First credit card checklist

Before you apply and every month after: the habits that build credit without debt.

NAME _____ DATE _____

HABITS

- [ ] Choose a card with no annual fee
- [ ] Read the interest rate and grace period
- [ ] Know your limit and keep spending well below it
- [ ] Turn on transaction alerts in the app
- [ ] Set up automatic payment of at least the minimum
- [ ] Plan to pay the full statement balance every month
- [ ] Avoid cash advances (interest usually starts right away)
- [ ] Check each statement for charges you don't recognize
- [ ] Check your credit report once a year

PAYMENT LOG

Month	Statement balance	Paid in full?	Paid on	Notes
Jan				
Feb				
Mar				
Apr				
May				
Jun				
Jul				
Aug				
Sep				
Oct				
Nov				
Dec				

SOURCES (CHECKED 2026-11-26)

FCAC explains how paying on time and keeping balances low affect your credit score.
https://www.canada.ca/en/financial-consumer-agency/services/credit-reports-score/improve-credit-score.html (checked 2026-11-26)