

## Credit Reports and Credit Scores

The following information is provided by Moneytree to help you understand your credit report and credit score. Additional financial education topics are also covered on our website at [www.moneytreeinc.com/education](http://www.moneytreeinc.com/education)

For more information about your credit report and credit score, you may visit <https://www.federalreserveconsumerhelp.gov/learnmore/credit-reports-and-scores>

---

### (1) Your Credit Report

Your credit report contains your identifying information along with transaction information about your current and past credit obligations.

- **Identifying Information.** Your name, Social Security Number, date of birth, and sometimes your employment information.
- **Credit Information.** Information about current and past credit and loan accounts, such as car loans, credit cards, student loans, and department store credit cards. Information may include the amount of credit, the amount currently owing and your history of making payments.
- **Public Record Information.** Information about court judgements, bankruptcies, and liens.
- **Inquiries.** A list of companies that have recently requested a copy of your credit report and or credit score.

### (2) Credit Reporting Agencies

There are three major credit reporting agencies that collect credit information and compile credit reports, Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion. In addition, there are numerous other credit reporting agencies that collect and compile traditional credit information as well as alternative financial information such as payment history for obligations such as rent, utilities, cell phone bills, and insurance.

- Moneytree makes inquiries and may report loan transaction information to: Clarity Services, Inc., a division of Experian.

### (3) Obtain a Copy of Your Credit Report

You may contact each credit reporting agency to obtain a copy of your credit report and your credit score. Your credit report may be provided at no cost if you have not made a similar request in the prior 12 months or you have recently been denied credit.

Equifax: 800.685.1111 or [www.equifax.com](http://www.equifax.com)

Experian: 888.397.3742 or [www.experian.com](http://www.experian.com)

TransUnion: 800.493.2392 or [www.transunion.com](http://www.transunion.com)

Clarity Services: 866.390.3118 or [www.clarityservices.com](http://www.clarityservices.com)

You may also get one free credit report every 12 months from Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion by visiting [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) or calling 877.322.8228.

#### **(4) Resolving Errors on Your Credit Report**

Credit reports may contain errors that negatively impact your credit score and your ability to obtain credit. It is important to periodically review your credit report and dispute any errors to the credit reporting agency that issued the report. The credit reporting agency is required to investigate your dispute and either confirm the information or remove the information from your credit report. You may be asked to provide personal information for identification purposes and supporting documentation such as account statements, police reports or identity theft affidavits.

The results of the investigation will be reported to you. If an investigation does not resolve your dispute, you can ask the credit reporting agency to include a statement in your credit report.

---

#### **(5) Your Credit Score**

A credit score is a numeric value that reflects information contained in a credit report. Information used to calculate an individual's credit score may include:

- Number and types of credit accounts (loans, credit cards, etc.)
- Historic payment information (were payments made when due)
- Total amount of outstanding debt
- Outstanding collection actions

Credit scores are often used by creditors to predict the likelihood for repayment. A low or declining credit score may result in a denial of credit or unfavorable credit terms,.

#### **(6) Establishing a Credit Score**

Individuals with little or no history using credit may not have an established credit score or may have a low credit score. To learn your credit score, you may contact the credit reporting agencies listed above. Each credit reporting agency may have assigned its own credit score.

To build your credit score, obtain credit in an amount you can afford to repay and make all of your payments on time. You may also ask your creditor which credit reporting agencies will be used to report information about your account.

#### **(7) Factors That Impact a Credit Score**

Changes to your credit report may impact your credit score. On-time payments and paying off debt may improve your credit score while late payments, too many open credit accounts, or high unpaid balances may decrease your credit score.

- **Increase.** Open credit card accounts with little or no balance
- **Increase.** On-time payments
- **Increase.** Correcting errors in your credit report
- **Decrease.** Credit card accounts with balances at or near the maximum credit limit
- **Decrease.** Late payments
- **Decrease.** High amount of outstanding debt as related to income amount