

# Managing Your Money

## Be Fiscally Smart—Know Your Numbers

(NAPSA)—Just as blood pressure, weight, body mass index (BMI) and cholesterol count are numbers you need to know to be healthy, there are important numbers for fiscal fitness, too. Your account balances, credit card limits and interest rate, credit score, and retirement savings add up to form a picture of your financial health.

Think numbers are mind numbing? Think again. Your financial institution can help with online tools and advice to shape up your wallet and your funds for the future.

### Account Balances

It's important to keep your checking account balanced so you don't spend more than you have. Before you withdraw money, write a check or use your debit card—know your balance.

Most financial service providers let you check your balance by phone, online, at an ATM or at a banking location. If you bank online or with your mobile device, by setting up e-mail and text alerts, you'll always know when you are close to your limit.

### Credit Card Balance

Every credit card has its limit. If you find yourself using more than two cards, you may be spending more than you can afford. If you have multiple cards with different balances, talk to your primary bank about consolidating your debt to get one interest rate.

### Credit Score

Credit scores are a vital part of your financial health. They help lenders and others predict how likely you are to make payments on time. Credit scores affect whether you can get credit and what you pay for it.

You can learn about and keep track of important numbers, auto loans, mortgages and other kinds of credit through many financial service providers.

The single most effective thing



**Many financial service providers help you learn and keep track of important numbers.**

that you can do to improve your credit score is to pay your bills on time. Also, be aware that you will have a better score if you regularly use no more than 25 percent of your total credit, compared to 50 percent.

### Know How Much You Need To Retire

Retirement planning has to be an ongoing process. It's never too late to revisit the objectives and strategies you set for your retirement plan. People should plan for what they need for a 30-year period (and that time could be longer for women), in which they may not be employed full-time. To prepare for this, people need to save, and they need to figure out how they want to replace their paycheck for the later years in life.

### How To Get Started

Go to your bank's Web site or a branch and speak with an expert about personal financial management tools. For example, Wells Fargo's online Smarter Credit resource center has information, tips and tools to help you take charge and improve your credit, and its Retirement Center can help you plan and get on track for your retirement.

### Learn More

Go to [www.wellsfargo.com](http://www.wellsfargo.com) and [www.handsonbanking.org](http://www.handsonbanking.org) to learn more about how to take charge of your own finances and reach your goals.