



What to Do With Your Credit Report and How to Fix Errors

Once you receive your credit report, go through each item carefully and make sure all of the information is correct.

Your credit report contains four types of information:

- Identifying information
 - Full name
 - Addresses from the past two years
 - Social Security Number
- Account (or credit) history
 - Payment history for accounts that have been open at any point during the past seven years
 - Includes:
 - Credit limit for each account
 - Whether you made any late payments
 - Monthly balances
- Public records
 - Bankruptcies may remain on your report up to 10 years after the filing date
 - Court judgments or foreclosures
- Inquiries
 - How many times your credit report has been requested due to:
 - Your own inquiries (for example, AnnualCreditReport.com)
 - Credit card, mortgage, auto loan, or other credit applications
 - Promotional offers made by businesses

Potential errors include:

- Accounts that are not yours
- Incorrect labeling of payments as "late"
- Incorrect balances
- Incorrect account numbers
- Incorrect creditors/companies
- Incorrect dates of last activity or charge-offs
- Incorrect credit limits or high credit amounts
- Missing account information
- Incorrect personal information

If you spot an error, contact both the credit bureau and the creditor immediately to dispute the incorrect information. Since there are three different credit bureaus all operating independently, an error on one report may or may not show up on your other two reports. It is up to you to check your report from all three bureaus and to contact each bureau separately to correct any errors.

Each credit bureau has a different dispute process:

- Equifax – <https://www.ai.equifax.com/CreditInvestigation/>
- Experian - <http://www.experian.com/disputes/main.html>
- TransUnion - <http://www.transunion.com/personal-credit/credit-disputes/credit-disputes.page>

It may be best to make your dispute by mail because then you can start a “paper trail” and make copies of the documentation. Keep detailed records of all of your correspondence. More information is available on the **Check Your Free Credit Report Campaign’s** website.

If you suspect that the error on your report is a result of identity theft, you will need to file a dispute to correct it. For information about identity theft and steps to take if you have been victimized, visit the Federal Trade Commission’s website, <http://www.ftc.gov/idtheft/>