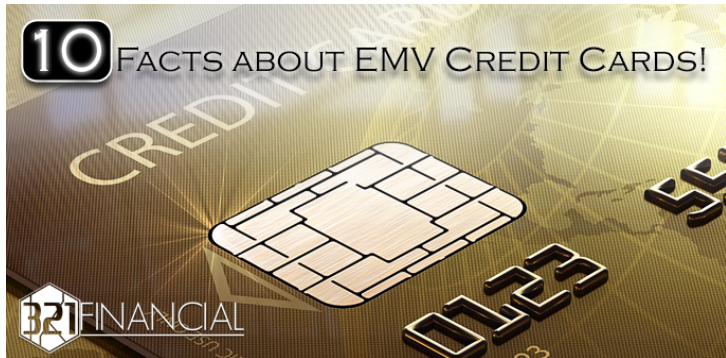




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22 Apr In Credit News

10 Facts about EMV Credit Cards that You Must Know

The nationwide movement to EMV credit cards is happening now. The U.S. is finally making an effort to comply with the global standard in EMV credit cards, which are equipped with computer chips and the technology used to authenticate chip-card transactions.

What do you need to know about this movement to standardize EMV chip-card technology in the United States?

Here are 10 Facts about EMV credit cards that you must know:

How Ready Are We For EMV?



EMV chip technology is the global standard for credit and debit-card payments. This smart-chip technology provides payment vehicles—cards and mobile phones—with embedded microprocessor chips that store and protect cardholder data.

U.S. Lags in Global EMV Adoption¹



Why U.S. EMV Adoption Rates Are So Low

Merchants Are Not Ready for EMV Transition



Just 1 in 5 small merchants² is EMV-capable today

Fraud Losses



U.S. Infrastructure Upgrade is Vast



Only 1.5% of cards and 10% of terminals are EMV-enabled today

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Oct 2015	EMV-enabled in 2015, and 53% of POS terminals will accept EMV cards
Oct 2016	ATM counterfeit liability shift
Oct 2017	Unattended fuel pump liability shift



1 Rates of U.S. as of 2014, rates of LATAM and Western Europe as of fall 2011.
2 Small merchants are those with less than \$10M in revenue.

To view the full report **EMV in USA: Assessment of Merchant and Card Issuer Readiness**, visit www.javelinstrategy.com/brochure/321.



Javelin Strategy & Research, a Greenwich Associates LLC company, provides strategic insights into customer transactions, increasing sustainable profits for financial institutions, government, payments companies, merchants and other technology providers.

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What are EMV credit cards?

- EMV credit cards use chip technology (smart chips) and can be identified by a small metallic rectangular design including a hologram.
- EMV stands for Europay, MasterCard and Visa.

What are other terms for the new card?

- Smart card
- Chip card
- Smart-chip card
- Chip-enabled smart card
- Chip-and-choice card (PIN or signature)
- EMV smart card
- EMV card

How do they work?

- EMV cards are processed for payment by reading the card and verifying the transaction, just like magnetic-stripe cards.
- The process uses “card dipping” instead of swiping. The process isn’t as quick as a swipe, so consumers need to be patient with the verification.

Is the card more secure than traditional cards?

- If someone copies a magnetic stripe, they can easily replicate that data repeatedly. When an EMV card is used for payment, the chip creates a code that is unique and only valid for that transaction.
- The EMV technology won’t prevent data breaches from happening, but it will make the stolen data much less profitable. Because EMV transactions produce data that is unique to each transaction, it’s practically useless to thieves who want to use it to make counterfeit cards.
- Credit card fraud in the U.S. has doubled in the past 7 years as criminals have steered away from countries that have already transitioned to EMV cards.


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Will I still have to use a signature or PIN for card transactions?

- You will still have to use one of these verification methods, but it will depend on the method tied to your EMV card, not dependent on your card being debit or credit.
- Many payment processors are not equipped with the technology needed to handle EMV chip-and-PIN credit transactions. In the early stages, the majority will be issuing chip-and-signature cards. Estimates say that point-of-sale terminals may not be fully converted to chip-and-PIN technology for two to three years.
- If a terminal doesn't have the ability to accept a PIN, it will default to accepting a signature. The United States is way behind everyone else on chip-and-PIN: Europe did this in 2005; Africa did it in 2006. A PIN is safer, because only you know the code.
- EMV cards can also support contactless card reading, also known as [near field communication](#).

What are the fraud liabilities?

- The current law says that if an in-store transaction is conducted using a counterfeit, stolen or compromised card, consumer losses from that transaction fall on the payment processor or issuing bank.
- After an Oct. 1, 2015, the liability for [card-present fraud](#) will shift to whichever party is the least EMV-compliant in a fraudulent transaction. The cost of fraud can fall on the merchant if their systems are not in compliance with the EMV changes.
- The major credit card issuers each have published [detailed schedules](#) about the upcoming shift in liability. The change is intended to help bring the entire payment industry on board with EMV by encouraging compliance in order to avoid liability costs. Companies that are not EMV-ready by October 2015 could face much higher costs in the event of a large data breach.
- Automated fuel dispensers will have until 2017 to make the shift to EMV. Until then, they will follow existing fraud liability rulings.
- Static card numbers can still be stolen. Many have opted to use one-time tokens that change for each use, like ApplePay and Samsung Pay.

When will the EMV technologies be updated?

- [Javelin Strategy & Research reports](#), "By the end of 2015, it is forecasted that 166 million EMV credit cards will be in circulation in the U.S. (29% of the total), and 105 million EMV debit and prepaid cards (17% of the total)."
- Although the upcoming deadline is powerful incentive for all payment processing parties to become EMV-compliant as soon as possible, experts do not believe everyone will comply by that date. Javelin forecasts that it will take until the end of 2018 for EMV card ubiquity to reach 96% of credit cards and 98% of debit and prepaid cards.
- Consumers with credit cards that are expiring in October will likely be in the first wave of transitions to chip cards.
- EMV debit cards may be issued at a slower pace. Debit conversion is lagging mostly due to the complex act of integrating EMV into the 16-plus regional debit networks in the United States. Other countries have national networks.
- Many newly-issued EMV cards, some already distributed, will be equipped with both chip and magnetic-stripe functions. If chip-card readers are not in place at a merchant at all, your EMV card can be read with a swipe, losing the security of the chip.
- By the end of 2015, the [Payment Security Task Force \(PSTF\)](#) predicts roughly 575 million payment cards (about half the cards in circulation) will have EMV chips.

CHIP CARDS, BY THE NUMBERS

575 million: Number of EMV cards to be issued by the end of 2015

59%: Percentage of retail locations that will be EMV-compliant by the end of 2015.

78,800: Current number of EMV chip-activated merchant locations

40%: Percentage of U.S. debit cards that will be issued as EMV cards by the end of 2015

70%: Percentage of U.S. credit cards that will be issued as EMV cards by the end of 2015

86%: Percentage of financial institutions that plan on issuing EMV debit cards in the next two years

\$3.50: Average cost for issuing a new EMV card

\$500: Average cost of an EMV-compliant point-of-sale terminal

Sources: Javelin Research & Strategy, Aite Group, 2014 PULSE Debit Issuer Survey

Will the EMV card work outside the country?

- Many European countries moved to EMV technology years ago, making it difficult for



signature verification methods.

- Unmanned payment kiosks in Europe used for such things as bike rentals, train ticket stations and parking permit dispensers will most likely only accept chip-and-PIN cards.

What does it mean for merchants?

- Merchants and financial institutions will have to add new in-store technology and internal processing systems to become EMV compliant.
- Beginning Oct. 1, 2015, businesses without credit card terminals designed to take advantage of EMV chip technology will be liable for fraud losses.
- Banks are spending billions to issue new cards, but they are falling behind.
- Small businesses might spend \$2,000 for the upgrade and average-sized shops could be spending \$25,000 to move into EMV-technology. Each new machine costs about \$250, and installation might cost twice that. Employees will also need to be trained on these new payment methods.
- Big retailers are spending a fortune. [Target is spending \\$100 million to swap out machines](#) and issue its own chip-based cards.

What does it mean for consumers?

- Approximately 120 million Americans have already received an EMV chip card and that number is projected to reach nearly 600 million by the end of 2015, according to [Smart Card Alliance](#).
- A big difference for consumers will be the act of inserting the card and remembering to remove it from the terminal. There will also be prompts asking for a signature or PIN to complete the transaction.
- Many of the nation's banks will be issuing EMV credit cards when the current card expires. Consumers with questions about receiving the replacement cards should contact their bank.

The continuing nationwide effort to better protect one's credit and financial data demonstrates a genuine effort in combating financial fraud and identity theft. However, the consumer must be knowledgeable and proactive in order to stay a step ahead of criminal minds. Stay informed.



Readers Rating

Rated 0 stars ★★★★★
0 / 5 (0 Reviewers)

Your Rating

0 Stars!

Miriam Cronkhite On April 22, 2015

chip, chip card, credit cards, debit, emv, emv card



26 Jan In Loans News

Debt Settlement vs Debt Dismissal

Settling one's debt is a goal for most Americans. But what if you could get some of your debts dismissed?

Newer legislation surrounding the [FDCPA \(Fair Debt Collection Practices Act\)](#) makes it easier to contest debts after they are turned over to a collections company. The [Fair and Accurate Credit Transaction Act of 2003 \(FACTA\)](#) added sections to the federal [Fair Credit Reporting Act \(FCRA\)](#) to help consumers fight the growing crime of identity theft and fraud. The legislation addresses accuracy, privacy, limits on information sharing and new consumer rights.

Debt Settlement vs Debt Dismissal...What are the differences?

Debt settlement is an approach to debt reduction in which the debtor and creditor agree on a reduced balance that will be considered paid in full. Debt settlement companies offer experience, training and knowledge of the most effective debt settlement procedures. They promise to reduce debt by negotiating with your creditors, but it could also have negative repercussions such as owing taxes on the settled debt or a hit to your credit score.

The IRS treats savings from forgiven debts as income that is taxable. Even if the creditor does not send you the proper tax form, you are obligated to include the settled debt in your tax return. The exception is when the IRS determines you are [insolvent](#), meaning your total debts are more than the fair market value of your total assets.

Because creditors usually don't settle debts until it is months past due, you have to stop paying on your accounts. This results in late payments being reported to the credit bureaus, a drop in your credit score and possibly harassing phone calls from creditors. Late payments remain on your credit report for several years. If the debt settlement company settles with your creditors, the delinquent history is not erased. If your account reflects a status of "charged-off settled" or "paid-settled", that does not equate to a "paid in full" status. Remember that you are still responsible for the debt, fees and penalties associated with the debt.

Avoid doing business with any company that promises to settle your debt if the company:

- Charges any fees before it settles your debts
- Pitches a "new government program" to bail out personal credit card debt
- Guarantees they can make your unsecured debt go away
- Insists that you stop communicating with your creditors, but doesn't explain the serious consequences
- Informs you that they can stop all debt collection calls and lawsuits

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- Guarantees that your unsecured debts can be paid off for pennies on the dollar



Debt Dismissal: Prove It

Information from a [2010 FTC debt collection report](#) reveals that somewhere between 60% and 95% of consumers who are sued for debt fail to participate in the lawsuits. Yet, if the debt buyer cannot produce proper documentation of the debt, the case could be dismissed.

Debt collectors are often unable to legally validate the debt due to inaccuracies, legal technicalities, fraud and lack of records from the original creditor. Simple miscalculations in one's credit report can be very costly for consumers. False records reporting late payments can significantly reduce one's credit score, lead to credit denials and result in higher interest rates.

A report issued by the [Consumer Financial Protection Bureau \(CFPB\)](#) revealed that debt buyers dismissed 70% of its lawsuits when the consumer filed a written answer to the lawsuit. Do not ignore the lawsuit. They also found the claims were often misleading because they had no intention of producing proof that a consumer owes the alleged debt and they were unable to produce documentation supporting the claim.

Utilizing the FCBA and the [Truth in Lending Act \(TILA\)](#), debt dismissal programs aim to have debt discharged based on inaccurate information and lack of evidence. Debt dismissal companies seek validation, verification and proof of the debt collector's legal authority to collect the debt. Fraudulent debt collection practices, harassment and violations of consumer rights can be grounds for debt dismissal.

Miriam Cronkhite On January 26, 2015

credit settlement, debt arbitration, debt dismissal, debt negotiation, debt settlement

2 Comments



Katrin Hampton June 30, 2015 at 12:39 am [Reply](#)

Im trying to cancel with you people i dont make enough to pay every month kds need to eat



Miriam July 6, 2015 at 11:20 am [Reply](#)

We will have a representative contact you today or you can call 1.888.854.2046.



13 Mar In Credit News

The National Consumer Assistance Plan: Credit Score Relief

Does your credit score reflect your creditworthiness? Have you battled to get your fraudulent and inaccurate data removed only to find the dispute was one-sided, in favor of the lender?

Good news for consumers, credit-reporting will soon become a more equitable playing ground. As part of a recent [settlement](#) with New York's Attorney General, the three major credit bureaus are revamping the antiquated credit reporting system. These changes will raise expectations for accurate credit reporting and improve the process for disputing errors.

What is it?

The [National Consumer Assistance Plan](#) focuses on improvement in consumer interaction with national credit reporting agencies, as well as improved data quality and accuracy.

This adjustment carries the most significant changes to the credit bureaus' practices since the [Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act of 2003](#), which entitles consumers to a free annual copy of their credit report and introduced a dispute process to correct credit-reporting errors.

The Consumer Data Industry Association (CDIA) explains the changes:





- Consumers who receive their free annual report and discover an error that they successfully dispute, will now be able to obtain a second report at no charge.
- For medical bills, there will now be a 180-day waiting period between the time an account is created and the time it can be recorded on a credit report as due for collection.
- Consumer debts that did not arise from a contract or other agreement by the consumer to pay, such as traffic tickets or government fines, will no longer be eligible for being recorded on credit reports.
- If consumers dispute an item on their credit report and are dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they will be given information about further options.
- The CRAs are focusing on an enhanced dispute resolution process for consumers that are proven victims of fraud or identity theft, as well as those involved in mixed files – a situation where two consumer files are mistakenly mixed together.

How will it help consumers?

These changes will provide more accuracy in credit reporting and make it feasible for consumers to resolve and manage their credit information.

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- If you dispute something on your credit report, the credit-reporting agency will now do an independent inquiry investigating your claim, instead of just taking the lender's word that their information is correct.
- A large percentage of consumer credit scores are negatively affected by medical debt, which is often due to an insurance company's delayed payment. Now medical debts cannot be reported for 180 days, giving insurance companies time to pay the bill. The credit-reporting companies will also erase previously reported medical debts that have been, or are currently being paid off, instead of leaving them to tarnish your credit score for the next seven years.
- Fines, tickets and debt that was issued, but not agreed to by the consumer will no longer be reported

When will the National Consumer Assistance Plan be implemented?

According to the [CDIA](#), "Implementation of the consumer assistance plan will begin over the next few months. In addition to the announcement today, dialogue continues with additional attorneys general, and further announcements could be made in coming months."

A Groundbreaking Settlement With Three National Credit Reporting Agencies:



Miriam Cronkhite On March 13, 2015

📌 CRA, credit reporting bureaus, credit score, debt, National Consumer Assistance Plan

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14 Jan In Loans News

Compare:Unsecured vs. Secured Loans

Choosing the right loan can be confusing and difficult since it is a decision based on personal facts, wants and needs. Getting answers to your questions and consulting experts can save you money, time and unnecessary stress.

Current interest rates, the amount you are seeking to borrow, the terms of repayment and current financial obligations can all have a significant impact on the type of loan you choose. When you compare loans, remember each loan option was created for different purposes and situations. How do you know which is the best loan for your situation?

Let's start by discussing the differences between secured and unsecured loans.

Unsecured loans do not require collateral. The lender is expecting you to repay the loan on the basis of your financial resources. Because there are no specific assets secured in case of default, unsecured loans generally have higher rates and lower borrowing amounts. Most unsecured loans charge fixed interest rates whether they are term or revolving loans, unless promotional interest rates are applied. The interest on an unsecured loan is not tax deductible.

Examples of Unsecured Loans:

- Personal Loans
- Personal Lines of Credit
- Some Home Improvement Loans
- Credit Cards
- Student Loans (note that tax returns can be garnished to repay delinquent student loans)

Secured loans are generally larger amounts used to fund major purchases. Collateral is required for secured loans to ensure payment. In the case of a home mortgage or car loan, the house or car is used as collateral and in the case of default the lender has rights to the asset. Secured loans usually offer lower rates, higher borrowing limits and longer repayment terms than unsecured loans. With a secured loan, a consumer often has the choice of fixed or floating interest rate options. The Federal Trade Commission offers a [mortgage worksheet](#) to help consumers compare loans with different terms.

Examples of Secured Loans:

- Mortgage
- Home Equity Loan
- Home Equity Line of Credit
- Auto Loan
- Boat Loan
- Recreational Vehicle Loan



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...and you will also save money. Try to limit your car loan to about 60 months. That's the optimal amount of time you should pay for your car," said Mike Quincy with Consumer Reports Autos, as reported by [CNBC](#).

Things to remember when shopping for a loan:

- Is your credit report accurate?
- Do you know your credit score?
- Why are you seeking a loan?
- How much would you like to borrow?
- What type of collateral can you provide?
- What is an acceptable interest rate?
- What is the repayment period?
- How much are the payments?
- Have you compared lenders?
- Have you calculated additional fees, down payments and required insurance costs?

Search for companies that work within your requirements for an affordable loan. At 321Financial we aim to put consumers on the path to becoming debt-free, by offering financing with low-interest rates.



Miriam Cronkhitte On January 14, 2015

🔍 Credit, debt, lenders, loans, secured, unsecured

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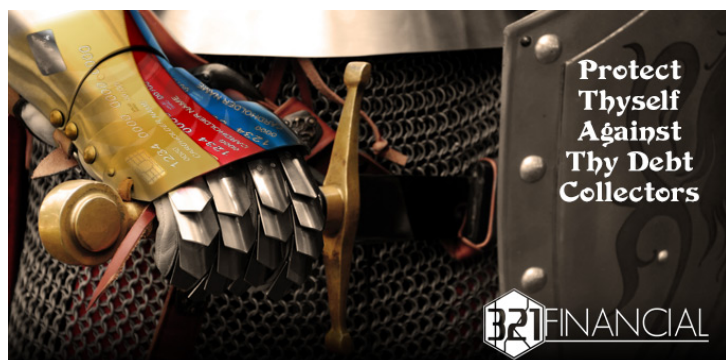
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23 Dec In Credit News

Protect Yourself Against Debt Collectors

When debt collectors hassle people with consistent phone calls and letters, it is up to every consumer to stand up for their rights. Protect yourself against debt collectors by knowing the law which protects consumers under the [Fair Debt Collection Practices Act](#) (FDCPA) which restricts the means (including texting and social media) and methods by which they can contact the debtor, as well as the time of day that contact can be made. Violations of these restrictions can result in a lawsuit.

This leads to a tricky loophole practice where collectors send the debt to a different collector and keep passing it to different collection agencies until it is settled. It is not illegal, but very frustrating for consumers. Advocacy groups have asked the [Consumer Financial Protection Bureau](#) (CFPB) to change the way it enforces the Fair Debt Collections Practices Act.

It's not against the law, but it is maddening to many consumers and advocacy groups have asked the CFPB to change the way it enforces the Fair Debt Collections Practices Act, referring to the practice as "debt laundering". "Collectors should not be able to launder the debt of defenses simply by selling it to another collector who can then restart the harassment," wrote the [National Consumer Law Center](#) (NCLC) in a set of recommendations to the CFPB. "Consumer information must travel with the debt and subsequent collectors should be held responsible for past collection acts."

In the meanwhile, consumers are left to battle one debt collector at a time.

Here are some suggestions to protect against harassing debt collections practices:

- **Do not engage.** Simply do not give them a chance to intimidate you or manipulate insecurities regarding your financial situation.
- **Ask for written verification.** By law, they must send written notice within 5 days.
- **Ask them questions.** Ask for the specific case number and court it is allegedly filed in. Call the original borrowers to see if your debt was sold.
- **Record and report.** Ask for permission to record the call. Take notes. Send a copy of your complaint to your state attorney general, Better Business Bureau and the [Consumer Financial Protection Bureau](#).
- **Hire an attorney.** Legal representatives can send a letter to stop harassment and if necessary file a suit against the harasser.
- **Stop the calls.** Collectors must honor any requests not to contact you again. If calls continue, file a complaint with the [Federal Communications Commission](#) and record call details or change your number. Consider a service such as [Google Voice](#), which offers a free voicemail service.
- **Know the law and use it to your advantage.** According to [Fraud.org](#), if the amount demanded is significantly more than the debt you owe, it's probably a scam. Don't be a victim of illegal, deceitful collection practices.

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Debt Collection
Federal Trade Commission
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It is not legal for debt collectors to:

- Lie about anything when attempting to collect a debt.
- Falsely claim to be an attorney or work for the government.
- Threaten an arrest if debt is not paid.
- Send a deceiving document that looks like an official document from a court or government agency.
- Threaten to seize a property or garnish wages unless they have the legal right to do so.



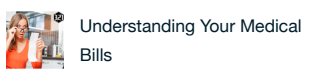
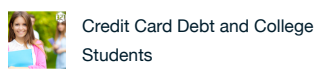
321Financial is not an attorney and does not give legal advice. If you think you've been a victim of "debt laundering" or unfair debt collection practices, please contact a lawyer in your jurisdiction to discuss your potential case.

Readers Rating
Rated 0 stars ★★★★★
0 / 5 (0 Reviewers)

Your Rating
0 Stars!

Miriam Cronkhite On December 23, 2014
collection, Credit, debt, FDCPA, finance

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30 Jan In Loans News

Qualifying for a Business Loan

Obtaining financial backing to launch a new business or expand an existing company business isn't a simple task. Qualifying for a business loan requires more than just a good credit history.

Most credit cards lenders base credit approval on an applicant's FICO score. However, other types of loans take additional factors into account. Small business loans, personal loans, even car and mortgage loans might consider the five "C"s, or the five characteristics of the borrower. This method helps lenders determine the credit worthiness of potential borrowers and predict the risk to the lender.

Get to Know the Five "C"s:

Character

Character is the general impression you make on the prospective lender, which they then use to form a subjective opinion regarding trustworthiness to repay the loan. The character comprises of business operations, managers and shareholders. Lenders often examine the history of vendor payments, company growth, taxes and other factors that comprise the character of a company.

Capacity

Capacity is the ability for the business to take on additional debt. This eligibility is determined by various financial benchmarks of a company and used to determine whether a business is operating within its abilities to both financially and operationally meet all its needs. Lenders also evaluate your debt-income ratio, stream of income, duration and stability of employment.

Collateral

Every loan requires some kind of collateral, which is used to assure repayment of a loan and reduce risk to the lender. It can consist of assets that are usable in the business as well as personal assets outside the business. Profits from operations are the first source of repayment; even a personal guarantee from a principal shareholder can count as collateral.

Capital

Lenders want to see that a borrower has some "at risk" capital, so that a business is able to repay their loan and still have monthly cash flow to operate.

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Conditions



Lenders will consider the intended purpose of the loan, such as working capital, inventory and expansions. Many banks require key man life insurance on the principals of a company. Current market conditions and terms of the loans are also conditions that are often considered by the lender.

This collateral table from the [U.S. Small Business Administration](#) shows how a typical lender and SBA value different forms of collateral:

COLLATERAL TYPE	LENDER	SBA
House	Market Value x 0.75 - Mortgage balance	Market Value x 0.80 - Mortgage balance
Car	Not applicable	Not applicable
Truck & Heavy Equipment	Depreciated Value x 0.50	Same
Office Equipment	Not applicable	Not applicable
Furniture & Fixtures	Depreciated Value x 0.50	Same
Inventory: Perishables	Not applicable	Not applicable
Jewelry	Not applicable	Not applicable
Other	10%-50%	10%-50%
Receivables	Under 90 days x 0.75	Under 90 days x 0.50
Stocks & Bonds	50%-90%	50%-90%
Mutual Funds	Not applicable	Not applicable
Individual Retirement Account (IRA)	Not applicable	Not applicable
Certificate of Deposit (CD)	100%	100%

Be wary of what you post online. Lenders are also known to scour all your social media outlets in order to determine your creditworthiness. For those with little or no credit history, this is an especially useful source for lenders.

The [SBA](#) suggests some questions a potential lender may ask:

- Can the business repay the loan? Is cash flow greater than debt service?
- Can you repay the loan if the business fails? Is collateral sufficient to repay the loan?
- Does the business collect its bills?
- Does the business pay its bills?
- Does the business control its inventory?
- Does the business control expenses?
- Are the officers committed to the business?
- Does the business have a profitable operating history?
- Does the business match its sources and uses of funds?
- Are sales growing?
- Are profits increasing as a percentage of sales?
- Is there any discretionary cash flow?
- What is the future of the industry?
- Who is your competition and what are their strengths and weaknesses?

Miriam Cronkhite On January 30, 2015

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06 Feb In Credit News

Steps to Fixing Bad Credit

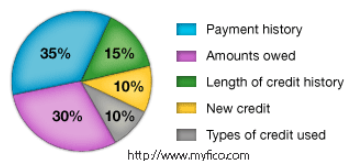
Over time everyone develops a snapshot of his or her credit score. Sometimes overwhelming debt develops due to different factors, resulting in a poor credit rating that can be extremely costly to consumers over time.

The government has given consumers tools and protective laws to combat faulty credit reporting and unethical debt collection practices, but fixing bad credit also requires dedication and effort from the consumer.

Here are some steps to fixing bad credit:

Repair the Past

- A [Federal Trade Commission study](#) of the U.S. credit reporting industry found that five percent of consumers had errors on one of their three major credit reports.
- When applying for a [free annual credit report](#) from the three main reporting agencies, view the details almost instantly online. With a click, you can dispute any information that seems



inaccurate or fraudulent. FICO Scores are key in making most lending decisions.

- If you find a mistake on your report, start collecting any evidence to prove the information is incorrect, including cancelled check and bank statements. Review your report closely for misspellings, wrong dates of birth or incorrect addresses that may indicate an identity mix-up.
- A “charge-off” on your credit report means debt payments have been neglected for several months. At this point, your credit has already been damaged. Collectors may be willing to remove the status from your credit report in exchange for payment in full. Sending a [pay for delete letter](#) is another way to negotiate a charge-off removal.

Settle Accounts in the Present

- 35 percent of your FICO score is based on payment history. Even if you can only pay the minimum, pay on time, this includes utilities and rent.
- Make every effort to catch up on any missed payment. If you are having difficulties making the payments, try to negotiate a payment plan with your creditors.
- Reduce your [credit utilization ratio](#), which is your credit usage verses total credit available. This greatly impacts your score and credit issuers prefer a ratio of approximately 30% or less.

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- Lower your debt-to-income ratio. A high DTI signals that an individual has too much debt compared to the amount of income. In general those with a DTI over 43% do not qualify and lenders prefer no more than a 28% DTI.
- Pay down debt. Consider paying off low-balance or high-interest cards first. Consider paying on the bill a few times a month.
- Apply for a secured credit card, which requires you to make a deposit that becomes the credit line. Make sure the secured card reports to the credit bureau. Look for a card that converts to an unsecured card after a designated period of responsible management of the account.



Prepare for the Future

- Don't apply for credit until any disputes are out of the pending stage, so that the most accurate information is reported.
- Many consumers don't even know there's a problem until they apply for a new line of credit and find themselves rejected. Monitor your credit and don't let inaccuracies linger.
- Delinquent debt must be removed from the credit report as soon as the statute of limitations has passed. If the credit bureau reports negative items for more than 7 years, they are violating the statute of limitations and could face penalties.
- Avoid closing credit cards that you've had a long time since this can have a positive impact on the length of your credit history.
- Once you have settled past-due accounts, ensure they are marked "current" or "paid" on your credit report. A "charge-off" status remains on the report for 7 years.
- Keep credit utilization under 30% of your total limit. Don't be tempted to overspend.
- Try to recognize reasons you have bad credit, so that you don't repeat the same mistakes. Set aside emergency funds, increase savings contributions, track spending-habits and monitor your credit.



Miriam Cronkhite On February 6, 2015

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Kimberly Randall March 25, 2015 at 7:06 am [Reply](#)

Your credit score will continue to rise the longer you maintain a positive credit experience with your creditors. Keeping your credit balances low and repaying debts on time is the surest way to increase your credit score and rating, which can also improve your quality of life.

Get More Here : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2CAFsoE6_oU

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