



THE CREDIT SCORE CHEAT SHEET

CREDIT SCORE

The 5 factors that build your FICO score - and the moves that move each one.

35%



PAYMENT HISTORY

ON-TIME PAYMENTS ARE THE SINGLE BIGGEST FACTOR IN YOUR SCORE.

- ✓ Set up autopay for at least the minimum on every account - today.
- ✓ One payment 30+ days late can cost 60-110 points.
- ✓ Every on-time month buries old late payments deeper. Protect the streak.

30%



AMOUNTS OWED

ESPECIALLY CREDIT CARD UTILIZATION: YOUR BALANCE COMPARED TO YOUR LIMIT.

- ✓ Under 30% utilization is the safety line. Under 10% is the goal zone.
- ✓ Pay BEFORE the statement closing date - most card companies report the statement balance.
- ✓ Two smaller payments a month keeps the balance they report low.

15%



LENGTH OF HISTORY

OLDER ACCOUNTS HELP YOUR SCORE. TIME IS THE ONE FACTOR YOU CANNOT FAKE.

- ✓ Do not close your oldest card - even if you only use it once in a while.
- ✓ An authorized-user spot on an old, always-on-time account can add history fast.

10%



CREDIT MIX

CARDS PLUS LOANS PROVE YOU CAN HANDLE BOTH KINDS OF CREDIT.

- ✓ A healthy mix builds on its own over time - never open an account just for mix.
- ✓ Revolving credit (cards) and installment credit (auto, mortgage, personal loans) both count.

10%



NEW CREDIT

EVERY APPLICATION LEAVES A FOOTPRINT - MAKE EACH ONE COUNT.

- ✓ Most hard inquiries cost fewer than 5 points - but they add up fast.
- ✓ Rate-shopping a mortgage, auto, or student loan inside a 14-45 day window counts as ONE inquiry.
- ✓ Space credit card applications about 6 months apart.



QUICK MATH - KNOW YOUR UTILIZATION

Balance / limit = utilization. \$900 on a \$1,000 limit = 90% (score killer). \$90 = 9% (goal zone).

CREDIT SCORE RANGES

300 - 579
POOR

580 - 669
FAIR

670 - 739
GOOD

740 - 799
VERY GOOD

800 - 850
EXCEPTIONAL



WANT TO KNOW WHAT IS HOLDING YOUR SCORE DOWN?

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CREDIT KNOWLEDGE CREATES FREEDOM

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