

# 10 UNUSUAL WAYS TO RAISE YOUR CREDIT SCORE

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It's possible to raise your credit score with some simple changes. Credit scores affect insurance rates, loan interest rates, and other important financial products. ***A higher score can lead to a brighter financial future.***

Consider using these ideas to raise your credit score:

**1. Piggyback on good credit histories.** You can use a family member's or friend's good credit history to help you.

- If you add yourself to an account in good standing, your credit score will go up.
- Most credit cards allow users to add family members and distant relatives to their accounts.
- You'll be an authorized user on the account and able to make purchases and pay the bills.

**2. Keep old accounts open.** It's important to keep older accounts like credit cards open because they influence credit scores. ***Credit scores can decrease if you close accounts.***

- Account age also matters. Scores are affected positively by older accounts because they show a history of maintaining credit.
- Plus, these old accounts add to the amount of credit you have access to, thus lowering the percentage of available credit you're using, which raises your score.

3. **Set up auto-payments.** Automatic payments are a convenient way to pay bills every month. They're also an easy way to avoid a late payment and a fee. Auto-payments can help improve your credit score by preventing these issues.
4. **Pay credit card bills more than once a month.** Credit scores rely on a debt utilization ratio. This ratio compares how much debt you have to the size of your credit limit.
  - One way to improve credit scores is to lower the debt utilization ratio.
  - Paying your credit card bills more than once a month can help you improve the score by decreasing the ratio. ***Extra payments lower your debt while increasing how much credit is available during the month.***
5. **Ask for good-will deletions.** It's possible to ask credit reporting agencies and lenders for good-will deletions.
  - Late fees, late payments, or unpaid bills can affect credit scores. A good-will deletion is a request to remove these items based on a prior good history. ***This method works best if you're a long-term customer with few issues.***
6. **Avoid pre-approved offers.** The pre-approved offers that come in the mail usually require a credit check, and multiple credit checks affect your credit score by lowering it.
  - It's also beneficial to avoid creating too many accounts. It's easier to manage a smaller number, so you're less likely to make mistakes.
7. **Avoid new utility accounts.** Utilities like gas, electricity, and phone services require credit checks that lower scores. It's better to transfer utilities to a new address instead of opening new ones.
8. **Remember library fines.** Did you return all of your library books? ***Unpaid fines can decrease your credit score,*** and libraries can send unpaid bills to collection agencies.

**9. Avoid online quote comparisons.** Online quotes for insurance or loans count as inquiries on your credit score. These credit checks affect the score each time you ask for a quote.

- Getting quotes from multiple websites can lead to many credit checks. It's best to narrow down the options before getting a quote, so your score isn't affected.

**10. Establish long-term credit.** Instead of switching to a new company that promises lower rates for a few months, consider staying with the previous one.

- Credit scores go up based on positive, long-term relationships with lenders.
- It may be tempting to take the lower credit card offer from another company to move balances, but your score may suffer.

***It's possible to raise credit scores with several strategies.*** Careful planning is an important part of getting a higher score.