

# Checking Checklist



## Checking Accounts

If you are using check cashing services, money orders, and/or prepaid debit cards to handle your money, you could be spending hundreds or thousands of dollars a year on these services. A bank account with direct deposit, bill pay services, and other features can help you get your paychecks, benefit checks, and even your tax return for less. For most people, a basic, free checking account will help them track spending and allow free access to their money through ATM withdrawals, debit cards, online transfers, and checks.

Choosing the right bank or credit union can be confusing. Here are some questions to ask to make sure you get the account with the right features for your needs without unnecessary fees.

Questions to ask about checking accounts:

- \* How much money do I need to open the account?
- \* Is there a minimum balance I have to keep in the account?
- \* Is there a monthly service fee?
- \* Is overdraft protection an option? If so, what is the cost?
- \* How much do checks cost?
- \* Can I bank online?
- \* Are there fees for visiting a branch or calling customer service?
- \* Is there an inactivity fee?

## Keep tabs on your balance

Over drafting your checking account can be very expensive. Keeping tabs on the balance in your account can help you avoid overdraft charges. Most banks and credit unions will give you the ability to manage your accounts securely online. If you have internet access, we suggest the following:

1. Go to your bank's web site and log in to your account.
2. Check your current balance.
3. Pay close attention to recent transactions. The balance you see may not include some pending transactions.
  - Debit purchases made within the last day or two may still be pending.
  - Checks written may take time to post to your account.
4. If needed, use the transaction register below to keep track of transactions and identify purchases and checks that are still pending.
5. Sign up for your bank's email and/or text alerts so you always know when you're running low on funds.



# Transaction Register

Date	Description of Transaction	Cleared	Debit (-)	Credit (+)	Balance

**Questions? Don't hesitate to call or email!**

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