

What are the most common

Credit Myths

There's a credit 'blacklist'

Partner or family affects your score

Your credit score goes down if you check it

Credit reference agencies make lending decisions

You only have one credit score

Previous occupants of your address affect your score

Credit refusal damages your score



Check out our guide on common credit myths





Where to get free support if you're

Struggling with Debt

If you're struggling with money or debt, there are lots of free support organisations who can help you get back on track.

They're completely confidential and can help from simple budgets to more complicated debt advice.

Contacting an advice provider won't affect your credit score.

If you're struggling, the sooner you seek help the better.



Check out
the debt help
page from
Citizens Advice



Protecting yourself from

Identity Fraud

Worried about ID fraud? Check out our guide on spotting the warning signs

How can a fraudster get your personal details?

- Theft or burglary of personal documents
- Snooping via unsecure public Wi-Fi
- Combing your social media accounts for personal details
- Stealing post
- Going through your bins for old bills and statements
- Phishing emails or scam texts designed to trick you
- Hacking unsecure home Wi-Fi



How to protect yourself

- Don't share too much personal info on social media
- Register on the electoral roll when you move
- Use unique passwords for all accounts
- Don't use unsecure public Wi-Fi for sensitive transactions
- Never click email links from a source you don't trust
- Shred letters and documents before throwing them out
- Don't provide personal details over the phone if they called you
- Check your credit report and score regularly



See how to spot the warning signs of ID fraud



Improving your

Credit Score

When you apply for credit, lenders will look at your credit report to help them decide.

The better your credit history and the higher your score, the more likely you are to be accepted for credit and at the best rates.



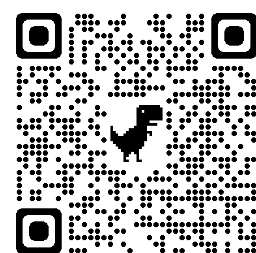
Top tips to improve your credit score

- Register on the electoral roll
- Keep your total borrowing as low as possible
- Build your credit history over time
- Don't max out your credit or store cards
- Make all your monthly payments on time
- Pay any court judgments within one month
- Don't apply for lots of credit in a short space of time

Don't forget to monitor your credit score for FREE with Experian



**Check out
our guide on
improving your
credit score**



Getting your credit score

Mortgage Ready

Visit Experian's
guide on applying
for a mortgage

Get your credit score ready for a mortgage

- Check your credit report and score as early as possible and report any errors
- Make sure you're registered to vote at your current address
- Check any financial links to other people and query any that no longer apply
- Build up your positive credit history
- Reduce any debt



Getting ready to apply?

- Avoid applications for any other accounts that might trigger a credit check
- Get all your paperwork ready
- Know your income and expenses
- Use Experian to search for a good mortgage deal
- Use a fee-free broker like L&C



Find out more
about getting
your credit score
mortgage ready



Moving Home

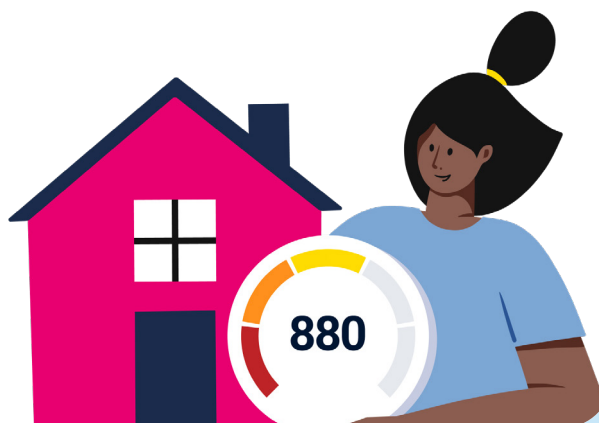
Moving home can be expensive and can often mean opening lots of new credit accounts.

Make sure you plan all your expenses – and you can afford to repay any money you borrow.

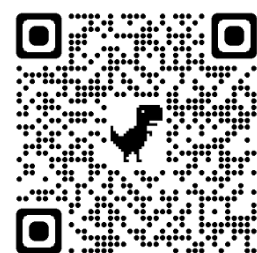


What to think about when you move house

- Check your credit report and score before you apply for a mortgage or rent a new home
- Make sure you can afford your new rent or mortgage – be realistic
- Have you included stamp duty, moving costs and other expenses?
- Work out how much your energy and water bills are
- Don't apply for multiple credit accounts if possible – will one type of credit cover all your renovations and furniture? Lots of hard credit searches can reduce your credit score
- Factor in travel costs to your budget if you're living in a different area
- Register on the electoral roll for your new home right away
- Tell all your existing lenders and service providers that you've moved address and make sure old accounts are settled and closed
- After a few months, get an updated credit report to make sure everything's either been transferred or closed.



Don't get caught by hidden expenses - see our guide on the true cost of moving





Building your credit history and score if you're

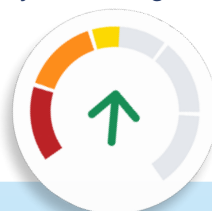
New to the UK

If you're new to the UK, you'll need to build up some credit history to help you get access to finance and other accounts. A good credit history will also help you secure the best interest rates.



Steps to build a credit history from scratch

- Register on the electoral roll, if you can, or add a note to your credit report if you aren't eligible
- Open a UK bank account. A 'basic' account is fine
- Consider opening a credit card (use for a small essential purchase and pay in full each month). Use a comparison and eligibility service, like Experian, to find a card where you meet the criteria
- If you're renting, use a service like Credit Ladder or Canopy to add your rent payments to your credit report
- Once you have built some credit history, you should find it easier to open other accounts, such as a mobile phone contract, car finance, loans. These will further build your credit history and score over time
- Don't apply for lots of credit in a short space of time
- Check your credit report and score regularly
- Take your time and watch your score grow



Check out
our guide on
improving your
credit score



Applying for

Credit

If you're applying for credit – give yourself the best chance of being accepted.

Use comparison/eligibility services to search for lenders who are more likely to accept you – without damaging your credit score.

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Improve your chances of being accepted

- Register on the electoral roll
- Check your credit report for errors
- Make sure payments are kept up to date
- Review financial links to other people
- Don't max out credit cards
- Reduce existing debt if possible



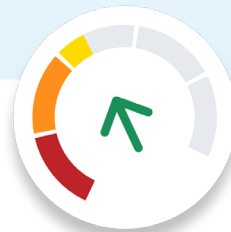
Looking for...?

- Credit cards
 - Mortgages
 - Loans
 - Car finance
- Search with Experian**



Students and

Credit Scores



Getting your credit score in great shape

- Register on the electoral roll
- Shop around for a student current account with the best benefits for you and, if you use the free overdraft, stay below the limit
- If you get a credit card, pay it off IN FULL each month to avoid interest charges
- In shared accommodation – share the bills (such as Broadband / Electric / Gas) around and pay by Direct Debit, to help everyone build some credit history
- Only borrow what you can afford to repay – including via Buy Now Pay Later services
- Make sure all credit repayments are made on time
- Get a free Experian account to watch your credit score grow

How to look after your student finances

- Make a budget and stick to it – try and avoid building up overdraft and credit card debt
- Make sure all accounts are paid and closed when leaving student accommodation at the end of the academic year. (Don't refuse to pay accounts registered in your name even if you're waiting for a friend to pay their share)
- Be careful if others have access to your post and act quickly if expected items fail to arrive
- Explore all grants and bursaries available to you
- If you get into debt, get free help - from StepChange, National Debtline, PayPlan, Citizens Advice – or ask your college or university for support



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