

MANAGING YOUR MONEY

Spend More Wisely With Debit Cards

(NAPSA)—When you use a credit card, you're borrowing money. Going into debt. When you use cash, you have to wait for change. Checks can be a hassle, and many places don't accept them. There is a way, however, to pay for purchases quickly and easily, without having to pay interest on borrowed money: debit cards.

There are a number of benefits to using debit cards for transactions:

- **Convenience**—Using a debit card simplifies the payment process; it eliminates the need to fill out a check, present ID, give out your personal information and wait for it to be verified.

- **Easier Budgeting**—Since the money comes directly from your checking account, you spend only what you have; you don't accumulate debts to be repaid later.

- **Replacing Cash and Checkbook**—Carry less cash and leave the checkbook at home; you can still purchase items, but you don't have to worry about carrying money.

- **Security**—Anyone can spend cash you lose, but with debit cards, there are certain protections such as a PIN your issuer can tell you about.

- **Internet Purchases**—Debit (and credit) cards are currently the only practical way to make Internet purchases.

- **Easier Travel**—It can save you from stocking up on traveler's checks and is accepted at millions of merchant locations worldwide.

- **Save Your Cash**—Using a debit card for purchases doesn't deplete the available cash in your wallet.



A debit card can help keep your spending down.

So what exactly is a debit card, and how does it work? A debit card, or check card is tied to your checking account and acts as a check. The money is deducted directly from your checking account at the time of purchase. Unlike a credit card, you won't receive a bill later.

That's what makes the debit card such a useful budgeting tool. Just as you would when you write a check, you track debit card purchases in your checkbook register, so you know immediately what you spent and what you have left. Impulse buys tend to be inhibited because you know that once the money is spent, it's gone.

So, if you've ever found yourself at month's end wondering where the money went, take heart. With a little commitment to sticking to a budget, and a wise budgeting tool such as a debit card, you can avoid overspending and revive your cash flow.

To learn more about debit cards, contact your bank or go to www.acecusa.org.