

REGIONS FINANCIAL FUNDAMENTALS

MANAGE YOUR MONEY

Worksheet for Setting Financial Goals

CREATE A PERSONAL SPENDING PLAN

- ☐ Keep track of your daily spending
- ☐ Find ways to decrease spending
- ☐ Determine your monthly income and expenses
- ☐ Find ways to save

PERSONAL SPENDING PLAN

My Income		My Expenses		Variable Expenses	
Take-home pay	\$ _____	Fixed Expenses		Savings	\$ _____
Public assistance	\$ _____	Rent/mortgage	\$ _____	Healthcare expenses	\$ _____
Child support/ alimony	\$ _____	Property taxes/insurance	\$ _____	Utilities	\$ _____
Interest/dividends	\$ _____	Trash collection	\$ _____	Water	\$ _____
Social Security	\$ _____	Cable	\$ _____	Telephone/cell phone	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____	Car payment	\$ _____	Groceries/food	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____	Car insurance	\$ _____	Transportation/gas	\$ _____
		Loan payments	\$ _____	Car maintenance	\$ _____
		Health insurance	\$ _____	Education	\$ _____
		Day care	\$ _____	Personal expenses	\$ _____
		Other	\$ _____	Charity/donations	\$ _____
		Other	\$ _____	Other	\$ _____
TOTAL INCOME \$ _____		TOTAL FIXED EXPENSES \$ _____		TOTAL VARIABLE EXPENSES \$ _____	

FINANCIAL GOALS

Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term

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YOUR CONSUMER CREDIT REPORT

Obtaining and Reading Your Credit Report

You can obtain your credit report by doing one of the following¹:

Requesting a FREE Annual Credit Report

Submit a request online at www.annualcreditreport.com

Call toll-free: 1-877-322-8228

Complete the **ANNUAL CREDIT REPORT REQUEST FORM**, which is available at www.annualcreditreport.com OR by printing out the form at www.ftc.gov/credit and mailing it to:

Annual Credit Report Request Service
P. O. Box 105281
Atlanta, GA 30348-5281

Obtaining a Copy from a Credit Reporting Agency

If you are not eligible for a free annual credit report at this time, a credit reporting agency may charge you a fee of \$10 or more for each copy. To buy a copy of your report, contact one of the following:

Equifax: 1-800-685-1111 or www.equifax.com

Experian: 1-888-EXPERIAN (397-3742) or www.experian.com

TransUnion: 1-800-916-8800 or www.transunion.com

YOUR CREDIT REPORT MAY CONTAIN:

1 Identifying Information

- Name
- Address
- Phone number
- Birth date
- Social Security number
- Employer information



2 Account Information

- Name of the creditor
- Account number
- The kind of credit
- Individual or joint account
- Total amount of the loan
- High credit limit
- Highest balance on the card
- How much is still owed



3 Public Records

- Local, State and Federal Court Records
- Bankruptcy records
- Tax liens
- Judgments
- Collection accounts
- Overdue child support (in some states)



4 Inquiries

- List of businesses that have received this credit report in the last 24 months
- Companies that have received your written authorization to check your credit history



Look closely at all the information listed in your report. If you find a mistake, contact the credit bureau and submit a dispute letter. If your report contains information that causes concern, then contact the credit bureau and request additional information.

¹ In addition to these methods, a consumer may also get a credit report after an adverse action based on a report, after a fraud alert, or in other situations.

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TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR CREDIT

Tips on How to Fix a Consumer Credit Score & Maintain Good Credit



1 Check Your Credit Report
(and learn what your credit score means)



2 Pay on time.
Setup Payment Reminders



3 Pay down debt.
Reduce the Amount of Debt You Owe

TIPS

Payment History Tips

- Pay your bills **on time**.
- If you have missed payments, **get current** and **stay current**.



- Be aware that paying off a collection account will not necessarily remove it from your credit report. It may stay on your report for **seven years**.
- If you are having trouble making ends meet, **contact your creditors** or **see a legitimate credit counselor**.

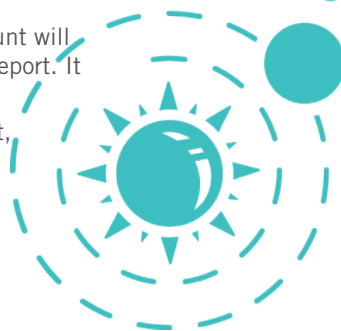


Length of Credit History Tip

If you have a short credit history, **don't open a lot of new accounts too rapidly**.

New accounts will lower your average account age, which may have a greater

effect on your score if you don't have a lot of other credit information and average account age is weighted heavily in calculating your score. Also, rapid account buildup can look risky if you are a new credit user.



Amount Owed Tips

Keep balances low especially in proportion to total available credit on credit cards and other "revolving credit".

- Pay off debt** rather than moving it around.



- Don't close** unused credit cards to raise your score.
- Don't open** a number of **new** credit cards.



New Credit Tips

- Do your **rate shopping** for a given loan within a **focused period of time** and consider fees and penalties before you apply for or use credit.
- Re-establish **your credit history** if you have had problems.
- Note that it's OK to request and **check your own credit report**.

Types of Credit Use Tips

- Apply for and open new credit accounts **only as needed**.
- Manage **credit cards responsibly**.
- Note that **closing an account doesn't make it go away**.

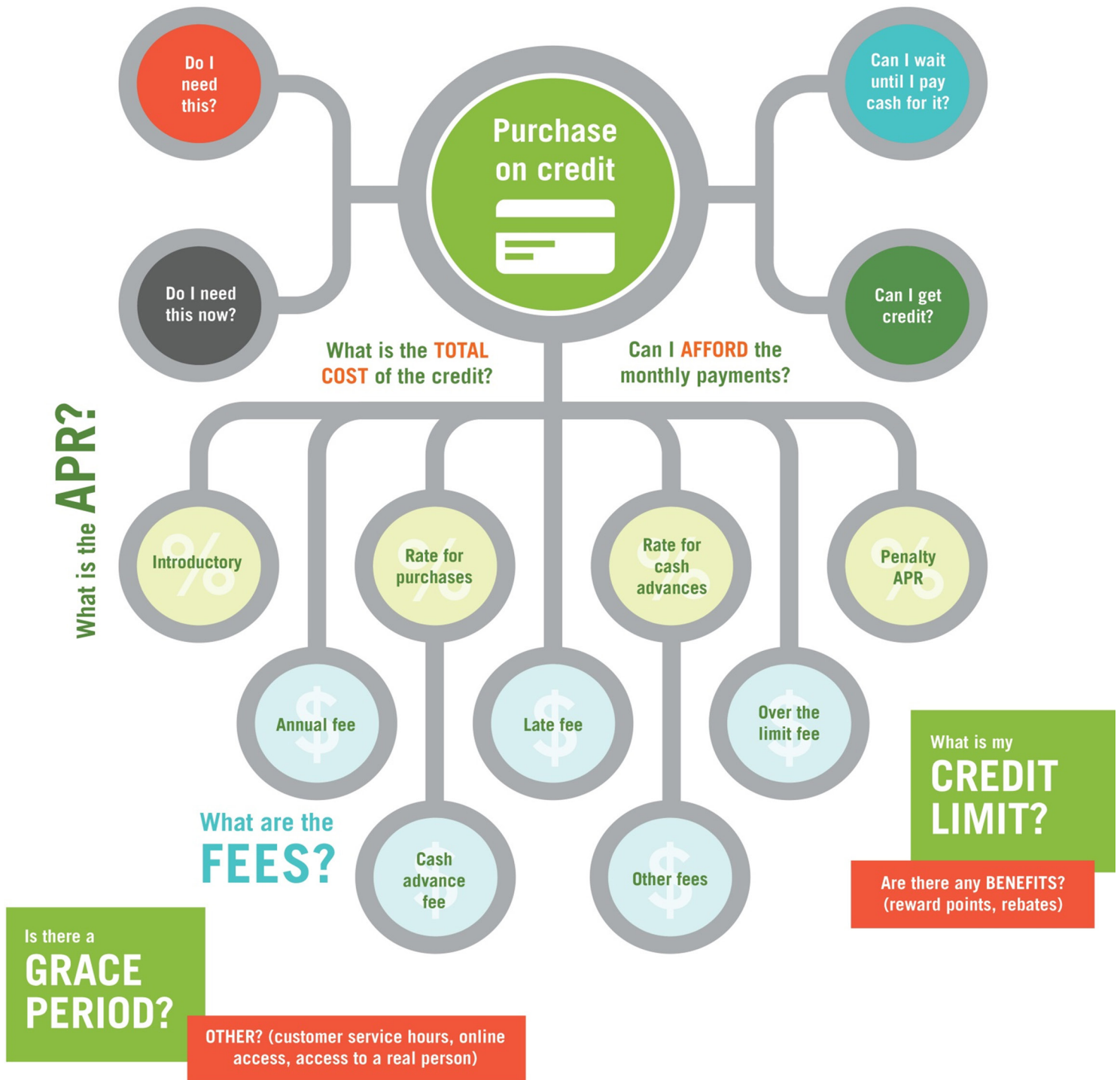


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APPLYING FOR AND USING CREDIT CARDS

Here are some important questions you need to ask yourself before applying for and/or using credit cards:



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FINANCIAL STABILITY PLANNING CHECKLIST

Your financial situation is impacted by many factors, and a checklist can help you plan ahead. The checklist below lists some areas that may impact your financial situation. It is a starting point, and you will add other items that are relevant to your situation.

Employment

- ☐ Check with your employer about flexible arrangements – including short term disability, long term disability, part-time and leave without pay provisions, and other leave entitlements.
- ☐ If you own your own business, develop a list of impacts your illness may have on your family and on the people who work with you.
- ☐ Check to see if you have loss of income insurance entitlements.
- ☐ Keep a log or notes of all interactions with personnel and agencies.

Financial/Legal

- ☐ Prepare a list of contacts (financial, insurance, legal, medical, personal and emergency) and include names, phone numbers and email addresses.
- ☐ Make a list of all accounts and policies, including policy and account numbers. Seek independent financial and legal advice.
- ☐ Update your current estate plan including your beneficiaries, will and trusts.
- ☐ Create a Living Will and a Durable Power of Attorney for healthcare. Give a copy to your doctors, hospital and your next of kin.
- ☐ Designate someone you trust to serve as your Power of Attorney (POA) who will make decisions for you in the event you are unable. Make sure this person knows your wishes for your care.
- ☐ Update your current will and let your family members know where it is located.
- ☐ Update your motor vehicle registration for appropriate parking permits.
- ☐ As medical bills arrive, review charges for accuracy. Billing errors are possible.

Banking

- ☐ Visit your financial institution to discuss your checking and savings accounts, your loans and credit cards. Review who is authorized to sign on your account(s).
- ☐ Visit or call your mortgage company to discuss your mortgage.
- ☐ Make a list of all your bills. Review your checkbook and your online bank accounts as far back as one year to create a thorough list of all possible expenses. Include all expenses related to your home, such as mortgage or rent, property insurance, utilities and lawn care.
- ☐ Stay current on your bills so you don't lose essential services and coverages.
- ☐ Pay your bills online when possible. Many banks offer recurring payment options.
- ☐ Use automatic debit features for your utilities and other service providers.
- ☐ If you prefer to use checks to pay your bills, ask a family member or friend to help ensure your bills get paid on time and correctly. Prepare a list of the account numbers, due dates and amounts of bills as well as checks and envelopes in advance.

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FINANCIAL STABILITY PLANNING CHECKLIST (CONTINUED)

Healthcare

- ☐ Create a Living Will and a Durable Power of Attorney for healthcare. Give a copy to your doctors, hospital and your next of kin.
- ☐ Call your healthcare provider to make sure you have a thorough understanding of the provisions of your medical insurance policy including out of pocket costs of healthcare treatment and associated costs, such as transportation, loss of income, etc.
- ☐ Discuss medications and prescriptions with your pharmacist to reduce costs.
- ☐ Investigate medical expenses tax rebates.
- ☐ Register for the Medicare safety net threshold.
- ☐ If you will need physical, speech or occupational therapy, you may need a prescription for these services. If you have insurance, ask your provider about your therapy coverage.

Care & Support

- ☐ Understand the availability and commitment of family and friends to provide care and support.
- ☐ If you meet eligibility requirements, Social Security may award you disability payments.
- ☐ Understand available support services from the local community services and palliative care services organizations. Contact the nearest social services organization (i.e. United Way, Area Agency on Aging) as well as health organizations (American Cancer Society or your cancer-specific organizations) for a variety of community referral services or for possible use of their special funding sources.

Future Plans

- ☐ Re-consider priorities taking into account these factors and your financial situation.
- ☐ Discuss future care goals and preferences – advance care planning.

Notes:

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Additional Resources

UNITED WAY'S 2-1-1 INFORMATION AND REFERRAL LINE

Call 2-1-1 or 1-888-458-8970 or visit www.211connectsalabama.org

United Way of Central Alabama's 2-1-1 Information and Referral Line is an easy-to-remember telephone number that connects people with community services to meet a wide variety of needs. By dialing 2-1-1 you are connected to a specialist who can assess your needs and link you to the right service using a comprehensive database of services. It is a free and confidential service which is also accessible online in a searchable format. Reach out to 2-1-1 for needs such as:



- **Physical & Mental Health:** get help with Medicaid & Medicare, health intervention services, support groups, counseling, drug and alcohol intervention, victims services and substance abuse rehabilitation.
- **Support for Elderly:** find resources for adult day care, respite care, home healthcare, transportation for individuals with disabilities, income tax preparation, debt management and financial coaching.
- **Financial Stability:** find help for immediate financial issues such as home foreclosure prevention, housing or rental counseling, income tax preparation, debt management and financial coaching.
- **In Times of Disaster:** call for immediate assistance during a disaster, such as a tornado.

GATEWAY FINANCIAL FREEDOM

Call 205-251-1572 or visit www.gway.org

Gateway Financial Freedom is a national non-profit program, Gateway Financial Freedom (GFF) helps people get out of debt, avoid bankruptcy and learn to manage their money. For more information and to schedule an appointment today.



All services are strictly confidential and include:

- **Debt Management Plans (DMP)** – Through a DMP a family's debt is analyzed and repayment plans are negotiated with their creditors. DMP clients make a single payment to GFF, which then pays creditors according to the negotiated agreement.
- **Budgeting** – Trained and experienced counselors work with individuals and families to examine both revenues and expenses and to devise budgets designed to promote financial stability.
- **Mortgage Counseling** – Allows potential homeowners to plan for the mortgage process by analyzing current finances, identifying "red flags," and planning future actions to prepare for home ownership.
- **Foreclosure Counseling** – GFF staff members will advocate for clients at risk of foreclosure to determine what, if any, steps can be taken to prevent foreclosure
- **Community Education** – The staff of Gateway Financial Freedom provide financial education services to groups throughout the community.

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