



Money Zone: Establishing and Repairing Credit

Each member can print this out and have it available to follow and take notes.

Establishing credit in your own name (or fixing the credit you already have) will help you buy a house, a car, or any other major purchase you desire—at the very best rates. Improving your credit is easier than you think. We'll show you how.

Icebreaker

When did you first use a credit card—your own or someone else's? How old were you? What did you buy?

Things to Talk About

Is Big Brother watching you? When it comes to your credit history, it seems that way. Most people go merrily on their way, living their lives, while computers in back rooms are keeping track of their every financial move. It is only when they get turned down for credit that most people realize that someone's been keeping track, and it's not them.

Pick the question your Club finds most interesting. If there's still time, pick another one -- or make up your own!

- What actions have you taken to improve your credit? How did they work out?
- What is the best credit decision you have ever made?
- Have you ever ordered a copy of your credit report? What did it reveal?
- Have you ever found an inaccuracy on your credit report? How did you correct it?

AS USUAL...

Catch Yourself Doing Something Right

Share your success with your fellow Club members:

- What Money Miracle (unexpected good fortune) did you have since last meeting?
- What did you do since last meeting to become a Money Star (a money-savvy gal in charge of her finances)? How did you further your financial goals?

What Will You Do Today?

Choose one **Small Step** to do before next meeting, and pledge to the group to do it. To select that 15-minute exercise, ask yourself these questions:

- What are your money challenges before the next meeting?
- What do you need to focus on?
- What is the next step in your life -- and what can you do before the next meeting to achieve it?

Don't drive yourself crazy. Remember, you can do anything for 15 minutes! For example:

- I will spend 15 minutes ordering a copy of my credit report (online, if possible, so I can read it immediately). I will review my account for mistakes and dispute any errors.

Or

- I will spend 15 minutes applying for a new credit card to improve my credit score. I will find the best card by checking at www.bankrate.com.

Or

- I will spend 15 minutes thinking about my credit history. What have I done well? How can I improve my credit habits for the future?

You get the picture. This is like Goldilocks. Don't try to do too much. Don't try to do too little. Do it just right.

[More Cool Ideas for Small Steps](#)

Money Magic

Choose one affirmation to motivate you to achieve your goals, something like:

- I am staying on track to achieve my financial goals.
- I am committed to self-improvement.
- I am becoming a Money Star.
- I am taking control of my financial life.

The Money Zone for Next Meeting

Cast your vote: Does your Money Club want to stay in this Money Zone, or do you want to move on to the next Money Zone?

If your group decides to Stay in the Zone then, future Money Star, check out these fun articles so you can discuss them at your next meeting. Even if your group decides to move to the next Zone, you still can explore these on your own.

Unmasking the Secrets of Credit Scores http://wife.org/features_bottomline_creditscores.htm

Discussion questions:

- In which area of credit scoring do you need the most improvement?
- How can you use this information to improve your credit score?

Applying Credit Wisdom <http://credit.about.com/cs/creditrepair/a/060403.htm>

Discussion questions:

- What can you do now to improve your credit rating?
- Which resources do you think you would find most helpful in your daily financial life?

Credit After Divorce http://wife.org/suddenly_single/creditafterdivorce.htm

Discussion questions:

- How does it feel to take control of your credit history during this difficult time?
- What are the first steps of your new financial life?

Just for You

Before the next Money Club meeting, do the Just for You Exercise called "Credit Beginnings and Credit Fixes"

<http://moneyclubs.com/moneyzones/credit-beginningsandfixes.htm>

Don't skip a meeting if you don't get this done. Half of life is showing up, Money Clubs included. You can tell the group you didn't get it done, and they will encourage you (not bug you) to make a date to do it soon.

Discussion questions for your club meeting:

- How can you remind yourself to check your credit files regularly for errors?
- What can you do to improve your credit score over the next few years?