

Save on ANY INCOME

Start today!

Use these simple savings tips to get in the savings habit:

- Save your change.
- Save any dollars that are not standard income:
 - Income tax refunds,
 - Bonuses,
 - Refunds on returned items,
 - Gifts of money,
 - If you stop buying something, (for example: cigarettes because you stopped smoking) save that amount.

Put these funds in a bank account that earns interest.

A savings account would do the trick, but a certificate of deposit usually earns higher interest rates over increments of time.



Credit Card SMARTS

Lighten Up

Reduce the amount of plastic you carry in your billfold. If you choose to use credit, use just ONE card.

It is easier to manage the account of one card verses several.

Select the card with the lowest annual interest rate.

No Credit DOES NOT Equal Good Credit

Ironic, but true. If you have not used credit in the last few years, your credit history can be viewed as a risk to invest in. Select a credit option that reports to a credit bureau and one that you can repay monthly to develop credit.

Show Me Loans recognizes the value of using credit. As of 2011, all Show Me Loans borrowers loan activities are reported to Trans Union credit bureau.

**For more information to increase
your financial smarts, contact:**

Show Me Loans
1501 NW Jefferson St.
Blue Springs, MO 64015
816-655-6700
info@mo-at.org



Financial SMARTS



Presented by

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Credit MANAGEMENT

Have you been turned down for a cellular service, credit card or a mortgage refinance?

Chances are the decision was made in part due to your credit history. Know what your credit history is saying about you from all credit bureaus.

Access a Free Credit Report each year:

Online: www.annualcreditreport.com

By phone: 1-877-322-8228

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

Note: To access your credit "score" there is a fee. You will need to provide your name, date of birth, social security number and address.

You can order reports from all three credit bureaus or just one.

Look for errors on your report such as:

- Activity older than seven (7) years (One exception: criminal convictions).
- Inaccurate information.

If you find an activity that needs correcting, access the credit bureau's dispute form and describe in as much detail why you dispute your items.

Contact the creditor related to the dispute and notify them in writing. Ask them to contact the bureau to remove the inaccurate information.

For further details, access the Federal Trade Commission website at:
www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0058-credit-repair-how-help-yourself

Financial SMARTS TIPS

1. Track every penny of your spending for two weeks.
2. Create a written spending plan for each paycheck.
3. Establish due dates for your financial goals.
4. Pay yourself first – use direct deposit to save easily.
5. Get your free credit report at www.annualcreditreport.com.
6. Pay down credit card debt.
7. Evaluate the cost of your current lifestyle.
8. Make ONE change in your spending each month.
9. Teach yourself and your children the difference between wants and needs.
10. Build a rainy day fund.
11. Read the fine print to understand credit card interest and fees.
12. Save your change.
13. Pay bills on-time, every time.
14. Learn to balance your checkbook.
15. Buy a shredder and use it to dispose of personal information.
16. Participate in your company's 401k.
17. Protect your social security number. Don't carry your Social Security card on you.
18. Set up a holiday gift fund.
19. Know your credit score and what that number means.
20. Start making changes today!

Provided by Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Kansas City, MO

Help and RESOURCES

Need to talk with someone regarding your budget or debt management?

There are several organizations to assist with credit counseling.

Bankruptcy law specifies credit counseling requirements. If you are considering that option, make sure the agency you chose to work with is approved.

Here is a link to research:

www.justice.gov/ust/eo/bapcpa/ccde/cc_approved.htm

For credit counseling, ask questions about fees, the agency's qualifications and if they help develop a plan for the future.

If you have a relationship with a bank or credit union, contact them for a referral. Often, a banking institution will have made arrangements for members for free debt management services.

The National Foundation for Credit Counseling offers assistance to homeowners. They have a free video on avoiding foreclosures, and offer referrals for counseling. Contact them at: www.nfcc.org or 1-800-388-2227

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