

Comparing Current Credit Card Programs

by Dave Capra “The Debtonator”

How will you use your credit card?

The first step in choosing a credit card is thinking about how you will use it.

- If you expect to always pay your monthly bill in full--and other features such as frequent flyer miles don't interest you--your best choice may be a card that has no annual fee and offers a longer grace period.
- If you sometimes carry over a balance from month to month, you may be more interested in a card that carries a lower interest rate (stated as an annual percentage rate, or APR).
- If you expect to use your card to get cash advances, you'll want to look for a card that carries a lower APR and lower fees on cash advances. Some cards charge a higher APR for cash advances than for purchases.

What are the APRs?

The annual percentage rate--APR--is the way of stating the interest rate you will pay if you carry over a balance, take out a cash advance, or transfer a balance from another card. The APR states the interest rate as a yearly rate.

Multiple APRs

A single credit card may have several APRs:

- *One APR for purchases, another for cash advances, and yet another for balance transfers.* The APRs for cash advances and balance transfers often are higher than the APR for purchases (for example, 14% for purchases, 18% for cash advances, and 19% for balance transfers).
- *Tiered APRs.* Different rates are applied to different levels of the outstanding balance (for example, 16% on balances of \$1–\$500 and 17% on balances above \$500).
- *A penalty APR.* The APR may increase if you are late in making payments. For example, your card agreement may say, “If your payment arrives more than ten days late two times within a six-month period, the penalty rate will apply.”
- *An introductory APR.* A different rate will apply after the introductory rate expires.

- *A delayed APR.* A different rate will apply in the future. For example, a card may advertise that there is “no interest until next March.” Look for the APR that will be in effect after March.

If you carry over a part of your balance from month to month, even a small difference in the APR can make a big difference in how much you will pay over a year.

Fixed vs. variable APR

Some credit cards are “fixed rate”--the APR doesn’t change, or at least doesn’t change often. Even the APR on a “fixed rate” credit card can change over time. However, the credit card company must tell you before increasing the fixed APR.

Other credit cards are “variable rate”--the APR changes from time to time. The rate is usually tied to another interest rate, such as the prime rate or the Treasury bill rate. If the other rate changes, the rate on your card may change, too. Look for information on the credit card application and in the credit card agreement to see how often your card’s APR may change (the agreement is like a contract--it lists the terms and conditions for using your credit card).

How long is the grace period?

The grace period is the number of days you have to pay your bill in full without triggering a finance charge. For example, the credit card company may say that you have “25 days from the statement date, provided you paid your previous balance in full by the due date.” The statement date is given on the bill.

The grace period usually applies only to new purchases. Most credit cards do not give a grace period for cash advances and balance transfers. Instead, interest charges start right away.

If you carried over any part of your balance from the preceding month, you may not have a grace period for new purchases. Instead, you may be charged interest as soon as you make a purchase (in addition to being charged interest on the earlier balance you have not paid off). Look on the credit card application for information about the “method of computing the balance for purchases” to see if new purchases are included or excluded. Information on methods of computing the balance is in the section “How is the finance charge calculated?”

How is the finance charge calculated?

The finance charge is the dollar amount you pay to use credit. The amount depends in part on your outstanding balance and the APR.

Credit card companies use one of several methods to calculate the outstanding balance. The method can make a big difference in the finance charge you'll pay. Your outstanding balance may be calculated

- Over one billing cycle or two,
- Using the adjusted balance, the average daily balance, or the previous balance, and
- Including or excluding new purchases in the balance.

Depending on the balance you carry and the timing of your purchases and payments, you'll usually have a lower finance charge with one-cycle billing and either

- The average daily balance method excluding new purchases,
- The adjusted balance method, or
- The previous balance method.

Minimum finance charge

Some credit cards have a minimum finance charge. You'll be charged that minimum even if the calculated amount of your finance charge is less. For example, your finance charge may be calculated to be 35¢--but if the company's minimum finance charge is \$1.00, you'll pay \$1.00. A minimum finance charge usually applies only when you must pay a finance charge--that is, when you carry over a balance from one billing cycle to the next.

What are the fees?

Most credit cards charge fees under certain circumstances:

- *Annual fee* (sometimes billed monthly). Charged for having the card
- *Cash advance fee*. Charged when you use the card for a cash advance; may be a flat fee (for example, \$3.00) or a percentage of the cash advance (for example, 3%)
- *Balance-transfer fee*. Charged when you transfer a balance from another credit card (Your credit card company may send you "checks" to pay off the other card. The balance is transferred when you use one of these checks to pay the amount due on the other card.)
- *Late-payment fee*. Charged if your payment is received after the due date

- *Over-the-credit-limit fee.* Charged if you go over your credit limit
- *Credit-limit-increase fee.* Charged if you ask for an increase in your credit limit
- *Set-up fee.* Charged when a new credit card account is opened
- *Return-item fee.* Charged if you pay your bill by check and the check is returned for non-sufficient funds (that is, your check bounces)
- *Other fees.* Some credit card companies charge a fee if you pay by telephone (that is, if you arrange by phone for payment to be transferred from your bank to the company) or to cover the costs of reporting to credit bureaus, reviewing your account, or providing other customer services. Read the information in your credit card agreement to see if there are other fees and charges.

What are the cash advance features?

Some credit cards let you borrow cash in addition to making purchases on credit. Most credit card companies treat these cash advances and your purchases differently. If you plan to use your card for cash advances, look for information about

- *Access.* Most credit cards let you use an ATM to get a cash advance. Or the credit card company may send you “checks” that you can write to get the cash advance.
- *APR.* The APR for cash advances may be higher than the APR for purchases.
- *Fees.* The credit card company may charge a fee in addition to the interest you will pay on the amount advanced.
- *Limits.* Some credit cards limit cash advances to a dollar amount (for example, \$200 per cash advance or \$500 per week) or a portion of your credit limit (for example, 75% of your available credit limit).
- *How payments are credited.* Many credit card companies apply your payments to purchases first and then to cash advances. Read your credit card agreement to learn how your payments will be credited.

How much is the credit limit?

The credit limit is the maximum total amount--for purchases, cash advances, balance transfers, fees, and finance charges--you may charge on your credit card. If you go over this limit, you may have to pay an “over-the-credit-limit fee.”

What kind of card is it?

Most credit card companies offer several kinds of cards:

- *Secured cards*, which require a security deposit. The larger the security deposit, the higher the credit limit. Secured cards are usually offered to people who have limited credit records--people who are just starting out or who have had trouble with credit in the past.
- *Regular cards*, which do not require a security deposit and have just a few features. Most regular cards have higher credit limits than secured cards but lower credit limits than premium cards.
- *Premium cards* (gold, platinum, titanium), which offer higher credit limits and usually have extra features--for example, product warranties, travel insurance, or emergency services.

Does the card offer incentives and other features?

Many credit card companies offer incentives to use the card and other special features:

- *Rebates* (money back) on the purchases you make
- *Frequent flier miles* or phone-call minutes
- *Additional warranty coverage* for the items you purchase
- *Car rental insurance*
- *Travel accident insurance* or travel-related discounts
- *Credit card registration*, to help if your wallet or purse is lost or stolen and you need to report that all your credit cards are missing

Credit cards may also offer, for a price,

- *Insurance to cover the payments on your credit card balance* if you become unemployed or disabled, or die. Premiums are usually due monthly, making it easy to cancel if the payments are higher than you want to pay or you decide you don't need the insurance any longer.
- *Insurance to cover the first \$50 of charges* if your card is lost or stolen. Under federal law, you are not responsible for charges over \$50.

Before you sign up to pay for any of these features, think carefully about whether it will be useful for you. Don't pay for something you don't want or don't need.

How do I find information about credit cards?

You can find lists of credit card plans, rates, and terms on the Internet, in personal finance magazines, and in newspapers. The Federal Reserve System [surveys](#) credit card companies every six months. You'll need to get the most recent information directly from the credit card company--by phoning the company, looking on the company's web site, or reading a solicitation or application.

Under federal law, all solicitations and applications for credit cards must include certain key information, in a disclosure box similar to the one shown.

Annual percentage rate (APR) for purchases	2.9% until 11/1/06 after that, 14.9%
Other APRs	Cash-advance APR: 15.9% Balance-Transfer APR: 15.9% Penalty rate: 23.9% See explanation below.*
Variable-rate information	Your APR for purchase transactions may vary. The rate is determined monthly by adding 5.9% to the Prime Rate.**
Grace period for repayment of balances for purchases	25 days on average
Method of computing the	Average daily balance (excluding new purchases)

balance for purchases	
Annual fees	None
Minimum finance charge	\$.50
Transaction fee for cash advances: 3% of the amount advanced Balance-transfer fee: 3% of the amount transferred Late-payment fee: \$25 Over-the-credit-limit fee: \$25	
<p>* Explanation of penalty. If your payment arrives more than ten days late two times within a six-month period, the penalty rate will apply.</p> <p>** The Prime Rate used to determine your APR is the rate published in the <i>Wall Street Journal</i> on the 10th day of the prior month.</p>	

APR for purchases. The annual percentage rate you'll be charged if you carry over a balance from month to month. If the card has an introductory rate, you'll see both that rate and the rate that will apply after the introductory rate expires.

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Other APRs. The APRs you'll be charged if you get a cash advance on your card, transfer a balance from another card, or are late in making a payment. More information about the penalty rate may be stated outside the disclosure box--for instance, in a footnote. In this example, if you make two payments that are more than ten days late within six months, the APR will increase to 23.9%.

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Variable-rate information. Information about how the variable rate will be determined (if relevant). More information may be stated outside the disclosure box--for instance, in a footnote.

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Grace period for repayment of balances for purchases. The number of days you'll have to pay your bill for purchases in full without triggering a finance charge.

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Method of computing the balance for purchases. The method that will be used to calculate your outstanding balance if you carry over a balance and will pay a finance charge.

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Annual fees. The amount you'll be charged each twelve-month period for simply having the card.

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Minimum finance charge. The minimum, or fixed, finance charge that will be imposed during a billing cycle. A minimum finance charge usually applies only when a finance charge is imposed, that is, when you carry over a balance.

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Transaction fee for cash advances. The charge that will be imposed each time you use the card for a cash advance.

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Balance-transfer fee. The fee that will be imposed each time you transfer a balance from another card.

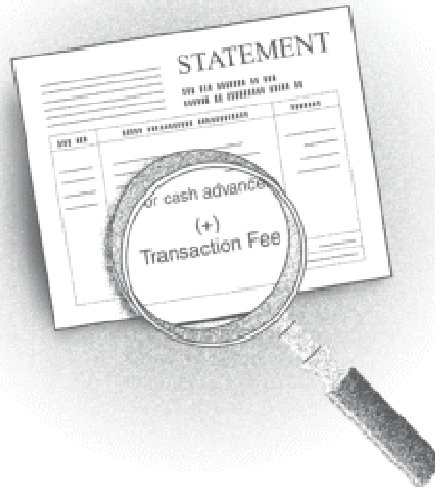
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Late-payment fee. The fee that will be imposed when your payment is late.

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Over-the-credit-limit fee. The fee that will be imposed if your charges exceed the credit limit set for your card.

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What are your liability limits?

If your credit card is lost or stolen--and then is used by someone without your permission--you do not have to pay more than \$50 of those charges. This protection is provided by the federal Truth in Lending Act. You do not need to buy “credit card insurance” to cover amounts over \$50.

If you discover that your card is lost or stolen, report it immediately to your credit card company. Call the toll-free number listed on your monthly statement. The company will cancel the card so that new purchases cannot be made with it. The company will also send you a new card.

Make a list of your account numbers and the companies’ phone numbers. Keep the list in a safe place. If your wallet or purse is lost or stolen, you’ll have all the numbers in one place. Take the list of phone numbers--not the account numbers--with you when you travel, just in case a card is lost or stolen.

What can you do about billing errors?

The federal Fair Credit Billing Act covers billing errors. Examples of billing error are

- A charge for something you didn’t buy
- A bill for an amount different from the actual amount you charged
- A charge for something that you did not accept when it was delivered
- A charge for something that was not delivered according to agreement
- Math errors
- Payments not credited to your account
- A charge by someone who does not have permission to use your credit card

If you think your credit card bill has an error, take the following steps:

1. Write to the credit card company within 60 days after the statement date on the bill with the error. Use the address for “billing inquiries” listed on the bill. Tell the company
 - Your name and account number,
 - That you believe the bill contains an error, and why you believe it’s wrong, and
 - The date and amount of the error (the “disputed amount”).
2. Pay all the other parts of the bill. You do not have to pay the “disputed amount” or any minimum payments or finance charges that apply to it.

If there is an error, you will not have to pay any finance charges on the disputed amount. Your account must be corrected.

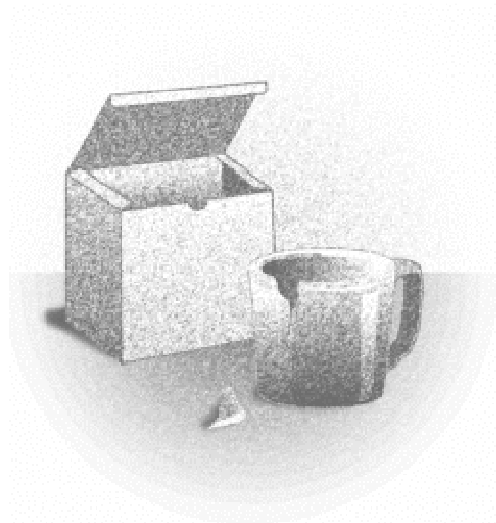
If there is no error, the credit card company must send you an explanation and a statement of the amount you owe. The amount will include any finance charges or other charges that accumulated while you were questioning the bill.

What if the item you purchase is damaged?

The federal Fair Credit Billing Act allows you to withhold payment on any damaged or poor-quality goods or services purchased with a credit card--even if you have accepted the goods or services--as long as you have made an attempt to solve the problem with the merchant.

The sale must have been for more than \$50 and must have taken place in your home state or within 100 miles of your home address. You should notify the credit card company in writing and explain why you are withholding your payment.

You may withhold the payment while the credit card company investigates your claim. If you pay the charges for the goods on your credit card bill before the dispute is resolved, you will lose your right to make a claim.



Every six months the Federal Reserve System surveys the terms of credit card plans offered by financial institutions and publishes a report of the findings. The report includes information from the largest credit card issuers in the country as well as other financial institutions that wish to participate in the survey. The credit terms shown in the accompanying list are as of January 31, 2007, and are subject to change. You should contact issuers for current rates and to learn about other credit card plans.

Codes Used in the List of Plans

Availability

Refers to availability of card to consumers

N = Nationally

R = Only in selected states

State abbreviation = Only in state specified

Type of pricing

F = Fixed

V = Variable

T = Tiered, with different periodic rates for different levels of outstanding balance. Rate shown applies to the lowest of the balance tiers.

Index

The interest rate on variable-rate plans is based on an index. The codes shown in the list of plans correspond to the following indexes:

1 = Prime rate

2 = One-month Treasury bill rate

3 = Three-month Treasury bill rate

4 = Six-month Treasury bill rate

5 = One-year Treasury bill rate

6 = Federal funds rate

7 = Cost of funds to card issuer

8 = Federal Reserve discount rate

9 = Other

0 = Not applicable

Other features

Credit card issuers may add enhancements or other features to the plan without charging extra fees. These enhancements may include cash rebates, purchase protections, warranty guarantees, travel accident or automobile rental insurance, discounts on goods and services, and incentives for use such as frequent flyer miles.

- 1 = Rebates on purchases
- 2 = Extension of manufacturer's warranty
- 3 = Purchase protection/security
- 4 = Travel accident insurance
- 5 = Travel-related discounts
- 6 = Automobile rental insurance
- 7 = Non-travel-related goods and services
- 8 = Credit card registration
- 9 = Reduced introductory interest rate available
- 10 = Other, not specified
- N.R. = Not reported

Survey Report by Name of Financial Institution

Institution	Availability and Credit Card Plan	Annual Percentage Rate	Type of Pricing	Index	Grace Period (days)	Annual Fee	Other Features	Telephone
5 STAR BANK (A COLORADO INDUSTRIAL BANK)	N - 5STAR VISA PLATINUM	11.4	V	1	25	0	N.R.	(800) 776-2265
ADIRONDACK TRUST COMPANY, THE	NY - VISA	15.0	F	0	25	15	4,6	(518) 584-5844
AMALGAMATED BANK OF CHICAGO	N - AMALGAMATED BANK OF CHICAGO - MASTER	12.0	V	1	25	0	4,5,10	(800) 365-6464
AMERICAN EXPRESS BANK, FSB	N - AMERICAN EXPRESS GOLD	18.2	V	1	20	85	N.R.	(800) 257-0770
AMERICAN EXPRESS CENTURION BANK	N - BLUE FROM AMERICAN EXPRESS	12.2	V	1	20	0	2,3,4,5,6,9,10	(800) 528-4800

AMERICAN SAVINGS BANK, F.S.B.	HI - CLASSIC VISA	16.3	F	0	25	24	4,6	(808) 272-2566
AMERICAN STATE BANK	TX - AMERICAN STATE BANK VISA	9.90	F	0	25	0	4,6,10	(325) 794-1000
ANB FINANCIAL NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	N - ESCAPES / ANB	8.30	F	0	28	0	N.R.	(888) 226-5262
APPALACHIAN COMMUNITY BANK	N - VISA CLASSIC	11.9	F	0	25	12	1,4,5,8,10	(706) 276-8000
ARVEST BANK	R - VISA	19.9	V	1	25	0	4,6,8	(800) 356-8085
BANCORPSOUTH BANK	R - MASTERCARD	11.2	V	1	30	0	N.R.	(800) 844-2723
BANGOR SAVINGS BANK	N - VISA CLASSIC	16.2	V	1	25	0	5	(207) 942-5211
BANK OF KENTUCKY, INCORPORATED, THE	R - VISA GOLD	19.8	V	1	25	0	4,9	(859) 372-5170
BANK OF LOUISIANA	N - VISA AND MASTERCARD	9.90	F	0	25	0	3,4,5,6,9	(800) 353-6454
BANK OF THE SIERRA	CA - VISA	13.0	F	0	25	0	4,6	(559) 782-4900
BANK, THE	PA - VISA	15.3	V	1	25	0	2,3,4,6	(800) 833-9295
BANKERS BANK, THE	R - MASTERCARD	14.2	V	1	25	0	4,5,6,7	(800) 854-7642

BANKERS' BANK OF KANSAS, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	KS - VISA	16.7	V	1	25	0	4,6	(800) 675- 6284
BAR HARBOR BANK AND TRUST COMPANY	ME - VISA CLASSIC CARD	14.5	F	0	25	0	10	(888) 853- 7100
BARCLAYS BANK DELAWARE	N - US AIRWAYS MASTERCARD	18.2	F	0	20	79	4,5,6,9	(866) 419- 0881
BB&T BANKCARD CORPORATIO N	R - VISA	12.2	V	1	25	0	N.R.	(800) 476- 4228
BMW BANK OF NORTH AMERICA	N - VISA	14.2	V	1	22	0	1,2,3,4,6,1 0	(888) 269- 2273
BOONE COUNTY NATIONAL BANK OF COLUMBIA, THE	R - MASTERCARD/ VISA	17.4	F	0	25	0	4	(573) 634- 1148
BRANCH BANKING AND TRUST COMPANY	R - VISA	12.2	V	1	25	0	3,4,5,6,9	(800) 476- 4228
CAPITAL ONE BANK	N - VISA	19.8	V	1	25	0	N.R.	(800) 955- 7070
CENTRAL BANK & TRUST COMPANY	KY - VISA	18.0	F	0	25	20	N.R.	(800) 637- 6884
CENTRAL TRUST BANK, THE	R - MASTERCARD / VISA	17.4	F	0	25	0	4	(573) 634- 1148
CHASE BANK	N -	9.00	F	0	20	0	N.R.	(888)

USA, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	MASTERCARD							684- 7370
CHEMUNG CANAL TRUST COMPANY	NY - VISA BUSINESS CARD	13.7	V	1	25	25	N.R.	(607) 737- 3761
CITIBANK (BANAMEX USA)	N - MASTERCARD PLATINUM	14.2	V	1	25	0	4,10	(800) 222- 1234
CITIBANK (SOUTH DAKOTA), NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	N - MASTERCARD	11.2	V	1	20	0	N.R.	(800) 950- 5114
CITIZENS BANK OF MASSACHUSE TTS	N - MASTERCARD PLATINUM	8.00	V	1	20	0	2,4,6,10	(888) 426- 1114
CITIZENS BANK OF PENNSYLVAN IA	N - MASTERCARD	8.00	V	1	20	0	2,4,6,10	(888) 426- 1114
CITIZENS BANK OF RHODE ISLAND	N - MASTERCARD PLATINUM	8.00	V	1	20	0	2,4,6,10	(888) 426- 1114
CITIZENS FIRST BANK	FL - VISA PLATINUM	10.0	F	0	25	0	N.R.	(352) 259- 3274
CITY NATIONAL BANK	R - VISA BUSINESS	16.0	F	0	25	50	3,4,6	(800) 221- 5920
CITY NATIONAL BANK OF TAYLOR, THE	TX - VISA AND MASTERCARD	13.9	F	0	25	0	4,6	(512) 671- 2221
CNB BANK	N - VISA	14.9	F	0	30	15	3,4,5,6,8,1 0	(800) 492- 3221

COLUMBIA RIVER BANK	R - VISA CLASSIC	18.0	F	0	25	0	4,5,8,10	(541) 298-6607
COLUMBUS BANK AND TRUST COMPANY	N - VISA CLASSIC	16.2	V	1	25	0	N.R.	(800) 543-8227
COMMERCE BANK AND TRUST	KS - VISA CLASSIC	17.1	V	1	25	0	4,9	(785) 267-8900
COMMERCE BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	R - VISA	12.2	V	1	25	0	3,6,9,10	(800) 937-2000
COMMERCE BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	R - SPECIAL CONNECTIONS	16.5	V	1	25	0	4,6	(800) 645-2103
COMMUNITY FIRST BANK	AR - MASTERCARD	9.00	F	0	25	50	10	(870) 391-8000
COMMUNITY NATIONAL BANK	VT - VISA	13.6	F	0	25	0	N.R.	(802) 334-7915
COMPASS BANK	R - VISA	18.2	V	9	25	0	N.R.	(800) 239-5175
COPPERMARK BANK	R - MASTERCARD	16.2	V	1	25	15	1,3,4,5,8,9	(800) 593-1557
CREDIT ONE BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	N - VISA	23.9	F	0	25	69	N.R.	(877) 825-3242
D. L. EVANS BANK	N - VISA GOLD	13.2	V	1	25	20	2,3,4,5,6,8,10	(208) 678-2529
DELAWARE NATIONAL BANK	R - VISA	15.3	V	1	25	0	2,3,4,6	(800) 833-9295

DISCOVER BANK	N - DISCOVER PLATINUM CARD	14.0	V	1	25	0	1,4,6,7,9	(800) 347-2683
DOLLAR BANK, A FEDERAL SAVINGS BANK	R - VISA	13.2	V	1	25	0	1,6,9	(800) 447-2823
EAST PENN BANK	N - VISA	14.7	V	1	25	0	4	(610) 965-5959
EXCHANGE NATIONAL BANK OF JEFFERSON CITY, THE	MO - MASTERCARD	16.9	F	0	25	0	4	(800) 761-8362
FAIRFIELD FEDERAL SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATION OF LANCASTER	OH - FAIRFIELD FEDERAL	12.3	V	1	24	12	1	(800) 650-0987
FARM BUREAU BANK FSB	N - MASTERCARD	15.2	V	1	20	0	9,10	(800) 492-3276
FIA CARD SERVICES, N.A.	N - BANK OF AMERICA MASTERCARD PLATINUM	15.2	V	1	20	0	3,4,6,9,10	(800) 932-2775
FIFTH THIRD BANK	R - PLATINUM MASTERCARD	10.2	V	1	20	0	3,4,9,10	(800) 275-4858
FIRST BANK & TRUST EAST TEXAS	TX - VISA CLASSIC	13.9	F	0	25	0	N.R.	(888) 608-7787
FIRST COMMAND BANK	N - VISA PLATINUM	9.30	F	0	30	0	2,4,6	(888) 763-7600
FIRST	AL - VISA	12.2	V	1	20	0	N.R.	(800)

COMMERCIAL BANK	PLATINUM							543-8227
FIRST COMMUNITY BANK	N - MASTERCARD	14.9	F	0	25	50	4,5,6,8	(505) 241-7373
FIRST COUNTY BANK	CT - VISA	14.2	V	1	25	25	N.R.	(203) 462-4200
FIRST FEDERAL SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATION	N - VISA	11.9	V	1	25	0	N.R.	(800) 768-3248
FIRST FINANCIAL BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	R - CLASSIC MASTERCARD	13.5	V	1	25	0	N.R.	(800) 221-8890
FIRST FINANCIAL BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	R - VISA CLASSIC	15.9	F	0	25	15	4,6	(800) 511-0045
FIRST HAWAIIAN BANK	HI - MASTERCARD STANDARD	16.5	F	0	25	15	4,6,7,10	(800) 342-2778
FIRST INTERSTATE BANK	R - VISA PLATINUM SCORECARD	20.3	T	0	25	35	4,5,6,8,9,10	(406) 255-5434
FIRST NATIONAL BANK & TRUST	FL - MASTER CARD	14.9	F	0	30	20	1,9	(850) 796-2020
FIRST NATIONAL BANK ALASKA	AK - MASTERCARD	13.9	F	0	25	0	4	(907) 777-4523
FIRST NATIONAL BANK AND	WY - VISA CLASSIC	13.9	F	0	25	0	4	(800) 377-6906

TRUST COMPANY								
FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF FAIRFIELD, THE	MT - VISA	15.6	F	0	25	0	5,7	(406) 467-2531
FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF OMAHA	N - VISA	10.0	V	9	20	0	2,3,4,6,9,10	(800) 688-7070
FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF ST. LOUIS	R - MASTERCARD / VISA	17.4	F	0	25	0	4	(573) 634-1148
FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF THE MID-CITIES	N - MASTERCARD REGULAR AND GOLD	13.9	F	0	25	0	N.R.	(817) 553-2500
FIRST PENN BANK	N - VISA	14.0	F	0	25	0	4,6	(866) 437-2265
FIRST SECURITY BANK	AR - VISA	10.0	F	0	25	0	1,3,4,6	(479) 527-7078
FIRST STATE BANK	NM - MASTERCARD CLASSIC	15.2	F	0	25	0	4	(800) 423-7503
FIRST-CITIZENS BANK & TRUST COMPANY	R - VISA GOLD	8.00	V	1	25	0	4	(540) 561-4707
FIRST-KNOX NATIONAL BANK OF MOUNT VERNON, THE	OH - VISA CLASSIC	17.2	V	1	30	0	4	(740) 399-5500
FIRSTBANK OF	R - VISA	15.2	V	1	25	0	2,4,6	(800) 964-

COLORADO								3444
FIRSTMERIT BANK, N.A.	R - VISA PLATINUM	10.8	V	1	20	0	2,4,6,9	(888) 554-4362
FRANKLIN TEMPLETON BANK & TRUST F.S.B.	N - PLATINUM MASTERCARD	11.7	V	1	25	0	2,3,4,6,10	(800) 238-2761
GARDINER SAVINGS INSTITUTION FEDERAL SAVING BANK	ME - VISA CLASSIC	16.5	T	0	25	0	N.R.	(207) 582-5550
GREENVILLE NATIONAL BANK	OH - GREENVILLE NATIONAL BANK VISA	18.0	F	0	25	0	N.R.	(937) 548-1114
HEARTLAND BANK	OH - MASTERCARD	15.7	V	1	25	18	10	(800) 697-0049
HILLS BANK AND TRUST COMPANY	IA - VISA PLATINUM "NO ANNUAL FEE"	10.3	V	1	25	0	4,6,8,9	(800) 445-5725
HOME FEDERAL BANK OF TENNESSEE, FSB	TN - VISA CLASSIC	12.8	F	0	25	15	N.R.	(865) 544-3954
HSBC BANK USA, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	N - MASTERCARD	16.0	V	1	20	0	3,4,5,9,10	(877) 700-4722
HUNTINGTON STATE BANK	TX - VISA	13.9	F	0	25	0	N.R.	(936) 639-5566
IBERIABANK	LA - VISA CLASSIC	11.0	F	0	15	0	N.R.	(800) 968-0801
IDAHO	N - VISA	15.2	V	1	25	15	1,3,4,6	(208)

INDEPENDENT BANK								947-1168
INFIBANK, N.A.	N - VISA	13.0	V	4	20	0	N.R.	(877) 875-8078
INTRUST BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	N - VISA PLATINUM	14.2	V	1	25	0	4,6,10	(800) 222-7458
IRONSTONE BANK	R - VISA GOLD	8.00	V	1	25	0	4	(540) 561-4707
KENTUCKY BANK	KY - VISA	16.2	V	1	25	0	N.R.	(859) 987-1795
LAFAYETTE AMBASSADOR BANK	PA - VISA	15.3	V	1	25	0	2,3,4,6	(800) 833-9295
LOS ALAMOS NATIONAL BANK	N - VISA GOLD	10.9	F	0	25	15	N.R.	(505) 662-1050
M&I BANK FSB	R - VISA CLASSIC	16.2	V	1	25	15	N.R.	(800) 642-2657
MERCER SAVINGS BANK	OH - VISA CLASSIC	11.9	F	0	25	20	N.R.	(419) 586-5159
MERRICK BANK CORPORATION	N - VISA CLASSIC	25.2	V	1	25	0	N.R.	(800) 253-2322
NATIONAL CITY BANK	R - NATIONAL CITY EVERYDAY REWARDS VISA	14.2	V	1	20	0	1,2,3,4	(800) 423-3883
NATIONAL GRAND BANK OF MARBLEHEAD	MA - MASTERCARD	16.5	F	0	25	0	N.R.	(781) 631-6000

NEW MILLENNIUM BANK	N - VISA SECURED CREDIT CARD	19.5	F	0	0	59	2,3,4,6	(732) 729-4395
NORDSTROM FSB	N - VISA	12.2	V	1	25	0	10	(800) 964-1800
NORTHWEST SAVINGS BANK	R - VISA CLASSIC	13.8	F	0	25	0	3,6	(814) 728-7505
OAK HILL BANKS	N - VISA CLASSIC	17.4	F	0	25	0	4,9	(513) 398-5196
OHIO VALLEY BANK COMPANY, THE	R - VISA	15.3	F	0	25	15	N.R.	(740) 441-9148
PARK NATIONAL BANK, THE	OH - CLASSIC VISA	18.0	F	0	25	12	N.R.	(800) 762-2616
PENN SECURITY BANK AND TRUST COMPANY	N - MASTERCARD	14.8	F	0	25	0	N.R.	(570) 346-7741
PEOPLES FIRST COMMUNITY BANK	FL - MASTERCARD GOLD	10.9	F	0	25	0	N.R.	(800) 624-9699
PINNACLE BANK	R - VISA CLASSIC	16.0	V	9	25	0	4,5,6,10	(800) 369-7283
PLAINS COMMERCE BANK	N - VISA/MASTERCARD	19.8	F	0	25	39	N.R.	(605) 948-2344
PULASKI BANK AND TRUST COMPANY	N - VISA	8.00	F	0	25	35	9	(800) 217-7715
QUAD CITY BANK AND	R - VISA CLASSIC	14.2	V	1	25	20	4,9	(877) 954-

TRUST COMPANY								0190
RAINIER PACIFIC SAVINGS BANK	N - VISA GOLD	13.0	V	1	25	0	N.R.	(800) 228-2858
RBC CENTURA BANK	R - VISA GOLD	14.7	V	1	25	0	4,5	(800) 236-8872
RICHLAND TRUST COMPANY, THE	OH - VISA GOLD	10.8	V	1	30	50	4	(418) 525-8791
S & T BANK	PA - VISA CLASSIC	11.8	V	1	25	15	4,6,10	(800) 325-2265
SECURITY NATIONAL BANK AND TRUST COMPANY	OH - CLASSIC VISA	16.9	F	0	25	0	N.R.	(937) 324-6828
SIMMONS FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF PINE BLUFF	N - VISA	13.3	F	0	25	35	4	(800) 636-5151
SOLVAY BANK	NY - VISA CLASSIC	14.9	F	0	25	0	N.R.	(315) 468-1661
STATE BANK AND TRUST COMPANY, THE	OH - CLASSIC	15.8	V	1	25	25	N.R.	(419) 783-8950
STATE FARM BANK, FSB	N - VISA PLATINUM	13.2	V	1	20	0	1,2,4,6,9	(877) 734-8472
SUNFLOWER BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	N - VISA CLASSIC	9.90	F	0	25	0	4,5,6,8	(888) 827-5564

TCM BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	N - TOTAL CARD MANAGEMENT	15.2	V	1	25	0	3,4,5,6,9	(800) 883- 0131
TEXAS BANK AND TRUST COMPANY	TX - VISA CLASSIC	13.9	F	0	25	0	N.R.	(903) 237- 5680
TIB THE INDEPENDEN T BANKERSBAN K	N - VISA AND MASTERCARD	16.2	V	1	25	0	N.R.	(800) 367- 7576
TOWN NORTH BANK NEVADA, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	N - MASTERCARD	10.2	V	1	20	0	4,8,9	(800) 820- 8417
TRUSTMARK NATIONAL BANK	R - VISA	12.2	V	1	30	0	N.R.	(601) 208- 7685
U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION ND	R - VISA	12.2	V	1	25	0	9	(800) 285- 8585
UMB BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	N - VISA - PLATINUM	12.2	V	1	25	0	1,2,3,4,5,6 ,9	(800) 821- 5184
UNION STATE BANK	NY - VISA GOLD	15.2	V	1	25	0	1,4,5,6,7,9 ,10	(800) 887- 8775
UNITED BANK, INC.	R - VISA	14.3	V	1	25	0	10	(800) 242- 7600
UNIVERSAL SAVINGS BANK, FEDERAL ASSOCIATION	N - VISA PLATINUM	10.0	V	1	25	0	4,10	(888) 214- 1427
USAA SAVINGS BANK	N - MASTERCARD	11.2	V	1	25	0	N.R.	(800) 531- 2265

VALLEY NATIONAL BANK	NJ - MASTERCARD	16.8	F	0	25	0	N.R.	(800) 522-4100
WACHOVIA BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	N - VISA PLATINUM WITH REWARDS	12.2	V	1	25	0	9	(800) 922-4684
WALLIS STATE BANK, THE	TX - VISA	14.9	F	0	25	0	4,5,6,8	(979) 478-6151
WASHINGTON MUTUAL BANK	N - PLATINUM MASTERCARD	15.0	V	1	25	0	10	(800) 788-7000
WAYNE BANK AND TRUST CO.	N - VISA CLASSIC	11.0	F	0	25	0	N.R.	(888) 769-2963
WELLS FARGO BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	N - VISA	17.2	V	1	25	0	9	(800) 642-4720
WELLS FARGO FINANCIAL BANK	R - VISA	13.9	F	0	25	20	N.R.	(605) 336-3933
WEST SUBURBAN BANK	IL - VISA CLASSIC	14.3	V	1	25	0	N.R.	(630) 652-2000
WHITNEY NATIONAL BANK	R - VISA	14.3	V	1	25	0	N.R.	(504) 838-6565
WILMINGTON SAVINGS FUND SOCIETY, FSB	N - MASTERCARD	14.9	V	1	25	20	N.R.	(302) 792-6000
WILMINGTON TRUST COMPANY	N - MASTERCARD	16.5	V	5	25	18	4,5,8,10	(302) 652-2378
WORLD FINANCIAL NETWORK	N - GANDER MOUNTAIN PLATINUM	16.2	V	1	25	0	N.R.	(888) 332-4709

NATIONAL BANK	MASTERCARD							
WORLD'S FOREMOST BANK	N - CABELA'S VISA CLASSIC	16.2	V	1	20	0	1,6	(800) 850-8402
YORK STATE BANK AND TRUST COMPANY	N - VISA	14.0	F	0	25	0	3,4,6,9,10	(402) 362-4411
ZIONS FIRST NATIONAL BANK	R - VISA CLASSIC	17.3	V	1	25	0	2,4,6,10	(888) 758-5349

Checklist for comparing credit cards

Think about how you will use your credit card. Do you expect to

- Pay your monthly bill in full?
- Carry over a balance from month to month?
- Get cash advances?

Once you have decided how you will use your credit card, you can use this checklist to compare cards. Information about most of the features is given in the [disclosure box](#) that must appear in all printed credit card solicitations and applications.

Feature	Card A	Card B	Card C
What are the APRs?			
For purchases?	_____	_____	_____
For cash advances?	_____	_____	_____
For balance transfers?	_____	_____	_____
If you pay late?	_____	_____	_____
What type of interest does the card have?			
Fixed or variable? Tiered?	_____	_____	_____
How long is the grace period?			
If you carry over a balance?	_____	_____	_____
If you pay off the balance each month?	_____	_____	_____
For cash advances?	_____	_____	_____
How is the finance charge calculated?			
One cycle or two?	_____	_____	_____
Including or excluding new purchases?	_____	_____	_____
Average or adjusted?	_____	_____	_____
Minimum finance charge?	_____	_____	_____
What are the fees?			
Annual	_____	_____	_____
Late-payment	_____	_____	_____
Over-the-credit-limit	_____	_____	_____
Set-up	_____	_____	_____

What are the cash advance features?

Transaction fees

Limits

How much is the credit limit?

What kind of card is it?

Secured? Regular? Premium?

Does the card offer other features?

Rebates

Frequent flier miles

Insurance

Other



Dave Capra is author of “Your Guide to Perfect Credit” and host of “The Debtonator Radio Show returning to Chicago airwaves this April on WJJG-AM 1530. His daily columns are available on his blog <http://thedebtonator.blogspot.com/> and he is a debt relief consultant with Franklin Debt Relief.

He has been helping people recover from problematic debt since 1990 and has made it his mission to educate consumers about credit cards and debt management. He is currently petitioning legislators in Illinois to include, as required curriculum, courses in credit cards and debt management for all high school students.

“I find it appalling that our children are graduating and entering the adult world uneducated about credit and debt matters, and I intend to do something about it.” Capra states. “Know the rules before you play the game,” is his battle cry.

For information about Dave Capra “The Debtonator” email him at dcapra@franklindebtrelief.com or call 312.674.4861 (office) or 630.433.0303 (cell)

If you're currently suffering from the pain and frustration associated with bad credit, or no credit at all, "**Your Guide To Perfect Credit**" will tell you EVERYTHING that a consumer needs to know about credit, credit cards, debt education, getting out of debt and staying that way.

The education and secrets that are inside this **big 168 page** manual are so powerful that some credit specialists and attorney's have charged up to \$2,000 and more for them and consumers have gladly paid, because even at that price, it was well worth it to achieve "**Perfect Credit**" in today's world.

The decision to obtain this book is one of the most important decisions that you will make in your life. It is a decision to become educated in an area of your life where average people have little or no knowledge. So your decision to reach out for help, **to educate yourself**, was truly a wise one. It is when you truly decide to **take action** that good things start to happen.

"Your Guide To Perfect Credit" was written to teach you what credit and debt are and how to establish or **restore** your credit and **build up** your credit score. If you're trying to build credit fast, you will find some great tools in this program.

You will learn:

- The history of your social security card
- What exactly credit is
- How to improve your credit score **fast**
- How to establish good credit
- Restoring you good credit
- Dealing with debt collectors
- The almost secret credit bureau and FICO score
- The secrets that the credit card companies and your bank don't want you to know
- **and much, much more!**

Also, as a **FREE limited time bonus** you will receive our special letters kit. This kit includes all the letters you will need to:

- Negotiate with creditors and use restrictive endorsement letters to settle your debts and erase bad credit for pennies on the dollar
- All the letters you need to stop the debt collectors in their tracks
- Powerful, highly effective credit bureau dispute letters that will eliminate bankruptcies, judgments, tax liens, charge off's and repossessions
- Letters to ChexSystems that will remove negative banking histories
- **and more!**

You will also receive a **FREE 1 hour debt consultation with Dave Capra "The Debtinator"**

Order Your Guide To Perfect Credit today!

The special bonuses are in limited quantity.

"Using the techniques in this book, you will begin to change your financial life and how you perceive credit, credit cards and debt. You will be taken by the hand

and shown **step by step** what you need to know to get out of debt and stay that way."

"You will have a far better understanding as to what credit and debt are and how they can affect our lives." . You will learn "how to" strategies that will alleviate your bad habits and change the way you deal with credit and debt.

A BIG 168 pages! Available at www.lulu.com/thedebtonator

