

Your Credit History: The Key to Great Overall Credit

Courtesy of *MyCreditPrivacy.com*

The biggest key to getting (and maintaining) great credit is knowing your credit history.

Your credit history is always important — especially if you plan on borrowing money to purchase a home or other property, or want future employers to consider hiring you.

That's why when banks, credit card companies and mortgage holders consider letting you borrow large sums of money, they check your credit report to see how responsible you've been with your overall credit.

Think of it this way: Just as you wouldn't buy a car before seeing what it looks like, creditors won't lend you money until they're convinced you can pay the loan back.

Building solid credit starts with common sense. And the keys to great credit follow that logic:

- **Get your credit report.** Remember: To money lenders, you are what your credit report says you are. And all your credit information is contained in that report. Now, through *My Credit Privacy*, you can order a credit report and score that merges the information from each of the three major credit bureaus — TransUnion, Experian and Equifax — instantly online, along with all three of your credit scores.
- **Establish checking and savings accounts.** Money lenders are mostly concerned with results; they just want to see those on-time payments. But they're more likely to lend you money when they have confidence in your track record.
- **Pay your bills on time.** The easiest way to keep a solid credit history is to avoid missing payments. You can do this by sticking to a monthly budget; a pattern of on-time payment shows money lenders you're worth the risk.
- **Monitor your credit, and fix credit errors.** Fact: Many credit reports contain errors — everything from out-of-date addresses to incorrect account information. Make sure you read through your reports and dispute any mistakes.

Your credit history is compiled by a credit bureau or consumer reporting agency (CRA). If you do find errors, you should contact each of the three credit bureaus. Currently, there are three major credit bureaus in the United States — TransUnion, Equifax and Experian:

1. **TransUnion**

Website: www.transunion.com

(contact page: <http://www.transunion.com/corporate/aboutUs/contactUs.page>)

Phone: 800-888-4213

Address: Customer Disclosure Center
TransUnion Consumer Relations
PO Box 2000
Chester, PA 19022

2. Experian

Website: www.experian.com
(contact page: http://www.experian.com/customer_service/mail.html)
Phone: 888-397-3742
Address: National Consumer Assistance Center (NCAC)
PO Box 9556
Allen TX 75013

3. Equifax

Website: www.equifax.com
(contact page: http://www.equifax.com/contact_us/en_us)
Phone: 800-685-1111
Address: PO Box 740256
Atlanta, GA 30374

Try to keep this contact information in an easy-to-find place. If and when you need to reach the credit bureaus, you'll have a quick reference sheet standing by.

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