

## 1 DO Pay your bills on time

Delinquent payments and collections can have a significant negative impact on your score.

## 2 DO stay current with payments & pay off debt

If you have missed payments, get current and stay current. Pay off debt rather than shifting it to other accounts.

## 3 DO understand your score

A credit score is based on several different factors in your credit history, including your payment history, how much you owe, how much credit is available to you, the length of your credit history, and the types of credit you have. However, two things influence your credit score the most: on time payment of your bills and your available balance.

## 4 DO manage accounts responsibly

Apply for and open new credit accounts only as needed. Keep and use credit cards, but manage them responsibly. Re-establish your credit history if you have had problems. Opening new accounts responsibly and paying them off on time may help in the long term.

## 5 DO maintain more than two accounts

In general, having credit cards and installment loans (and paying timely payments) may favorably impact your credit score in the long term. If you are having trouble making ends meet, contact your creditors or see a legitimate credit counselor.

## 6 DO keep balances low

Keep balances low on credit cards and other revolving credit. If working on re-establishing your credit, try to keep a balance of less than 30 percent of your available credit limit.

## 7 DO consider the number of credit inquiries you make

The Equifax Risk Score distinguishes between a search for a single loan and a search for many new credit lines, partly by the length of time over which inquiries occur. Shop for rates for a given loan within a short period of time. Using a Mortgage Broker for mortgage rate shopping allows for multiple lender inquiries with only one credit pull.

## 8 DO NOT close unused credit cards or loans

Closing unused credit cards as a short-term strategy to raise your score can have a negative effect. The account's history and low/no balance is likely favourable.

## 9 DO NOT open accounts to increase your score

Avoid opening new credit accounts just to increase your available credit or applying for multiple credit cards over a short period of time. Either of these could have a negative effect on your credit score because of the impact of the length of your credit history. Remember: The length of your credit history matters

## 10 DO NOT open many new accounts rapidly

If you have been managing credit for a short time, avoid opening a lot of new accounts too rapidly. Adding new accounts will lower your average account age, which could have a negative impact on your credit score, particularly if you are a new credit user.



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