements remain as part of the report for two years and display to anyone who has permission to review your report.

Your Personal Statement

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No general personal statements appear on your report.

Important Message From Experian

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By law, we cannot disclose certain medical information (relating to physical, mental, or behavioral health or condition). Although we do not generally collect such information, it could appear in the name of a data furnisher (i.e., "Cancer Center") that reports your payment history to us. If so, those names display in your report, but in reports to others they display only as MEDICAL PAYMENT DATA. Consumer statements included on your report at your request that contain medical information are disclosed to others.

Contacting Us

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Contact address and phone number for your area will display here.

Credit Cards

Provided by the Attorney General of Texas – Greg Abbott

Credit Cards are everywhere. They make buying gas at our local corner store convenient and making bids on internet auctions easy.

Behind each transaction, though, there are risks. To reduce your risk, you need to do two things.

1. Understand the terms established by your credit issuers and;
2. Know how to protect your credit card numbers.

Know Your Credit Terms. If you have questions about your credit card, consult your credit card agreement. Even though it can be long, be sure to read it thoroughly.

While Texas law provides for a limit on credit card interest, this applies only if the bank issuing the card is chartered in Texas. Most credit card companies today are based in states that do not impose such limits, and under federal law are able to charge substantially more, even to consumers who reside outside states with high or no interest caps.

Many triggers can raise your interest rate substantially. Some are more apparent than others.

Make sure you pay on time and do not exceed your credit limit. Being one day late on a payment or a few dollars over your limit can trigger a rate increase.

Consumers should also be aware that many credit card companies regularly monitor their overall creditworthiness. This means they can raise your interest rate if you are delinquent in paying a debt unrelated to your card, such as an auto loan or mortgage. Furthermore, most credit card agreements allow the issuer to periodically change the rate at its discretion.

Credit card companies are also generally allowed to change other terms, including late fees and the minimum amount due.

Keep a close watch on your rate and other terms in each statement. They can change even if you've been making timely payments on your card and other outstanding debt. Contact the credit card company if you see a change that you don't like.

Protect Your Credit Card Numbers

Thieves can steal your credit card numbers many ways. Taking some simple steps will help thwart them.

First, consider removing your name from the marketing lists of the four major credit reporting bureaus. You can "opt-out" from these lists by phone or online. This should reduce the number of pre-approved credit card offers you receive. Other steps to help safeguard your cards are:

- Only carry the cards you need.
- Do not keep PIN numbers in your wallet or purse.
- Never let a clerk put your card where you can't see it. Dishonest clerks can use hand-held recorders to swipe your card and capture its information.

- Make sure the receipt amount is correct.
- Draw a line through any fields you leave blank on the receipt.
- Never give your credit card number over the phone unless you made the call. Legitimate companies will never call to "verify" your credit card number.
- Never reply to an unsolicited email with your credit card number. Again, no legitimate business will ask you to "verify" your credit card number. This is a common scam known as phishing.
- When shopping online use a secure server. After you arrive at the page that asks for your credit card, look at the top area of your browser. The website should begin with "https://" rather than "http://". The 's' indicates a secure server.
- Check your credit card statements and verify that each bill is legitimate. It is particularly important with ATM cards, because you may be liable for all charges if you do not report the loss quickly.
- Make a list of your cards, account numbers, and phone numbers of the card companies. Keep this in a safe place, separate from your cards. If your purse or wallet is stolen, you can use this to notify your credit card companies.

State law requires businesses to conceal all but the final four digits of the account number on all credit or debit card receipts. The law does make an exception for transactions in which the sole means of recording the card number is writing it out by hand or an imprint or copy of the card. Merchants are allowed to keep a copy of the receipt with the full credit card number.

Business owners who continue to print the entire credit or debit account number on consumer receipts may be penalized up to \$500 per month of noncompliance. Please file a consumer complaint with our office if you believe a merchant violated this law.

If Theft Occurs

If you suspect your credit card number may be compromised, contact your credit card company right away.

Federal Reserve regulations protect you if someone uses your credit card without permission. You are not liable for any charges made after you notify your bank or credit card company that your card was lost or stolen. If charges are made before you give notice, you are only liable for \$50 of those charges.

If you have more than one card lost or stolen, even the \$50 limit can result in significant losses so promptly give notice of theft or loss. If you dispute your liability for an unauthorized charge, remember that under federal law, the credit card company has the burden of proving that you authorized the charges or that any unauthorized charges were made before you gave notice. Disputes over credit card bills must be in writing.

The regulations that protect you from fraudulent use of ATM and debit cards are not as generous. As with credit cards, you are not liable for any charges made after you report the loss or theft of your card. However, the notice requirements are stricter. You are only protected by the \$50 limit on unauthorized charges if you report the loss of the ATM card within two business days after the day you learn of the loss or theft. If you wait longer than two business days, you can be liable for up to \$500 in charges. Once an unauthorized charge has been reported to you on your bank statement, you can be liable for the full amount if you do not report the charge within 60 days of the date the statement was sent to you.

Another step you can take to protect your credit is to place a credit alert or freeze on your file with the major credit reporting bureaus. You can contact them at:

EXPERIAN

P. O. Box 2104
Allen, TX 75013-2104
(888) 397-3742
www.experian.com

EQUIFAX

P. O. Box 740241
Atlanta, GA 30374-0241
(800) 685-1111 (order report)
(800) 525-6285 (report fraud)
www.equifax.com

TRANS UNION

P. O. Box 2000
Chester, PA 19022-2000
(800) 888-4213 (request report)
(800) 680-7289 (report fraud)
www.transunion.com

It is also a good idea to review your credit report for suspicious activity. You can order a free credit report from each of the above credit reporting bureaus at www.annualcreditreport.com

Charging Extra For Credit Card Use

In Texas, a business can not penalize you for paying with a credit card. Businesses that add a surcharge to those who pay by credit card might be violating provisions of the Texas Finance Code. However, businesses can discount the regular retail price of an item for consumers who pay cash. If you believe a business is charging extra for credit card purchases, please file a consumer complaint with our office.

Credit card fees can be charged by government entities, such as for the payment of property taxes or other fees required by government agencies.

Filing a Complaint

If you have a complaint against a credit card company, you can file a consumer complaint with our office and with the agency that regulates the financial institution which issued your credit card. Many credit cards are issued by national banks which are regulated by the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency.

In addition, the Federal Reserve System supervises state-chartered member banks of the Federal Reserve System.