

## TEN BASIC RULES OF MONEY MANAGEMENT

1. **PLAN YOUR SPENDING** - Just like a road map, your budget will help you get where you want to go.
2. **SET GOALS** - Determine how much you will need and when you will need it. From regular, periodic expenses such as car tags or tires, to life-long goals such as retirement, define each goal in terms of priority, resources, and time.
3. **PLAN FOR EMERGENCIES** - There is no doubt unexpected expenses will occur. Create an emergency fund with enough money to cover insurance deductibles, emergency travel expenses, and at least one month of bills. Relying on credit for emergencies is a poor strategy that will only add to your problems when that "rainy day" comes.
4. **PAY YOUR BILLS ON TIME** - Late charges can destroy your budget and keep you from reaching your goals. Pay your bills when you get paid. Risking a late charge by holding funds until the last minute is foolish.
5. **NO SAVINGS - NO CREDIT** - If you have no savings, you have no business using credit. (see rule #3)
6. **PAY MORE THAN THE MINIMUM** - Even with a 12% APR, a 2% minimum payment on a \$2000 balance will take 70+ months to pay. That's longer than most car loans! Don't fall into the minimum payment trap!
7. **JUST SAY NO!** - Just say no to high interest rates. Pay off credit cards that are over 18% APR. If you can't get an account for under 18%, you probably shouldn't be using credit. It's too expensive!
8. **BALANCE YOUR CHECKBOOK** - Banks sometimes make mistakes. Depending on the bank to provide you with your balance can cause serious problems if a mistake is made.
9. **SHOP AROUND FOR CREDIT** - When buying a car, let the dealer know you will be shopping for the best credit deal. Call local banks and credit unions before buying to compare rates and terms.
10. **TEACH YOUR CHILDREN** - Children need to develop money management skills before graduating from High School. Don't leave this important task to someone else. Paying bills, understanding credit, and planning for the future are important skills they should not have to learn on their own.

CONSUMER CREDIT COUNSELING SERVICE OF ALABAMA, INC.  
(334) 265-8545