

# UNDERSTANDING YOUR CREDIT

*A CLEAR, SUPPORTIVE GUIDE FROM*



At Nordstrom Federal Credit Union, we believe credit should be something you understand, not something you fear. When you know how credit works and how lenders look at it, you can move forward with more confidence and make decisions that support your goals.

**This guide is here to help you feel informed, prepared,  
and supported every step of the way.**





## WHAT A CREDIT SCORE REALLY IS

A credit score is a snapshot of how you have used credit over time. It helps lenders understand patterns, such as how consistently you make payments and how much credit you typically use.

It is not a judgment of who you are or where you are headed. It is simply one tool used in the lending process.

**Credit scores are commonly reviewed when you apply for things like:**

- [Auto loans](#)
- [Personal loans](#)
- [Credit cards](#)
- [Home-related financing](#)

Scores can change over time. With the right habits and guidance, improvement is always possible.



## WHAT IMPACTS YOUR CREDIT THE MOST

Several factors influence your credit score, but a few carry more weight than others.



### Payment History

Paying your bills on time is the single biggest factor. Even small delays can have an impact, while consistent on-time payments help build trust over time.



### Credit Usage

This refers to how much of your available credit you are using. Lower balances generally signal responsible credit management.



### Length of Credit History

A longer history gives lenders more information to work with. That said, everyone starts somewhere.



### New Credit Activity

Applying for or opening multiple accounts in a short period of time can temporarily affect your score. Thoughtful, intentional borrowing tends to work best.





## WHAT LENDERS LOOK AT BEYOND THE NUMBER

Your credit score matters, but it is not the whole story.

### **When you apply for a loan, lenders also consider:**

- Your income and employment stability
- Your current monthly obligations
- Your overall financial picture

This is why personal conversations matter. Numbers provide insight, but they do not always reflect real life. At Nordstrom FCU, we take the time to understand your situation so we can guide you toward options that make sense for you.

## SMALL STEPS THAT CAN MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE

Improving or maintaining credit usually happens through steady, manageable habits.

### **Here are a few steps that can help over time:**

- Make payments on time, every month, even if only the minimum
- Review your credit report periodically to check for errors
- Keep balances as manageable as possible
- Ask questions before applying for new credit

Progress does not have to be dramatic to be meaningful. Consistency matters more than perfection.

## BEFORE YOU APPLY: A QUICK SELF-CHECK

Taking a few moments to review your situation can help you feel more prepared and confident.

### **Ask yourself:**

- Am I current on my existing payments?
- Do I have a general sense of my monthly obligations?
- Have I reviewed my credit recently?

If any of this feels unclear, that is completely okay. These are exactly the kinds of questions our team is here to help you work through.







## YOU'RE NOT EXPECTED TO FIGURE THIS OUT ALONE

Life changes. Credit histories have ups and downs. We understand that.

**Nordstrom Federal Credit Union is built for the Nordstrom community**, and our role goes beyond simply processing applications. We are here to listen, explain, and help you move forward in a way that feels right for you.

Whether you are building credit for the first time, rebuilding after a setback, or planning your next step, you will always be met with respect, clarity, and real support.


## READY WHEN YOU ARE



If you would like to explore loan options, check our current rates, or simply talk through what makes sense for you, [our team is here](#).

You do not have to have everything figured out to take the next step.

**We will meet you where you are and help you move forward with confidence!**



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