

# Financial health tips



## Create a budget

- Having a budget will help you stay in control of your finances
- Create yours at [SallieMae.com/CollegePlanningToolbox](https://SallieMae.com/CollegePlanningToolbox)



## Pay on time

- Late payments and collections may impact your FICO® Score
- If you have a hard time paying your bills on time, consider signing up for an automated bill pay service
- If you're having trouble paying your bills, contact your creditors



## Manage your accounts

- Keep your balances low
  - According to FICO, high balances on your credit cards and other revolving credit can lower your FICO® Score. Consider increasing your monthly payments until all balances are manageable
- According to FICO, in general, having credit cards doesn't hurt your FICO® Score as long as you are making payments on time



## Monitor your credit

- Request a free copy of your credit report every 12 months at [annualcreditreport.com](https://annualcreditreport.com)
- Check for errors to ensure you haven't become the victim of identity theft



## Correct mistakes

- If you find mistakes on your credit history, contact credit bureaus directly
  - Equifax: 1-800-685-1111
  - Experian: 1-888-397-3742
  - TransUnion: 1-800-916-8800

Learn more at [SallieMae.com/FICO](https://SallieMae.com/FICO)



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