

GET **READY**, GET **SET**, GET **GOING**.

LESSON 10: PAYING BILLS



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Learning Objectives

After completing this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Identify five options of how to pay bills.
- List three reasons for having a bank or credit union account.
- Identify how to decide what type of savings or checking account, or both, is best.
- Demonstrate knowledge about using a checking account.

Time

- 60 Minutes

Materials Needed:

- Handouts (1 per participant):
 - **Choosing How to Pay Bills** Can Help You Save Money and Time
 - Should I Have a Banking Account?
 - **Finding Financial Products and Services** That Meet Your Needs
 - Shopping for Bank Services
 - Gather What You Need Before **Opening a Checking or Savings Account**
 - Endorsing a Check
 - Completing a Deposit Slip
 - Completing a Deposit Slip Answer Sheet
 - Writing a Check
 - Writing a Check Answer Sheet
 - Balancing a Checkbook
 - Evaluating Your Prepaid or Payroll Card
 - Learn About Fees by **Evaluating Your Prepaid or Payroll Card**
 - Knowing Your Prepaid Card Rights
 - Make a Plan for **Putting Goals Into Action** (from previous lessons)
- Name tents
- Markers, crayons, pencils, or other writing utensils
- Discussion Questions
- Flip chart

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Preparation

Review the entire lesson. Decide or ask ahead if your participants write their own checks, and if not, in the “Using the Account” section, skip activities 4 to 6 and related handouts.

Make copies of handouts you plan to use for participants. If using 3-ring binders to organize and store handouts, 3-hole punch the handouts. Collate the handouts into one set for each participant.

Gather all needed materials. Prepare materials accordingly. Review and choose several questions from the “Discussion Questions” section. If desired, repost the ground rules you wrote on flip chart paper before Lesson 1 on a wall in the classroom.

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Lesson Plan Overview

Facilitator may use a flip chart and a marker to visualize any important terms introduced during the lesson. Use the lecturette concepts and activities covered in the lesson plan as a guide.

Lesson Plan Overview

TIME ALLOTTED	ACTIVITY
5 minutes	Welcome, overview of lessons, ground rules, assignment review, lesson objectives, distribute handouts
5 minutes	Choosing How to Pay Bills Handout: Choosing How to Pay Bills Can Help You Save Money and Time
10 minutes	Activity 1: Should I Have a Banking Account? Handout: Should I Have a Banking Account? Handout: Finding Financial Products and Services That Meet Your Needs
5 minutes	Activity 2: Shopping for Bank Services Handout: Shopping for Bank Services
5 minutes	Activity 3: Opening an Account Handout: Gather What You Need Before Opening a Checking or Savings Account
3 minutes	Activity 4: Check Endorsement Handout: Endorsing a Check
3 minutes	Activity 5: Making a Deposit Handout: Completing a Deposit Slip Handout: Completing a Deposit Slip Answer Sheet
3 minutes	Activity 6: Writing Checks Handout: Writing a Check Handout: Writing a Check Answer Sheet

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TIME ALLOTTED	ACTIVITY
3 minutes	Activity 7: Manage the Account Handout: Balancing a Checkbook
8 minutes	Activity 8: Using a Prepaid Card Handout: Evaluating Your Prepaid or Payroll Card Handout: Learn About Fees by Evaluating Your Prepaid or Payroll Card Knowing Your Prepaid Card Rights
5 minutes	Discussion Questions and Are You Ready for Change? Handout: Make a Plan for Putting Goals Into Action (from previous lessons)
5 minutes	Wrap-Up

Welcome, Review Assignments, and Distribute Handouts

Share: Welcome the group, take attendance, review ground rules, and distribute handouts for today’s lesson. To review the assignments from “Lesson 9: Income and Taxes,” ask for a couple of volunteers to share their action plan that include finances, using their stated goal on their name tent as a reminder.

Share: State the learning objectives for this lesson.

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Choosing How to Pay Bills

Share: You can choose from several ways to pay bills. Also think about if the way you pay will save you time and money, or avoid some unnecessary fees. Deciding on a payment method so that you pay on time will help you build a reliable track record to improve credit and possibly access future credit (Anderson-Porisch et al., 2007). In a few minutes, we will talk more about the pros and cons of each method.

Ask: How do you usually pay your bills? (Write responses on a flip chart. Add any of these answers that are missing: cash, check, money order, debit or credit card, online bill payment or mobile app, prepaid card.)

Ask: Why do you pay your bills the way you do? In other words, what is your reason? Does it help you save time, save money, or avoid unnecessary fees?

Next, let's review the **"Choosing How to Pay Bills Can Help You Save Money and Time"** handout. Let's compare it to how you said you currently pay your bills.

(Leader Note: Also review the more contemporary methods including a debit card, a prepaid card, and online or mobile bill payment.

Debit cards are linked to a checking account. If you overspend and you have opted in to your bank's overdraft program, your bank may cover a purchase that is more than what you have in your account. They may charge you a fee and require you to repay the overdraft amount and fees.

Prepaid cards have money that was loaded on the card in advance. You may pay fees to use the card, but there are no interest charges because you are spending money you already have. There are different types of prepaid cards. Make sure you understand the details and fees for using the card and how to check your balance. Also ask questions about your rights and responsibilities. Some prepaid cards offer a savings wallet feature that allows you to set aside some money for your goals.

Online or mobile bill payment can be set up with your bank, credit union, or prepaid card account. You can set up automatic payments for certain bills. You may be able to receive alerts when your balance goes below a certain amount.)

Ask: What are the benefits and risks of your method(s)? What questions do you have? Are you considering another method for certain bills, based on this discussion?

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ACTIVITY 1: SHOULD I HAVE A BANKING ACCOUNT?

Bank and Credit Union Accounts

Share: Banks and credit unions are businesses where people can have accounts for managing money. Banks are for-profit companies who offer financial products and services, such as checking and savings accounts. Credit unions are nonprofit businesses that offer banking services to their members. Credit unions usually have higher savings rates for savings accounts and lower loan rates for borrowers (Anderson-Porisch, et al., 2007).

Share: Reasons to find the right one for you include:

- **Safety:** Money deposited is safe from theft, loss, and fire.
- **Security:** Your money is insured up to \$100,000 for deposits you are saving for goals, unexpected expenses, or emergencies.
- **Convenience:** Accounts make it easy to pay bills and make purchases.
- **Cost:** Accounts let you pay bills or get cash cheaper than using a check cashing service.
- **Financial future:** Accounts allow you to repair or build a credit history by developing a bill paying or savings record.

(Leader Note: During this discussion, assess participants to understand their current knowledge and past experiences so that you can decide how in depth you should cover the activities and handouts in this lesson.)

ACTIVITY 1: SHOULD I HAVE A BANKING ACCOUNT?

Share: A bank account needs to be used carefully. Know the fees and minimum balance limits. An overdraft or nonsufficient funds (NSF) is a check written for more than what is available in the account. I will give you a few minutes now to complete the self-assessment, “Should I Have a Banking Account?” Place a checkmark under the column marked either “yes” or “no” depending on your answer. If you answered “no” on any items, this could mean you will have future problems, and you are not be ready to manage an account.

Share: Also consider what you want or need from a financial product or service. Use the **“Finding Financial Products and Services That Meet Your Needs”** handout to check which products and services will meet your important goals and be best for you. Types of accounts are checking, savings, or other deposit accounts. The rest of the handout has more details if you are considering some products or services to meet your needs. It will help you decide if you are ready to open and manage a bank or credit union account.

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ACTIVITY 2: SHOPPING FOR BANK SERVICES

Share: Choose a bank or credit union based on your account needs and their rules, the location, fees, customer service, and privacy protection. Many offer electronic or online banking to do transactions on a computer or phone.

ACTIVITY 2: SHOPPING FOR BANK SERVICES

Share: Next, turn to the “Shopping for Bank Services” handout. It will help you to compare three financial institutions if you are ready to open an account. I encourage you to use this handout as a guide for comparing options and making the best decision for you.

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ACTIVITY 3: OPENING AN ACCOUNT

ACTIVITY 3: OPENING AN ACCOUNT

Share: Look at the items and information needed to open a bank or credit union account on the “Gather What You Need Before **Opening a Checking or Savings Account**” handout. This will prepare you to bring the correct identification and questions to ask about the account you plan to open (Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, 2020),



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ACTIVITY 4: CHECK ENDORSEMENT

Using the Account

Share: *Now that you have opened an account, let's talk about how to responsibly use your account.*

ACTIVITY 4: CHECK ENDORSEMENT

Share: *Next, let's review the "Endorsing a Check" handout together. When you receive a check, you must sign the back of the check to make it cashable. Once a check is endorsed, it is the same as cash so sign it in front of the cashier at the bank. Or write "for deposit only" by your signature to make the check safe for bank deposit by mail or by someone else (Anderson-Porisch et al., 2007).*

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ACTIVITY 5: MAKING A DEPOSIT

ACTIVITY 5: MAKING A DEPOSIT

Share: *You open an account by depositing money, either checks or cash. Deposit slips list all checks and cash being put into the account. Deposit slips come with printed checks and are available at the bank or credit union. Let's look at the "Completing a Deposit Slip" handout together. Each of you can fill out the blank form as practice. Compare what you have written to the "Completing a Deposit Slip Answer Sheet." Who can tell me how to find the bank routing number and the bank account number on the deposit slip? I emphasize that this is important. You need these numbers to fill out direct deposit forms at work and to set up any automatic withdrawal forms online. (Anderson-Porisch, et al., 2007).*

Funds may be automatically deposited from an employer or government agency into a bank account. Use a deposit slip or voided blank check to identify the bank routing and account numbers to start this service.

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ACTIVITY 6: WRITING CHECKS

ACTIVITY 6: WRITING CHECKS

Share: Review the “Writing a Check” handout with participants, pointing out the parts of a check.

Share: *Practice using the sample check on the handout. Compare what you have written to the “Writing a Check Answer Sheet.” Write checks to pay bills or make purchases only if there is enough money in the account to cover the amount of the checks. You may also choose to do online banking using the internet on a computer or smart phone. Write the check amount on your check register and then compute the amount remaining in the account (Anderson-Porisch et al., 2007).*

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ACTIVITY 7: MANAGE THE ACCOUNT

ACTIVITY 7: MANAGE THE ACCOUNT

Share: *The last step is to review the “Balancing a Checkbook” handout together. You must remember to record deposits, checks written, check or debit card use, and bills paid electronically, ATM transactions, and service fees in a check register. You should balance the checkbook monthly to find any differences between your check register and the monthly bank statement. Bank statements usually have a form or chart with these steps. When you balance your checkbook, you confirm the amount of money in your account. If you write checks or make withdrawals for more than the money in the account, the bank will charge overdraft fees. If errors were made by the account holder or the bank, contact the bank for help to correct any errors (Anderson-Porisch, et al., 2007).*

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ACTIVITY 8: USING A PREPAID CARD

ACTIVITY 8: USING A PREPAID CARD

Share: A prepaid card is a card you can use to pay for things. Money is loaded on it and you can use the card to spend up to that amount. They are a convenient way to pay for things without carrying cash. Prepaid cards look like a credit card but are very different from a credit card because you are not borrowing money to pay back. Some government benefits and employer paychecks are loaded electronically onto a prepaid card.

Ask: Do you receive any income or benefits on a prepaid card? Possibly from SSI, SSDI, your employer, SNAP or other assistance?

Share: If you have a prepaid card, you must understand how to use it as well as know the rules and fees. Let's find and review several handouts with more information. You can read the fact sheets more carefully and fill in your answers on the worksheet after doing research after class. The "Evaluating Your Prepaid or Payroll Card" handout talks about the importance of carefully reading the terms and fees you pay each month. It also has many definitions of terms to know about various fees. Not every card charges each type of fee. Review details about your prepaid card to add money or get cash, check the balance, know what to do in case of loss and errors, and manage and use the card. Write in your answers on the "Learn About Fees by **Evaluating Your Prepaid or Payroll Card**" handout. Last, know your legal rights and how to use them to protect yourself. Find the "Knowing Your Prepaid Card Rights" handout. For example, if you work for an employer who offers to pay your wages on a payroll card, you must be offered at least one other option, such as a paper check or direct deposit into a checking or savings account. Some government benefits may also offer you the choice of receiving benefits on a prepaid card or having them directly deposited into your bank account or your own prepaid card.

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Discussion Questions

(**Leader Notes:** Choose several questions from the following list to begin wrapping up the lesson.)

- Do you have account(s) at a financial institution? Why do you use them?
- Is your paycheck direct deposited or do you have to cash it? How often do you make deposits?
- What are the fees for an overdraft or nonsufficient funds (NSF)?
- What are the minimum balance limits for your account(s)?
- How often do you write checks? How often do you use a debit card? Do you use online banking?
- Do you record all transactions in your check register?
- Do you balance your checkbook monthly?

Are You Ready for Change?

Share: *I encourage you to think about the concepts covered in this lesson “Paying Bills.” What actions or behavior changes do you plan to do?*

(**Leader Note:** Encourage participants to use the “Make a Plan for **Putting Goals into Action**” handout to write down SMART goal(s), supports, resources needed, and Action Plan Step(s). Some participants may choose to keep working on their original SMART goal steps for many weeks. They can revisit and revise their SMART goal as needed to be more realistic and doable. Some may want to add a new SMART goal based on this lesson; you may want a few extra copies of this handout ready. It is important that participants focus on one or maybe two SMART goals at a time so that they do not feel overwhelmed and are confidently making progress to successfully achieve their goals toward desired behavior outcomes.)

Ask: *On a scale of 1 (not at all ready) to 10 (extremely ready), where are you?*

Are you ready to make a change with confidence toward your SMART goal?

How important is the change for you?

How confident are you about making this change? Why?

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Wrap-Up

Share: *The goal of this lesson was to help you learn how to keep track of your income and expenses using a bank or credit union account. You learned several reasons for having a bank account: safety, security, and convenience. You also learned how to use and manage a checking account.*

References

Anderson-Porisch, S. A., Heins, R. K., Petersen, C. M., Hooper, S. E., & Bauer, J. W. (2007). *Dollar works 2: A personal financial education program* (Item 08503). University of Minnesota Extension.

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. (2020). *Your money, your goals: A financial empowerment toolkit*. https://files.consumerfinance.gov/f/documents/cfpb_your-money-your-goals_financial-empowerment_toolkit.pdf

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Choosing how to pay bills can help you save money and time

1. Evaluate the benefits and risks of each bill payment method.
2. Write down questions you have about options that you think could be right for you.

	▶ BENEFITS	RISKS	📄 QUESTIONS I HAVE
Cash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to use and understand • There are often no fees, unlike getting a money order or a prepaid card 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires bills be paid in person • Difficult to prove payment unless you have a receipt • May be stolen 	
Check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convenient once checking account is set up • Can be mailed • Easy to prove payment if there is a dispute • Funds in the checking account are secure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely requires a checking account, which may not be possible if you have a negative banking history • If you don't have enough money in your account to cover your checks, you may be charged with nonsufficient funds or overdraft fees • Can get lost in the mail 	


Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection. (2020). *Your money, your goals: A financial empowerment toolkit*. pp. 87-89.

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	▶ BENEFITS	RISKS	 QUESTIONS I HAVE
Credit card	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can pay bills by phone or online • Can make one-time payments or set up recurring (automatic) payments, which reduce the chance of paying a bill late • Easy to prove payment if there's a dispute • Protected from paying for unauthorized charges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates debt— you are borrowing money when you use a credit card • Costs more if you can't pay the full balance and have to pay interest • Creates another bill to pay once the credit card bill is due 	
Debit card	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convenient and saves time • Can make one-time payments or set up recurring (automatic) payments, which reduce the chance of paying a bill late • Easy to prove payment if there's a dispute 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there isn't enough money in the account when the automatic debit happens, you may have to pay additional fees • If you have an issue with the card and you have to replace it, you will have to remember to update the information with the billers that are being paid with automatic debit 	

Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection. (2020). *Your money, your goals: A financial empowerment toolkit*. pp. 87-89.

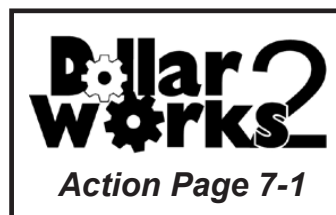
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	▶ BENEFITS	RISKS	 QUESTIONS I HAVE
Money order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to understand • Can be mailed • Can be more secure than a check in some cases, as no personal banking information is on the money order 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be inconvenient because you have to buy money orders • Costs per money order • May be hard to prove payment unless you have the money order receipt and received the receipt payment • Hard to recover if lost 	

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Should I Have a Banking Account?



A bank, thrift (savings and loan), or credit union checking and/or savings account can help you manage your income safely, securely, and conveniently. Money handling services, such as check cashing offered with a bank account, may be less costly than a check-cashing service. A well-managed account will help you develop a record of paying bills and saving money to build a credit history. To build a positive credit history, you need to use your account carefully and correctly. Poor account use habits cost money.

Use these statements to see if you are ready to have a bank account. Respond to each statement below by placing a checkmark in the **YES** or **NO** column.

YES **NO**

- I have a source of income.
- I would deposit money in a timely manner.
- I would add (+) deposits recorded in the check register to find my current account balance.
- I would record all withdrawals made by check, debit card, automatic bill payments, and automatic teller machines (ATM) in the check register.
- I would subtract (-) all withdrawals recorded in the check register to find my current account balance.
- I know the fees the bank will charge if I write a check for more than the amount in my account.
- I have the identification papers needed to open an account.
- I would not share my personal identification number (PIN).
- I would review my account activity at least monthly to check for accuracy.
- I have a safe place to keep account information.

Do I have any **NO** answers checked above? _____

Would I be able to change the **NO** answers to **YES** answers easily? _____

I AM READY!!! _____ **I AM NOT READY YET!!!** _____

Anderson-Porisch, S.A., Heins, R.K., Petersen, C.M., Hooper, S.E., & Bauer, J.W. (2007). *Dollar Works 2: A Personal Financial Education Program* (Item 08503). University of Minnesota Extension. Action Page 7-1 Should I Have a Banking Account, page 156.

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Finding financial products and services that meet your needs

1. Think about why you want or need a financial product or service. Check the boxes of the goal(s) that are most important to you.
2. Read more about the financial products and services that meet those needs and decide which might be the best for you.

GOAL	PRODUCTS TO CONSIDER
<input type="checkbox"/> I want a secure place to keep my money.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate of deposit (CD) • Checking account • Prepaid card • Savings account
<input type="checkbox"/> I want to make purchases without having to carry cash or go into debt.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking account (with linked debit card) • Prepaid card
<input type="checkbox"/> I want a low-cost and easy way to pay and manage my bills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill payment service • Checking account • Money order • Prepaid card
<input type="checkbox"/> I want to pay my bills online or from my mobile device.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill payment service • Checking account • Prepaid card
<input type="checkbox"/> I want access to online or mobile banking (to do things like check my balance online or deposit a check using my phone).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking account • Prepaid card
<input type="checkbox"/> I want my paycheck deposited directly into an account I can access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking account • Payroll card • Prepaid card • Savings account

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GOAL	PRODUCTS TO CONSIDER
<input type="checkbox"/> I want to turn my paycheck into cash.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking cashing service • Checking account • Payroll card • Prepaid card
<input type="checkbox"/> I want to build up savings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate of deposit (CD) • Prepaid card (with savings wallet feature) • Savings account
<input type="checkbox"/> I want to save for education and training for myself or my child.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 529 Plan
<input type="checkbox"/> I want to buy a car.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auto loan
<input type="checkbox"/> I want to buy a house.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mortgage
<input type="checkbox"/> I want to get a small loan quickly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auto title loan • Credit card • Pawn loan • Payday loan
<input type="checkbox"/> I want to build my credit history.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auto loan • Credit builder loan • Credit card • Mortgage • Secured credit card
<input type="checkbox"/> I want to send money to someone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money or wire transfer service • Peer-to-peer transfer service

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Review details of the products and services that you’re considering.
Learn about how each works and where they’re offered.

	Consider this option if you want...	How it works	Where it’s offered
529 Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To save for education and training costs for you or your child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Savings plan that goes into an investment account with special tax benefits. Can be used to pay for qualified educational or training expenses for yourself or dependent children If used for other purposes, may pay income tax and penalty fees on money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial investment firm From your state’s program (find your state’s contract information at plans.collegesavings.org/viewstate.aspx)
Auto loan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To buy a car or truck (see the “Comparing auto loans” tool in Module 6 for more information) To build a credit history 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Borrow money to buy a new or used car or truck Repay monthly over a set period of time (loan term) Loan is secured by the car or truck as collateral, so if you default on the loan your car or truck could be repossessed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bank or credit union Car dealer

Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection. (2020). *Your money, your goals: A financial empowerment toolkit*. pp. 193-203.

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	Consider this option if you want...	How it works	Where it's offered
Auto title loan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To get small loans quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Borrow money for a short term and give up the title to your car or truck until you repay it Often loan amount is for 25 to 50 percent of the cars total value Can be repaid in installments or all at once If you're unable to pay, lender can repossess your car and sell it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online lender Title loan company
Bill payment services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A low-cost, easy way to pay and manage bills To pay bills online from your mobile device (see Module 4: Paying Bills for more information) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay your bill online through a service (from your bank's website, for example) or in person (at a location like a grocery store or large retail store) instead of mailing directly to the company Offered as a feature of certain financial products to help you pay your bills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bank or credit union Check cashing store Grocery, retail, or other store Online providers Prepaid card

Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection. (2020). *Your money, your goals: A financial empowerment toolkit*. pp. 193-203.

GET **READY**, GET **SET**, GET **GOING**. HANDOUT

	Consider this option if you want...	How it works	Where it's offered
Certificate of deposit (CD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A secure place to keep money • To build savings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deposit a fixed amount of money for a specific length of time (for example, \$50 for one year) • Can withdraw that money after the time is up • Pay penalty to withdraw your money early (fee varies and could be more than interest already earned, meaning you could lose money) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank or credit union
Check cashing service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To turn your paycheck into cash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive cash for your paycheck without first depositing it into an account • Often charged a fee • Don't have to have a checking account 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank or credit union • Check cashing store • Grocery, retail, or other store

Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection. (2020). *Your money, your goals: A financial empowerment toolkit*. pp. 193-203.

GET **READY**, GET **SET**, GET **GOING**. HANDOUT

	Consider this option if you want...	How it works	Where it's offered
Checking account	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A secure place to keep money • To make purchases without carrying cash or going into debt (with a debit card) • A low cost, easy way to pay and manage bills • To pay bills online or from your mobile device (see Module 4: Paying Bills for more information) • To bank online or from your mobile device • To have your paycheck directly deposited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deposit or withdraw money from your account at a branch or at an ATM using your debit card • Pay for things by writing checks or using a debit card • Keep track of your balance to avoid overdraft fees or bounced checks with fees when there isn't enough money to cover payments or withdrawals • Usually includes access to mobile and online banking and bill payment services • Deposits are insured in case your bank fails • You have federal rights if money is lost electronically through error or theft 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank or credit union
Credit builder loan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To build credit history 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A loan (usually small) that you repay before you get access to the loan amount • Establishes a good payment history that can improve your credit score 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank or credit union • Non-profit organization

Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection. (2020). *Your money, your goals: A financial empowerment toolkit*. pp. 193-203.

GET **READY**, GET **SET**, GET **GOING**. HANDOUT

	Consider this option if you want...	How it works	Where it's offered
Credit card	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To get small loans quickly To build a credit history 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Borrow money up to an approved credit limit amount Pay at least the monthly minimum until the balance is repaid Charged interest if you don't pay your balance in full each month and other fees if your payment is late May charge an annual fee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Credit card company Large gas station chain (gas credit cards) Large retail stores (store credit cards)
Money order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A low-cost, easy way to pay and manage bills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Like a check, except you pay for the full amount of the money order (plus any fees) upfront when you get it No checking account needed Usually available only in smaller amounts (up to \$1,000) Used to guarantee a payment to a person or company since it can't bounce like a check might because it's already been "funded" during the initial purchase Can be cancelled or reissued if it gets lost or stolen Can be harder to prove payment, since there isn't a bank record that it was cashed (like a check would have) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bank or credit union Check cashing store U.S. Postal Service

Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection. (2020). *Your money, your goals: A financial empowerment toolkit*. pp. 193-203.

GET **READY**, GET **SET**, GET **GOING**. HANDOUT

	Consider this option if you want...	How it works	Where it's offered
Money or wire transfer service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To send money to someone else 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a service to send money to another person or place Often charged a fee Depending on which service you use, delivery method can be to the person's bank account, mobile phone, or cash from a participating location Depending on which service you use, pay for it with cash, credit card, debit card, prepaid card, or from your bank account 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bank or credit union Check cashing store Grocery, retail, or other store Online provider
Mortgage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To buy a house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Borrow money to buy or build a house Repay monthly over set period of time (loan term) Loan is secured by the house as collateral, so if you default on the loan your house could go into foreclosure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bank or credit union Mortgage broker Online lender
Pawn loan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To get small loans quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paid cash in exchange for an item that the pawn shop keeps (like jewelry or electronics) during the loan Loan amount is often much less than actual value of item If loan isn't paid back as agreed, shop can sell the item to cover the debt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pawn shop

Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection. (2020). *Your money, your goals: A financial empowerment toolkit*. pp. 193-203.

GET READY, GET SET, GET GOING. HANDOUT

	Consider this option if you want...	How it works	Where it's offered
Payday loan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To get small loans quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Borrow small amounts of money, generally to be repaid plus fees when you get your paycheck Lender either cashes a check you give them or electronically debits the payment from your checking account when payment is due (usually two weeks after the loan) If loan isn't repaid as agreed, you may be able to renew it by paying another fee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Payday loan provider Some banks or credit unions (usually called a short-term loan rather than a payday loan)
Payroll card	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To have your paycheck directly deposited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employer loads your salary or wages onto a prearranged prepaid card where you can access the funds Can use like a prepaid or debit card and accepted at most merchants May have service fees or inactivity fees Has full consumer protections in case of electronic error or theft Employer must provide you at least one other way to receive your salary or wages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers, working with a financial institution that provides the card
Peer-to-peer transfer service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To send money to someone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service allowing you to electronically transfer funds to another person Send and receive funds using a mobile device or computer May be charged a fee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bank or credit union Online provider

Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection. (2020). *Your money, your goals: A financial empowerment toolkit*. pp. 193-203.

GET **READY**, GET **SET**, GET **GOING**. HANDOUT

	Consider this option if you want...	How it works	Where it's offered
Prepaid card	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A secure place to keep money • To make purchases without carrying cash or going into debt • An easy way to pay and manage bills • To pay bills online or from your mobile device • To bank online or from your mobile device • To have your paycheck directly deposited • To set aside funds for specific purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access money you've paid or loaded in advance that's stored on a card • Accepted at most merchants • Some let you take out money from an ATM or reload money onto the card (often charging a monthly maintenance fee or usage fee) • Some provide separate savings wallet feature that allow you to save for your goals • Funds may be insured in case the bank that offers the card fails • You may have rights if money is lost electronically through error or theft 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank or credit union • Check cashing store • Grocery, retail, or other store • Online provider
Savings account	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A secure place to keep money • To have your paycheck directly deposited • To build savings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deposit and withdraw money from your account when you want • Earns interest • Build up money for savings or emergencies • Not intended for frequent transactions • Deposits are insured in case your bank fails • You have federal rights if money is lost or stolen electronically through error or theft 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank or credit union

Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection. (2020). *Your money, your goals: A financial empowerment toolkit*. pp. 193-203.

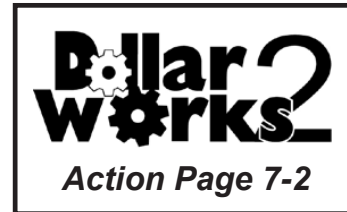
GET **READY**, GET **SET**, GET **GOING**. HANDOUT

	Consider this option if you want...	How it works	Where it's offered
Secured credit card	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To build a credit history 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Borrow money up to an amount that's backed by a deposit you've already paid Charged interest if you don't pay your balance in full each month and late fees if you miss a payment Many charge an annual fee Accepted at the same merchants as other credit cards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bank or credit union Credit card company

Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection. (2020). *Your money, your goals: A financial empowerment toolkit*. pp. 193-203.

GET **READY**, GET **SET**, GET **GOING**. HANDOUT

Shopping for Bank Services



Find the bank, credit union or thrift that best fits your checking and/or savings account needs. This chart will help you ask questions. Compare the answers to make a decision. The information can be obtained by phone, a bank brochure, or the business internet website.

What I need to know	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Name of Bank or Credit Union			
CHECKING ACCOUNT			
Opening deposit needed			
Minimum balance needed			
Monthly service fee			
Check printing cost (how many?)			
Duplicate check cost			
Overdraft/NSF fee			
Overdraft protection cost			
Check copy fee			
Fee to receive canceled checks			
INTEREST EARNING ACCOUNT			
Minimum balance required			
Monthly service fee			
Interest rate paid/APR			
AUTOMATED TELLER MACHINES (ATMs)			
ATM locations			
Withdrawal fees			
ACCOUNT SERVICES			
Direct deposit available?			
Check or cash card fees			
Lost check or cash card fees			
Money order cost			
Cashier's check fee			
Remittance fees (which countries?)			
Bill paying or online banking fees			
Account statement balancing fee			
Electronic Transfer Account (ETA)			

Which checking account costs the least? _____

Which account location is most convenient for me? _____

Which ATM is least costly yet convenient? _____

Anderson-Porisch, S.A., Heins, R.K., Petersen, C.M., Hooper, S.E., & Bauer, J.W. (2007). *Dollar Works 2: A Personal Financial Education Program* (Item 08503). University of Minnesota Extension. Action Page 7-2 Shopping for Bank Services, page 157.

GET **READY**, GET **SET**, GET **GOING**. HANDOUT



Gather what you need before **Opening a checking or savings account**

1. Review the items you need to open the account and check them off as you gather them. Write down any questions you have.
2. Get answers to all the questions listed to make sure you're aware of the terms, costs, and limitations of the account.

WHAT I NEED TO OPEN AN ACCOUNT

QUESTIONS I HAVE

<input type="checkbox"/> A picture ID issued by a state, or the U.S. or foreign government (check which foreign IDs your bank or credit union accepts)	
<input type="checkbox"/> One of these second forms of identification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social Security card ▪ Birth certificate ▪ Bill with your name and address on it 	
<input type="checkbox"/> Your Social Security number or ITIN; if you don't have one, you may be able to open only a no-interest account	
<input type="checkbox"/> Money to put into the account	

QUESTIONS I WILL ASK THE BANK OR CREDIT UNION

RESPONSES

<input type="checkbox"/> Is there a monthly fee? If so, how much is it and can it be waived?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Is direct deposit available?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Do I have to pay for checks?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Are there per-check or transaction fees? How much are they?	

Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection. (2020). *Your money, your goals: A financial empowerment toolkit*. pp. 213-214.

GET **READY**, GET **SET**, GET **GOING**. HANDOUT

QUESTIONS I WILL ASK THE BANK OR CREDIT UNION

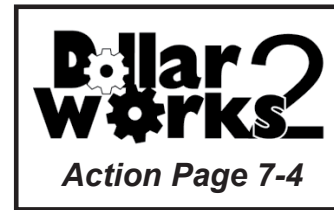
RESPONSES

<input type="checkbox"/> Are there convenient, free ATMs located near where I live, work, or shop?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Is there access to online banking? What's the cost to use?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Is there access to online bill paying services? What's the cost to use?	
<input type="checkbox"/> What happens if I try to spend or withdraw more money than I have in my account (overdraft)?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Are there alerts when my balance gets low?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Will I earn any interest on the money in the account? What is the interest rate?	

Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection. (2020). *Your money, your goals: A financial empowerment toolkit*. pp. 213-214.

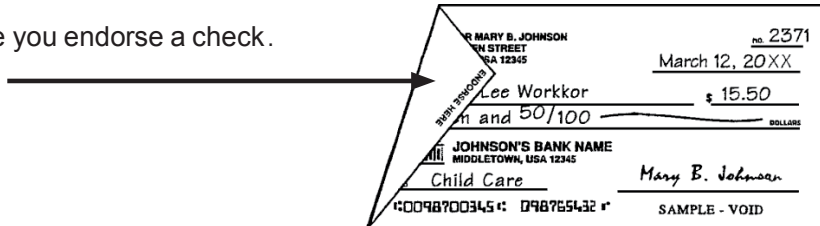
GET READY, GET SET, GET GOING. HANDOUT

Endorsing a Check

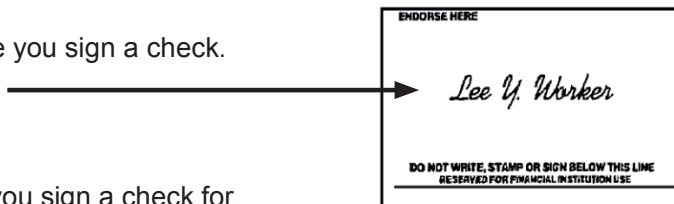


This Action Page shows examples of how Lee Y. Worker would endorse (or sign) a check.

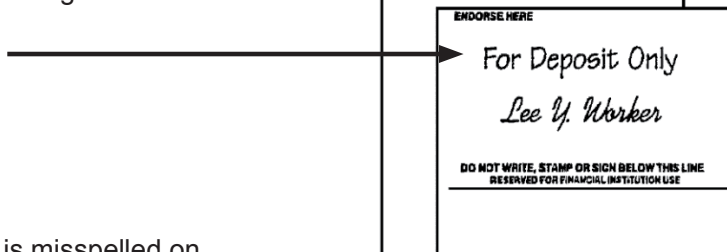
This is where you endorse a check.



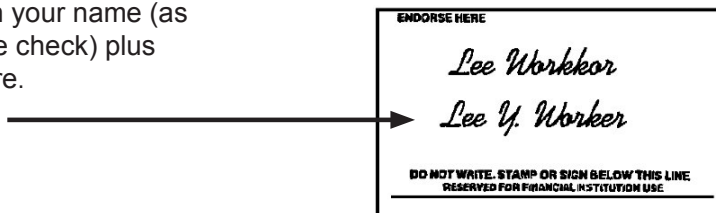
This is where you sign a check.



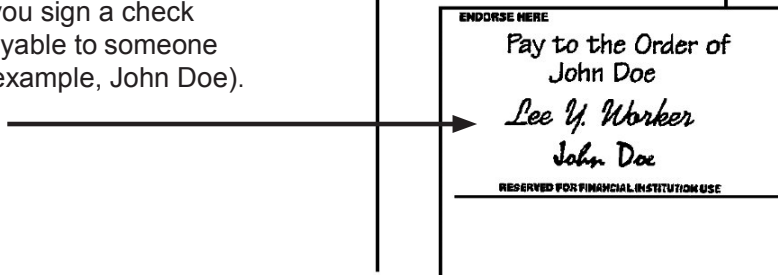
This is how you sign a check for deposit only.



If your name is misspelled on a check, sign your name (as written on the check) plus your signature.



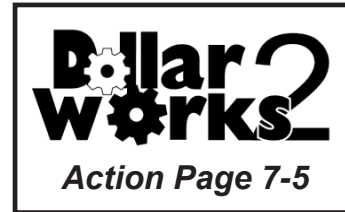
This is how you sign a check to make it payable to someone else (in this example, John Doe).



Anderson-Porisch, S.A., Heins, R.K., Petersen, C.M., Hooper, S.E., & Bauer, J.W. (2007). *Dollar Works 2: A Personal Financial Education Program* (Item 08503). University of Minnesota Extension. Action Page 7-4 Endorsing a Check, page 159.

GET READY, GET SET, GET GOING. HANDOUT

Completing a Deposit Slip



Here are the parts of a typical deposit slip and how you should fill one out.

Write date of deposit here

Sign here to get back cash

Your pre-printed bank routing number

Your pre-printed account number

List the total deposit here (subtract the cash received from the subtotal)

List cash deposits here

List each check (separately) here

Total additional checks (listed on back side) here

Subtotal above amounts here

Write cash amount to get back here

Practice completing a deposit by filling in the sample deposit slip below. Use the following information:

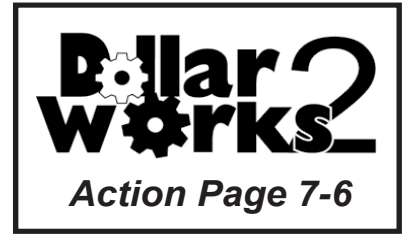
Date: December 28, 20XX
 Cash for deposit: \$11.34
 Checks for deposit: \$156.99 refund from HS Shop
 \$100.00 gift from Mom
 Cash back: \$20.00

DEPOSIT TICKET	Your Name			
	Your Address			
	Your Phone Number			
	DATE _____			
	<small>DEPOSITS MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL</small>			
	SIGN HERE IF CASH RECEIVED FROM DEPOSIT _____			
	YOUR FINANCIAL INSTITUTION			
	CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE			
	<small>DO NOT USE FOR AUTOMATIC PAYMENT OR CHECK TRANSACTIONS</small>			
	:00000000 : 00000 00000.:			
	CURRENCY			
	COIN			
	OR TOTAL FROM REVERSE			
	SUBTOTAL			
	LESS CASH RECEIVED			
	NET DEPOSIT			

Anderson-Porisch, S.A., Heins, R.K., Petersen, C.M., Hooper, S.E., & Bauer, J.W. (2007). *Dollar Works 2: A Personal Financial Education Program* (Item 08503). University of Minnesota Extension. Action Page 7-5 Completing a Deposit Slip, page 160.

GET **READY**, GET **SET**, GET **GOING**. HANDOUT

Completing a Deposit Slip Answer Sheet



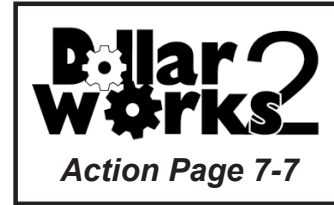
This is how you should have filled out the sample deposit slip.

DEPOSIT TICKET	Your Name Your Address Your Phone Number	CURRENCY			
	Date <u>Dec. 28, 20XX</u> <small>DEPOSITS MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL</small> <u>Dec. 28, 20XX</u> <small>SIGN HERE IF CASH RECEIVED FROM DEPOSIT</small>	COIN	11	3	4
		YOUR FINANCIAL INSTITUTION CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE	H5 Shop OR TOTAL FROM FEDERAL	156	9
	DO NOT USE FOR AUTOMATIC PAYMENT OR CHECK TRANSACTIONS :00000000 : 00000 00000.:	SUBTOTAL	100	-	-
		LESS CASH RECEIVED	268	3	3
		NET DEPOSIT	20	-	-
			248	3	3

Anderson-Porisch, S.A., Heins, R.K., Petersen, C.M., Hooper, S.E., and Bauer, J.W. (2007). *Dollar Works 2: A Personal Financial Education Program* (Item 08503). St. Paul, MN: University of Minnesota Extension, Action Page 7-6 Completing a Deposit Slip Answer Sheet, page 161.

GET READY, GET SET, GET GOING. HANDOUT

Writing a Check



Here are the parts of a typical check and how you should fill one out.

Practice writing a check on the sample check below. Use the following information:

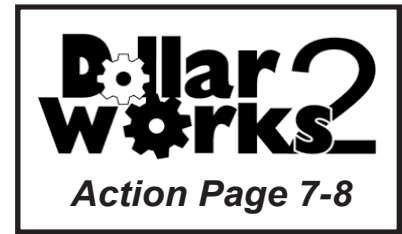
Date: October 12, 20XX
 Amount: \$16.98
 To: PQ Supply Store
 For: pet food
 Written by: Lee Y. Worker

YOUR NAME YOUR ADDRESS YOUR PHONE NUMBER		Date: _____	105 00-6879 770
PAY TO THE ORDER OF _____		\$ <input type="text"/>	
FINANCIAL INSTITUTION Your City, State, Zip Code		Dollars	
Memo _____	_____		
:00000000 : 0000 0000 0 000 0 0.:			

Anderson-Porisch, S.A., Heins, R.K., Petersen, C.M., Hooper, S.E., & Bauer, J.W. (2007). *Dollar Works 2: A Personal Financial Education Program* (Item 08503). University of Minnesota Extension. Action Page 7-7 Writing a check page 162)

GET **READY**, GET **SET**, GET **GOING**. HANDOUT

Writing a Check Answer Sheet



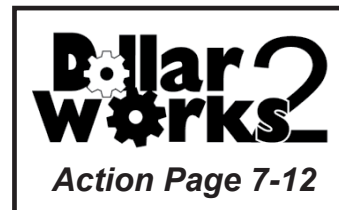
This is how you should have filled out the sample check.

YOUR NAME		105	
YOUR ADDRESS		Date: <u>Oct. 12, 20XX</u>	<u>00-6879</u>
YOUR PHONE NUMBER			<u>770</u>
PAY TO THE ORDER OF	<u>PQ Supply Store</u>	\$	16.98
<u>Sixteen dollars and ⁹⁸/₁₀₀</u>		Dollars	
FINANCIAL INSTITUTION			
Your City, State, Zip Code			
Memo	<u>pet food</u>	<u>Lee Y. Workon</u>	
:00000000 :0000 0000 0 000 0 0.:			

Anderson-Porisch, S.A., Heins, R.K., Petersen, C.M., Hooper, S.E., & Bauer, J.W. (2007). *Dollar Works 2: A Personal Financial Education Program* (Item 08503). University of Minnesota Extension. Action Page 7-8 Writing a Check Answer Sheet, page 163.

GET READY, GET SET, GET GOING. HANDOUT

Balancing a Checkbook



Balancing a checkbook means figuring out how much money is in a checking account. To do this, you need the check book register and the bank statement. Using **Action Page 7-9 and 7-10** (checks 1041 through 1046) and **Action Page 7-11: Understanding a Bank Statement**, follow the steps to balance the sample checking account:

- Step 1.** In the check register, mark (“8” or “4”) each check or other debit and deposit listed on the bank statement. Enter into the register any unlisted checks, debits, automatic payments, bank fees, or deposits. Correct other recording and math errors.
- Step 2.** Find the ending account balance on the bank statement. Write this total on the reconciling chart by “Balance shown on this statement.”
- Step 3.** List any deposits made that do not appear on the bank statement. Total this amount and insert on the “deposits outstanding” line of the chart. Add to bank balance shown on statement.
- Step 4.** List all withdrawals (checks, debits, ATM withdrawals) recorded in the check register but not listed on the bank statement. These have not cleared through the account; they are called “withdrawals outstanding”. Add them together to find the total amount.
- Step 5.** Enter this amount on “withdrawals outstanding” line of chart. Subtract from total deposits.
- Step 6.** Compare the result with amount shown in check register. They should be the same.

Checks or withdrawals outstanding to the account		Balance shown on this statement	\$
Check Number/Debit	Check/Debit Amount		
		Add deposits outstanding (+)	\$
		Total	\$
		Subtract total of withdrawals outstanding (-)	\$
		***Balance	\$
Total	\$	*** This balance should agree with the check register balance.	

What was total amount of withdrawals outstanding to the account? _____

If the balance between the chart and the bank register does not agree, what steps could be taken to find errors? _____

Anderson-Porisch, S.A., Heins, R.K., Petersen, C.M., Hooper, S.E., & Bauer, J.W. (2007). *Dollar Works 2: A Personal Financial Education Program* (Item 08503). University of Minnesota Extension. Action Page 7-12 Balancing a Checkbook, page 167.

GET **READY**, GET **SET**, GET **GOING**. HANDOUT

□ GETTING STARTED

Evaluating your prepaid or payroll card

Carefully read the terms and fee descriptions when you get your prepaid or payroll card to learn how much you'll pay each month to have and use your card.

Each prepaid and payroll card has its own set of rules and fees. Before you use your card, it's important to understand the fees you'll pay to maintain your account, make purchases, and withdraw money. After adding up the fees, you can compare cards and also compare the cost of a card to the costs of a bank or credit union account.

Most prepaid cards have their own policies about loss, theft, and errors. Information about these policies can be found in the cardholder agreement.

Most prepaid cards also offer details about terms and fees on their website, so you can look online if you want to compare cards before buying one.

What to do

- **Review the definitions** of common prepaid card fees so you know what they are.
- **Find the terms and fees** for your prepaid or payroll card. These are usually on the back or inside of the card packaging
- **Get all the facts.** Make sure you have all the answers about how the card works and what fees are involved. Consider researching prepaid cards, so you can read about all the features before you buy it.

A step further

A prepaid or payroll card can also give you the services that you would get with a debit card linked to a checking account. Review the "Finding financial products and services" tool to learn more. If your employer pays wages by payroll card, you must be offered at least one other option to get paid. Learn more with the "Knowing your prepaid card rights" handout.

GET **READY**, GET **SET**, GET **GOING**. HANDOUT

DEFINITIONS OF COMMON PREPAID CARD FEES

All fees vary from card to card, so check your cardholder agreement for terms, conditions, and costs. Here are some of the fees you might see.

Additional card	For a second card when adding another person as an authorized user to your account
ATM withdrawal	To use your card to withdraw money from an ATM; usually varies depending on if the ATM is within your card provider’s network or not
Balance inquiry	To check your card balance using certain methods, like at an ATM or by calling customer service (there might be a fee for some methods or if you check often)
Bill payment	To pay a bill online through the card provider’s website; may be charged a fee for each bill paid
Card cancellation	To cancel a card at any time (there usually isn’t a fee); you might pay a fee to get a check for the remaining balance on the card
Card replacement	To replace your card if it’s lost, stolen, or damaged
Card-to-card transfer	To transfer money between two prepaid cards (also called a person-to-person transfer fee)
Cash reload	For adding money to your card at a retail location
Decline	If you attempt to use your card for something that costs more than the amount of money you have left on your card
Foreign transaction	When you use your card in a foreign country or to pay in a foreign currency
Inactivity	If you don’t use your card for a certain period of time
Monthly	A fixed fee you pay each month, even if you don’t use your card, that’s automatically deducted from your account balance (often waived if you sign up for direct deposit)
Paper statement	If you request paper statements for your card transactions
Transaction	Charged every time you use the card for certain types of transactions (sometimes called a “per purchase fee”)

Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection. (2020). *Your money, your goals: A financial empowerment toolkit*. p. 220.

GET **READY**, GET **SET**, GET **GOING**. HANDOUT



Learn about fees by **Evaluating your prepaid or payroll card**

1. Look at your cardholder agreement to answer the questions about fees and card protections.
2. Write in the response for each question. If there is no fee, enter \$0.
3. Use these answers to help manage the cost of having and using your card.

Don't forget to register your prepaid card to get all the protections offered.

Adding money and getting cash

Questions to ask before using your card	Notes
<p>What's the fee to withdraw money from an ATM that's in-network? That's out-of-network?</p> <p>Things to consider: You may pay zero or smaller ATM fees by using your prepaid card at in-network ATMs, depending on the terms of your cardholder agreement.</p> <p>Your payroll card may allow you a certain number of free ATM withdrawals each month.</p>	
<p>What's the fee for reloading my prepaid card with cash at a retail location? Can I reload my card at the retail location where I purchased it?</p> <p>Things to consider: Many retail stores don't allow you to reload your card at the store and those that do sometimes charge a fee. Most prepaid cards provide other options for loading money to your card without a fee, such as direct deposit.</p> <p>Payroll cards usually don't allow you to reload with cash.</p>	
<p>What's the fee for spending or withdrawing money in another country?</p> <p>Things to consider: Also called a currency conversion fee, this is usually a percentage of your purchase, withdrawal, or other transaction, rather than a flat fee.</p>	

Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection. (2020). *Your money, your goals: A financial empowerment toolkit*. pp. 221-224.

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Checking my balance

Questions to ask before using your card	Notes
<p>What ways can I check my balance and what do they cost? How do I check my balance for free?</p> <p>Things to consider: Most cards offer at least one free way to check your balance, such as online or request by email or text.</p>	
<p>Is there a fee for receiving a paper statement in the mail?</p> <p>Things to consider: You may be able to go online to get a statement, or at least a list of your recent card purchases and other transactions, without a fee.</p>	

Loss and errors

Questions to ask before using your card	Notes
<p>What's the fee for replacing a lost, stolen, or damaged card?</p> <p>Things to consider: Write down your card number and the customer service phone number and keep it in a safe place. Call customer service right away to report a lost or stolen card.</p>	
<p>What protections do I have if my card is lost or stolen? Am I responsible for the charges?</p> <p>Things to consider: Your rights to recover money taken from your card account depend on what type of card it is, what your contract promises, and how quickly you report the loss after you discover it. Call your provider right away if your card or PIN is lost or stolen or if you see unauthorized charges.</p>	
<p>What protections do I have if there are charges I didn't authorize or some other error with my card?</p> <p>Things to consider: If your card is a payroll card or a certain type of government benefit card, or if you receive federal payments onto your card, you may have certain "error resolution" rights that require that you get your money back after an error or theft (as long as you report it promptly).</p>	

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Managing my card

Questions to ask before using your card	Notes
<p>What’s the monthly fee for having my card?</p> <p>Things to consider: Some prepaid cards that charge a monthly fee may waive the fee under certain circumstances, such as if you arrange to have your pay or benefits directly deposited into your account. Payroll cards usually don’t charge a monthly fee.</p>	
<p>Will I be charged a fee if I don’t use my card for a certain length of time? If so, what is the fee and how long can I go without using my card before I am charged?</p> <p>Things to consider: If your card charges inactivity fees, try to see what kinds of transactions or activity you can conduct to avoid the fee. Many cards don’t charge inactivity fees.</p>	
<p>What’s the fee if I get an additional card for an authorized user?</p> <p>Things to consider: That additional card lets someone else spend your money, so think carefully about whether to add an authorized user to your account. Any new authorized users will have to register online or call customer service to verify their identity.</p>	
<p>Is there a fee to cancel my card? What about to receive a check for the remaining unused balance after I cancel?</p> <p>Things to consider: You can spend or withdraw the remaining funds on your card before you cancel the card to avoid a potential fee for sending you any unused funds. Most cards don’t charge to cancel the account.</p>	

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Using my card

Questions to ask before using your card	Notes
<p>What’s the fee for paying bills through my card provider’s website?</p> <p>Things to consider: Consider whether there are free ways to pay your bills, such as setting it up for the biller to debit your card account.</p>	
<p>What’s the fee to transfer money between two cards?</p> <p>Things to consider: Not all card providers allow you to transfer funds to another person using the same type of card.</p> <p>Compare this cost with other money transfer services.</p>	
<p>Is there a fee if my transaction is declined because there’s not enough money on the card?</p> <p>Things to consider: To avoid a decline fee, check your card balance before making a purchase to make sure there’s enough money on the card. Many cards offer free ways to check your balance, such as with a mobile app, by text message, or calling a toll-free number.</p>	
<p>Is there a fee for each transaction I make? Do I have a choice between a “pay-as-you-go” plan that charges a fee per transaction and a monthly fee plan?</p> <p>Things to consider: Some cards let you choose between a plan that charges transaction fees and one that charges a single monthly fee. Depending on how much you use your card in a month, one plan could be significantly cheaper than the other.</p>	
<p>Can I set aside funds on the card for a specific purpose?</p> <p>Things to consider: Some prepaid cards offer a savings wallet feature that allows you to save for your goals.</p>	

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Knowing your prepaid card rights

You have certain rights under the law and the terms of your cardholder agreement for your prepaid card. It's important to know your rights and how to exercise them.

YOU'LL HAVE THE MOST PROTECTION IF YOU REGISTER YOUR PREPAID CARD

Your use of a prepaid card might be limited until it's registered. Instructions for how to register your card are usually provided on the card packaging. Registration typically provides you with more protections if your card is lost or stolen. Some prepaid card providers may require you to register your card and verify your identity when you buy or receive the prepaid card, or soon after.

CHOOSING HOW YOU GET PAID

Some employers might pay you only using a traditional paper check. If your employer offers to pay your wages by payroll card, you must be offered at least one other option. That option might be a paper check, or it could be direct deposit to an account of your choosing (such as a checking or savings account or your own prepaid card). Some states require employers to offer paper checks, while others permit employers to mandate electronic pay for wages. In those cases, you might have to choose between a payroll card and direct deposit.

CHOOSING HOW YOU RECEIVE SOME GOVERNMENT BENEFITS

For some types of government benefits, you may have a choice between receiving the benefits on a government-arranged prepaid card and having them directly deposited into your bank account or onto your own prepaid card.

PROTECTIONS FROM FRAUD AND ERRORS FOR PAYROLL CARDS, SOME GOVERNMENT BENEFIT CARDS, AND FEDERAL PAYMENTS

You have protections in case of an unauthorized transaction or other error if you are paid through a payroll card arranged by your employer, receive certain types of government benefits through a government-arranged card, or receive any payments from the federal government onto your own prepaid card. For example, you generally can't be held responsible for unauthorized charges or other errors on these cards if you report them promptly. The card provider may be required by federal law to credit the disputed amount to your account while investigating the problem if the investigation will take longer than 10 business days. **You should call your card provider as soon as you notice your card is missing or notice charges you don't recognize.**

PROTECTIONS FOR LOSS, THEFT, OR ERRORS ON OTHER PREPAID CARDS

Depending on your card, you may also have some protections in case of an unauthorized transaction or other error in your account. Check your cardholder agreement to find out about your specific card's terms and conditions.