

## Use Student Credit Cards to Build Your Credit Rating

A strong credit history is important right from the start of your working life. A great many accomplishments, from renting an apartment for the first time to buying your first new car to getting your first "real" job, require you to have good credit. Therefore, you need to start building your credit history as early as possible so you are ready when you leave home and step out into the real world. Your student credit cards are the first step in your progress toward an excellent credit history.

Start by choosing the right [student credit cards](#). Student credit cards often have "gotchas" built into the contract, from low initial interest rates that convert into high rates after a grace period, to high hidden fees. Choose the credit card offer with the lowest interest rate and the most reasonable schedule of fees.

Then learn to use your cards wisely. Charging a small amount to your credit cards each month is good as long as you pay it off in full at the end of the month. (After all, how are you supposed to show that you know how to be a responsible creditor if you never use your line of credit?) If you let your balance roll over from one cycle to the next, reduce the amount of interest your account accrues by paying substantially more than the minimum payment each month.

If you use your student credit cards well, you will not reach your credit limit. But emergencies have a way of happening. If you find yourself nearing your credit limit, stop spending immediately. If you go over, do everything you can to pay your balance down as soon as possible. Many credit card companies will let you go over your limit, but the interest rates they will charge you will be exorbitant, and the fact that you exceeded your balance may be reflected in your credit report.

Another essential step is always paying all of your bills on time. This includes not only your student credit card bills, but your utility and rent bills. Any bill that is late by a certain number of days (usually 30) can show up on your credit report as a black mark against you.

Your credit history will determine more of your future than you suspect. Don't leave it to chance. Use student credit cards to establish the fact that you are a responsible and sensible consumer who can meet his or her financial obligations, and lay strong foundations for your future.

### About the Author

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