



**Take It
to the
Bank**



**Your Guide to
Opening a
Bank
Account**



All banks and credit unions participating in BANK ON DALLAS are offering accounts featuring:

- No-cost or low-cost checking accounts
- No minimum-balance requirement
- Acceptance of the Mexican matricula card as one form of identification. A secondary form of identification will be requested.

Our banks are also offering at least one of the following features:

- Free ATM or debit cards
- Accounts for people who may have had problems in the past, such as bounced checks or overdraft fees
- Remittances
- Free checks
- Free online banking

Banks reserve the right to amend their offerings.

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Texas
APPLESEED



Why Open a Checking or Savings Account?

Safety

Carrying cash on payday or keeping large amounts of money at home can make you a target for robbery and assault. Protect your family's future and well-being. Open a bank or credit union account. There are people ready to help you, and a bank account comes with many other benefits.

Money

You may be spending a lot of money every year cashing checks or buying money orders to pay your bills. A checking or savings account will help you better control your budget and will allow you to pay bills directly without having to use money orders.

Credit

Banks and credit unions make loans for cars, homes and many other items—but first, you have to establish credit. Opening a checking or savings account is the first step to establishing credit and making the dream of owning a home or new car come true.

Education

Saving for your children's college education is the most important thing you can do to help them secure a bright future. Banks and credit unions offer options for financing a college education—and savings accounts to help you make that goal a reality.

Convenience

When making purchases at the supermarket, department store or pharmacy, you can use a debit card or automated teller machine (ATM) card instead of carrying cash or writing checks. It is the same as using cash but safer and more convenient. Also, with an ATM or debit card, you have access to your money from cash machines around the world.



How Do I Open an Account?

There are many people ready to talk with you about how to open a checking or savings account. Ask someone who has opened an account for advice.

A respected family member or friend can describe how the process works and can help you find banks and credit unions that have employees who can explain step by step how to open an account. Call different banks and credit unions and ask to speak with someone who speaks your language. Be sure to get information from more than one bank or credit union to find the best and most convenient services at the lowest cost. You can also look for the “Bank On Dallas” logo of participating banks or credit unions. Remember, the bank or credit union is there to serve you. You are the customer!

How much money do I need?

You usually can open a checking or savings account with a deposit of \$25 to \$100. Ask how much is required to open an account and how much is required to avoid fees.

What identification do I need?

In most places, two types of identification are required. A Social Security number is always accepted, but many banks and credit unions do not require one if you are not a U.S. citizen. Sometimes one form of ID and a bill with your name and address are enough to open an account. Call first to find out their requirements.

Consular identification: Consular IDs, such as the matricula consular, can be used to open accounts. Mexican and other consulates in the United States offer them. Visit your country’s consulate for more information.

Other types of identification: Driver license. Passport. Birth certificate. A bill with name and address.





Is my money safe?

Even if something happens to your bank, the U.S. government guarantees your money up to \$250,000 as long as the bank is FDIC-insured or the credit union is NCUA-insured. Look for the official FDIC or NCUA sign when opening an account.

Credit unions and banks—what's the difference?

Credit unions are nonprofits that tend to be smaller than banks and serve people who are members of a particular group. For example, there are credit unions for people who work in government, who teach in public schools, or who live in the same city or neighborhood. Banks can be either small or large, and they are governed by a board of directors chosen by the stockholders. They are for-profit business corporations.

What are checking and savings accounts?

A **checking account** allows you to write and deposit checks or use debit or ATM cards instead of paying with cash. It is meant to be the place to manage bill payments.

A **savings account** is meant to be the place to put money away for long periods of time. A savings account pays interest on the money in your account. The higher the interest rate, the more money your account makes. Most savings accounts have limits on withdrawals, usually three to six a month.

What is interest?

Most savings accounts pay a small amount of interest on the money in your account. That means your money is making money while it is in the account. The more interest your account pays, the more money it produces. Remember that interest earned will have to be reported as income and is subject to federal income taxes.



Advice to Save You Money

Monthly charges

Some checking accounts charge a fixed monthly fee or a fixed amount per check written. You usually can avoid these charges by maintaining a minimum balance in the account. Many banks offer free checking without a monthly fee, but they may require direct deposit of your paycheck or include other charges.

Pay attention to the cost of additional services.

Minimum balance

A minimum balance is the amount of money that you must keep in your account to avoid the bank charging you a monthly fee or charging you to write checks. Some types of accounts do not require a minimum balance, but others require hundreds of dollars.

Ask about minimum balance requirements when opening an account.

Transaction limits

Banks and credit unions typically limit the number of checks you can write on your account each month without being charged a fee. But some accounts do not limit the number of transactions.


Ask about transaction limits and check fees when opening an account.

Debit and ATM card fees

You can use a debit or ATM card to withdraw money from your account or to make a purchase. These cards often are offered to account holders free of charge. But be aware that other fees may apply to these cards.

Debit cards are different from basic ATM cards. ATM cards can only be used at an ATM machine and a few grocery stores to pay for items and to get cash, while you can use a debit card at most retailers that take credit cards. A debit card will usually have a Visa or MasterCard logo; an ATM card will not. An ATM card is less prone to overdraft charges,





but fees may be incurred if you use an out-of-network ATM. The debit card allows you more flexibility with your finances, but like with a check, overdraft fees can occur if you have insufficient funds.

Ask about ATM and debit card fees.

Bounced checks or insufficient funds

It is important to always know how much money you have in the bank. If you write a check for more money than you have in your account, you can bounce the check. That will cost you the amount of the check plus an extra \$20 to \$60 in bad-check fees. Remember, you can have the same problem using your debit card.

One solution is to have a checking account that links to your savings account. That way your savings can cover your check if there isn't enough money in your checking account. There may be a charge for this service, but it is cheaper than bouncing a check.

Other accounts offer a line of credit to protect against bounced checks. The bank or credit union will automatically loan you the money to cover a bad check, but it will charge a very high interest rate or fee that can end up costing you a lot of money.

To avoid these problems, make a budget and stick to it!

Loans and credit

How good is your credit? If you have a good credit history, you can qualify for loans that cost less. Having an account is the first step toward getting low-cost credit.

Loans can be useful for making major purchases, such as a home, a car or college education for your children. Make your payments on time. This will save you money and will open the doors to credit.

You can establish good credit by paying your bills and loan payments on time.

Local Financial Education Resources

Bank On Dallas has partnered with the following nonprofit organizations to provide you with the knowledge and tools to make informed decisions about your financial future. These organizations are offering free or low-cost financial education classes in Spanish and English. You will learn how to manage a checking and savings account, pay off debt, and understand and improve your credit score. Check the following websites or call to get more information about upcoming classes.



Catholic Charities of Dallas Inc.

214-520-6590

www.catholiccharitiesdallas.org



Consumer Credit Counseling Service

800-249-2227

www.cccs.net



Hispanic Bankers Association, Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter and The PLAN Fund

214-942-6698

www.hbadfw.org

www.planfund.org



Meed Center

972-241-8250

www.meedcenter.com



Urban Financial Services Coalition, Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter

214-233-3932

www.ufscdallas.org



Urban League of Greater Dallas and North Central Texas

214-915-4600

www.ulgdntx.org



YWCA of Metropolitan Dallas

214-826-YWCA (9922)

www.ywcadallas.org

For more information, contact:



Bank On Dallas

214-671-BANK (2265)

www.BankOnDallasTexas.com