

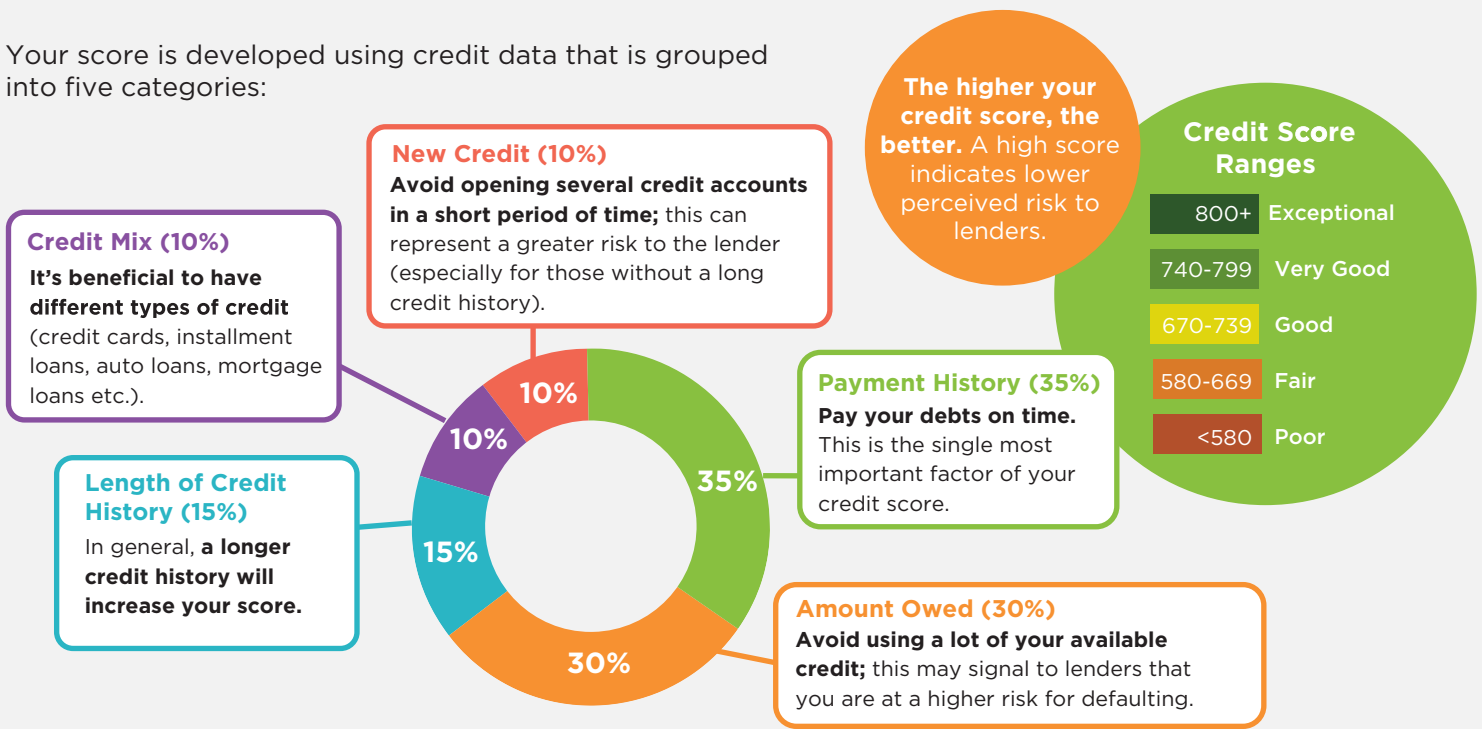


Understanding Your Credit

From getting approved for a loan to lower interest rates, there are many benefits to improving your credit. Use this tip sheet to learn about the factors that affect your credit score and how you can improve your score (and overall financial health!)

How Is My Credit Score Calculated?

Your score is developed using credit data that is grouped into five categories:



Steps for Improving Your Score

Looking to improve your credit? Building stronger credit takes time. But with patience and a commitment to managing your credit over time, it can be done:

- 1 Get Your Current Credit Report**
 If you haven't already, get your free credit report at annualcreditreport.com to see where you currently stand.
- 2 Reduce the Amount of Debt You Owe**
 Stop using your credit cards and develop a plan to pay off your highest-interest debt first.
- 3 Start Practicing Your New Healthy Credit Habits** Things like opening new accounts sparingly, managing credit card use responsibly and keeping credit card balances low are all important factors in improving and maintaining your credit score.