

## **How to improve your credit file information**

Getting credit can be essential for everyday living and being refused is frustrating. So how can you improve your chances of being approved for credit?

**Keep up-to-date with existing credit.** Paying your existing credit card and loan repayments on time will show that you're likely to be able to meet future credit payments.

**Be patient not persistent.** If you're refused credit for a product or service, don't keep on reapplying as this may lower your score. Wait a few months before making further applications.

**Get yourself on the electoral register.** Banks, Credit Card, Finance companies and retailers carry out this standard check to ensure you are/have been registered at the addresses you provide.

**Don't leave out previous addresses.** If you've moved a lot in the last three years, don't be tempted to leave out any previous addresses. This could be seen as an attempt to conceal unpaid credit at that address and may be treated as suspicious.

**Be honest about your credit history.** If you've been in difficulties in the past and been unable to meet your repayments, or you've got CCJ's against you, be upfront as this information is easily traced.

**Settle bad debt.** Although unpaid credit and CCJ's will remain on your file for six years, they will be marked as settled once you pay the debt. This could be taken into account when you're making future applications.

Get the facts. If you're still puzzled at being refused credit, contact a credit reference agency to get a copy of your credit file. This will show you all the information about you that lenders and retailers can see. Check out "[How does the application process work?](#)" under "[credit guides](#)" for the contact details.

Dispute any inaccuracies. Once you have your credit file, check all the details carefully. If you find any inaccuracies, you can appeal to the agency or to the lender directly. You can also add a note to your file, to explain any special circumstances.