

# Understand your credit report

Once you have requested your free credit report, you can use the information below to see what it means and to make sure there are no errors.

It is easier to review your credit report successfully when you know and understand all the parts, what they mean, and how they affect your credit situation.

Reports can be formatted differently or use different words, but they cover the same information, described below.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| File number: 12345678<br>Date issued: 9/30/2017  |   |
| <b>Personal information</b>  |   |
| <b>Name:</b> Miguel Smith  | <b>SSN:</b> XXX-XX-1234   |
| <b>Other names:</b><br>Miguel S Smith<br>Miguel Simon Smith  | <b>Date of birth:</b> 12-1-1980<br><b>Telephone number:</b> 555-555-1000  |
| <b>Addresses reported:</b><br>457 First Street, Littletown, MI 09876 13476<br>Avenue A, Big City, WI 43526                     |   |
| <b>Employment data reported</b>  |   |
| <b>Employer name:</b> Riviera Restaurants<br><b>Position:</b> Manager<br><b>Date reported:</b> 3/2013<br><b>Hired:</b> 11/2010 | <b>Employer:</b> Freer Chiropractic College<br><b>Date reported:</b> 6/2008<br><b>Position:</b> Food services<br><b>Hired:</b> 3/2008 |

## Personal information

Credit reporting companies use your personal information to confirm you are the person who opened the accounts listed on the report. Check this section carefully to make sure your information is right and is up to date. The wrong name or Social Security number could mean you could be charged for another person's debt.

|   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Public records</b>   |                                   |
| Big City Wisconsin Court Docket# 200900001467<br>515 C St, NE, Big City, WI 43528 |                                   |
| <b>Date filed:</b> 8/3/2015   | <b>Amount:</b> \$11,987           |
| <b>Type:</b> Chapter 7 Bankruptcy   | <b>Responsibility:</b> Individual |

## Public records

Bankruptcies and, in some cases, foreclosures are the only public records that appear on a credit report from the three nationwide credit reporting companies. Public court records can have a negative effect on your credit record and scores. Bankruptcies can appear on your credit report for as long as 10 years. Negative information on your credit report may lead to a higher interest rate or being turned down for credit.

## Account information

In the account information section, your credit accounts are displayed one by one. Lenders typically update the information monthly. The information usually includes your payment history, whether an account is current or past due, your balance, and the type of loan or account. If your credit report lists the name of a lender that is unfamiliar to you, it might be the name of the lender's parent company or a new company the lender has joined. Check the fine print on your monthly bill or contact the lender if you are not sure. If your credit report shows an account that is not yours, you have the right to dispute it.

Account information from your credit card company and other lenders appears on your credit report as satisfactory or in good standing, or else as adverse or potentially negative.

| Account information                           |          |                              |          |          |          |          |
|---|----------|------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Littletown Bank (B62391), Account #2010004637 |          |                              |          |          |          |          |
| Balance: \$14,285                             |          | Pay status: 30 days past due |          |          |          |          |
| Date updated: 8/31/2019                       |          | Account type: Automobile     |          |          |          |          |
| High balance: \$16,500                        |          | Responsibility: Individual   |          |          |          |          |
| Past due: \$395                               |          | Date opened: 2/5/2019        |          |          |          |          |
| Terms: \$395/month 48 months                  |          | Payment received: \$395      |          |          |          |          |
| Account type: Automobile                      |          | Last payment made: 7/5/2019  |          |          |          |          |
|   | 8/5/19   | 7/5/19                       | 6/5/19   | 5/5/19   | 4/5/19   | 3/5/19   |
| Balance                                       | \$14,285 | \$14,680                     | \$14,988 | \$15,294 | \$15,598 | \$15,901 |
| Scheduled payment                             | \$395    | \$395                        | \$395    | \$395    | \$395    | \$395    |
| Amount Paid                                   | \$0      | \$395                        | \$395    | \$395    | \$395    | \$395    |
| Past Due                                      | \$395    | \$0                          | \$0      | \$0      | \$0      | \$0      |
| Rating  | 30       | OK                           | OK       | OK       | OK       | OK       |

## Satisfactory accounts

Satisfactory accounts are in good standing because the credit reporting company has not received recent negative reports. An account is usually still reported as current if paid within 30 days of the due date. Paying on time protects your credit record and credit scores.

| Collections                                  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| Reliable collections (Y76381); Account #3629 |                            |
| Original creditor: ABC Megastore             | Amount placed: \$2,500     |
| Opened: 7/2/2013                             | Account type: Open         |
| Balance: \$1,000                             | Responsibility: Individual |

## Potentially negative accounts

Accounts that are past due or in collections are listed as adverse or potentially negative. A credit reporting company generally reports most negative information, like missed payments or collections, for seven years. You may see that your original loan has a different company name. Lenders sometimes ask outside companies to collect debts that are owed to them. Or, they sometimes sell the debt. In those cases, the new company that owns the debt is listed on your credit report together with the original lender.

## Credit inquiries

Credit reporting companies receive inquiries from businesses, lenders, or employers when they ask to review your credit report. The reason for the inquiry determines whether it could affect your credit scores.

| Inquiries made to your account  |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| Inquiries that display to others<br>The following companies have received your credit report. |                      |
| Auto Loan Store<br>90 President Lane, Big City, WI 43529                                      | Requested on: 6/2013 |

## Hard inquiries

A hard inquiry to review your credit report is made by a lender when you apply for credit. Hard inquiries can affect your credit scores because most credit scoring models look at how recently you applied for credit and how frequently you do so.

| Promotional inquiries   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| The following companies received your name, address and other limited information about you so they could make a firm offer of credit or insurance. They did not receive your full credit report. These are not displayed to others and do not affect your credit scores. |                      |
| Dress for Success Fashion House<br>31 Fashion Lane, Big City, WI 43530  | Requested on: 7/2016 |

| Account review inquiries  |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| The companies listed below obtained information from your consumer report for the purpose of an account review of business transaction. These are not displayed to others and do not affect your credit scores. |                      |
| Bank of Wisconsin<br>457 State Street, Big City, WI 43532   | Requested on: 6/2017 |

## Soft inquiries

A soft inquiry is recorded when your credit file is reviewed for reasons other than your application for credit—for example, when a lender checks an existing account, when you request your own credit report, and sometimes when a potential lender prescreens you for a credit offer. Soft inquiries do not affect your credit scores.

## Once you've checked your reports, keep up the good work

### Make checking your credit report a regular habit

You are entitled to request a free copy of your credit report, once every 12 months, from each of the three nationwide credit reporting companies: Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion. In addition, until the end of 2026, you can get six free credit reports every 12 months from Equifax.

Visit [annualcreditreport.com](https://annualcreditreport.com), call (877) 322-8228, or download and complete the Annual Credit Report Request Form and mail it to the address on the form. When you visit the site, you may see steps to view more frequently updated reports online. This gives you a greater ability to monitor changes in your credit.

### Take action promptly to correct errors

You can use sample letters to dispute errors on your credit report or respond to debt collection efforts. These letters are available at [consumerfinance.gov/askcfpb/314](https://consumerfinance.gov/askcfpb/314).

### Take steps to improve or better understand your credit





You can see tips and information at [consumerfinance.gov/consumer-tools/credit-reports-and-scores](https://consumerfinance.gov/consumer-tools/credit-reports-and-scores).

## About us

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau regulates the offering and provision of consumer financial products and services under the federal consumer financial laws, and educates and empowers consumers to make better informed financial decisions.

Learn more at [consumerfinance.gov](https://consumerfinance.gov)

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