

Using Your **CREDIT CARD**

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**MONEY
THING®**

Paying your balance in full and on time is the best way to use your credit card responsibly



Paying in full and on time:
THE BENEFITS



CREDIT REPORT

BUILD CREDIT

By using credit responsibly, you're contributing to your credit history, which will make it easier and more affordable to secure a loan in the future

SKIP THE INTEREST

By paying in full and on time, you avoid carrying a balance on your card, which means the credit card company cannot charge you interest on your balance





STAY OUT OF DEBT

By sidestepping the cycle of minimum payments and interest charges, you're able to use your credit card without the fear of spiraling into debt

DODGE LATE FEES

Paying on time protects you from being hit with late fees and other penalties for missing payments





ENJOY REWARDS

Maintaining healthy credit card habits means you're free to enjoy the perks and rewards of your credit card

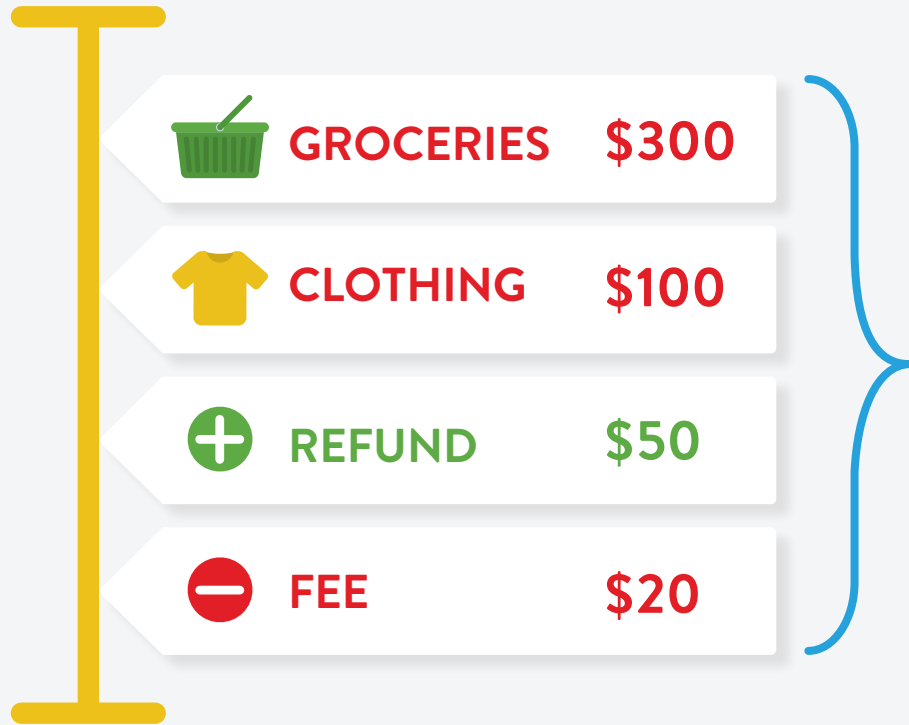
Brush up on your
BILLING CYCLE

CREDIT CARD BILLING CYCLES



A billing cycle is the period of time between billings—it can vary from 20 to 45 days, depending on the credit card issuer

CREDIT CARD BILLING CYCLES

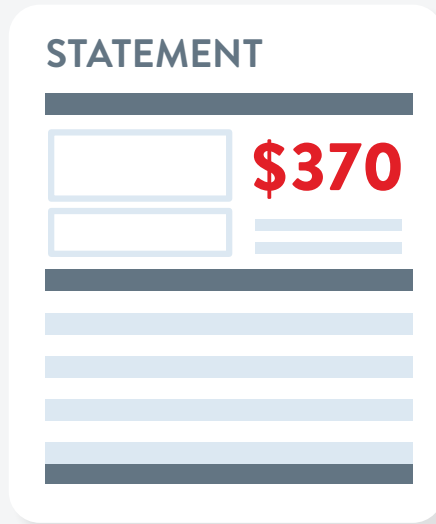


A diagram illustrating a credit card billing cycle. On the left, a yellow vertical bar with horizontal caps is positioned next to a list of four transactions. Each transaction is represented by a white arrow pointing to the right, containing an icon, a category name, and a dollar amount. A blue bracket on the right side of the list groups all four transactions together.

	GROCERIES	\$300
	CLOTHING	\$100
	REFUND	\$50
	FEE	\$20

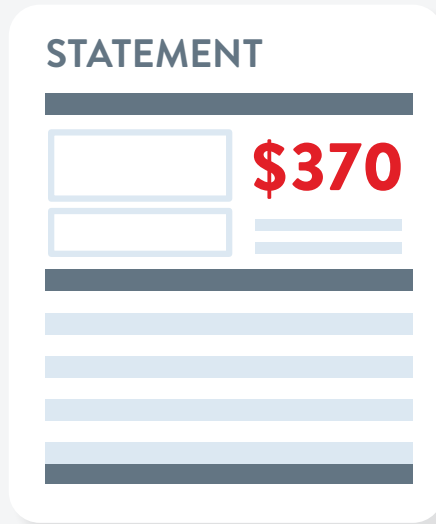
Within that time frame, purchases, credits, and any fees or finance charges are added to and subtracted from your account

CREDIT CARD BILLING CYCLES



When your billing cycle closes, you are billed for the remaining balance—this will be reflected on your credit card statement

CREDIT CARD PAYMENT TIMELINE



Your statement also shows your payment due date, which is usually about 20 days after your billing cycle ends

CREDIT CARD PAYMENT TIMELINE

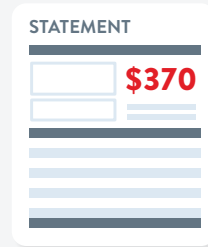
BILLING CYCLE 1

BILLING CYCLE 2

The **grace period** is the time frame within which you can pay your bill without penalty!



GRACE PERIOD



PAYMENT DUE DATE
(for balance from
Billing Cycle 1)

CREDIT CARD CHECKUP



- **Do you know when your billing cycle opens and closes?** For each credit card you use, take a look at your last three credit card statements to figure out when your billing cycle starts and ends
- **Are you paying your bill early enough?** You want your payment to be applied during the grace period and before the due date to avoid fees and penalties—allow ample time (a week or more) for your payment to process

Treat your

CARD LIKE CASH

Treating your card like cash means using it to pay for **regular expenses you know you can afford** with money you already have



TREAT YOUR CARD LIKE CASH

DO

- Remember: your credit card transactions are mini-loans
- Pay for things within your regular budget
- Decrease your reliance on credit cards by saving up for an emergency fund



DON'T

- Pretend your credit card is access to “extra income”
- Use credit to justify extravagant purchases
- Postpone saving money simply because you have access to a credit card

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Sources: Investopedia, The Balance

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