

Tips to Use Your Credit Cards Wisely

- ✓ **Use only one or two cards.**
- ✓ **Keep track of what you charge**, just as you would with a checking account.
- ✓ **Save for big-ticket items instead of putting them on a card.** If you must borrow for that item, less expensive loans usually are available from banks and credit unions.
- ✓ **Pay credit card bills as soon as they arrive**, to avoid late-payment fees.
- ✓ **It is best to** budget the ability to pay the entire balance on your credit card purchases every month but if that's not possible, always pay at least the minimum balance if not more.
- ✓ **If the balance begins to increase**, quit using the card for a while.
- ✓ **Use a low interest rate card, preferably with no annual fee.** Shop around using the internet or look at the offers sent to you in the mail. Rates vary widely. (Retail cards issued by department stores tend to charge the highest rates.)
- ✓ **Be wary of cards that offer extremely low interest rates** "for a limited time." Frequently, when the "limited" time expires, a new interest rate is charged and it may be well above average

