

How can I get a copy of my report?

Typically, there is no single credit report. Most likely, each of the three major credit bureaus that operate nationwide has a credit report on you. Many experts advise you to obtain your report from each.

The Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (FACT Act) enables you to obtain a free copy of your credit report once a year from each of the three major credit bureaus (Equifax, Experian and TransUnion).
www.annualcreditreport.com

How often should I get my credit report?

Many financial advisors suggest that you review your credit report once a year. It's especially important to review your credit report before making a major purchase so you can have an error corrected before it slows down your credit approval or prevents you from getting the best possible loan terms.

What kinds of problems could I encounter?

While federal law requires lenders and other companies providing information to credit bureaus to give accurate information, mistakes do happen. So, when you look at your report:

- Make sure it accurately reflects how you have paid your bills. If you always pay your credit card and other loans on time, but your credit report erroneously shows late payments, you'll want to correct that immediately.
- Verify that all the accounts listed are yours, especially if you have a common name or you share a name with a relative (such as John Doe, Jr.). You also want to be careful that an identity thief hasn't opened new accounts in your name to commit financial fraud.
- Look for accounts you don't use and may have forgotten. You may be able to raise your credit score by closing unnecessary credit card accounts.

How do I correct wrong or incomplete information in my credit report?

- Immediately tell the credit bureau, in writing. Federal law requires credit bureaus to investigate your complaint (generally within 30 days), and send you a prompt response and correct any errors.
- Identify each item in your credit report that you dispute, state the facts and request a correction. The law also requires the source of inaccurate information to correct the record at the credit bureaus.
- Contact in writing the company that provided the inaccurate or incomplete information and request a correction of its records, too. If a credit bureau's investigation does not resolve your concerns, the law allows you to submit a brief statement about the matter that must be attached to your credit report and provided to anyone that accesses your report in the future.

What if I have a question or complaint involving a credit bureau?

First, try to resolve the matter with the credit bureau directly. If you are not satisfied, contact the FTC. The FTC does not resolve individual disputes, but it does provide useful information that may help consumers resolve their problems. Visit them at www.ftc.gov or call toll-free, 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357).

How can I get my credit scores?

Your scores, along with an explanation of how the score was derived, typically are available online for a fee. You may want to call or check the Web sites of any of the three major credit bureaus (see below). Remember, your score may vary from one company to another.

CONTACT INFORMATION CREDIT BUREAUS

Equifax - www.equifax.com
(800) 685-1111

Experian - www.experian.com
(888) 397-3742

TransUnion - www.transunion.com
(800) 888-4213

GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

Federal Trade Commission - www.ftc.gov
(877) 382-4357

FREE CREDIT REPORTS
www.annualcreditreport.com
(877) 322-8228