

Proper Care and Feeding of Your Debit Card

(Stuff you need to know so you don't get into trouble with plastic)

Having a bank account is a big step toward financial maturity. Your checking or savings account is by far the best place to put hard earned dollars from your job, or those nice cash gifts from your family members at birthday and for holidays.

Putting money into your account is one thing (and we encourage regular deposits!) taking money out of your account is something else entirely. You can get money out of your account (make sure you check with your parents or other adults who are also responsible for

your account) in a few different ways. A common and popular way to access your money is by using a debit card.

Debit cards also work in ATM machines, where you can get cash and make deposits. These cards are important financial tools. Sometimes people get confused about a credit card vs. a debit card. They are NOT the same. A credit card is actually like taking out a mini-loan to buy something. You don't actually put money out for your purchase now, but you will get a bill later.

A debit card, on the other hand, gives you access to your account right now, and the money you spend will come out of your account right now. No delay. No bill will come later. It's pretty much like using cash.

Using a debit card is super convenient and easy, but it's also a big responsibility. Here are some rules to help you be smart about your debit card:

Rule 1: Protect your debit card just like you protect actual cash!

You wouldn't toss dollar bills around, don't toss your debit card around. Keep a close eye on your card when you hand it to someone to pay for stuff. Make sure they hand it right back to you. Keep it in a safe place.

Rule 2: Protect your Personal Identification Number (PIN).

Your PIN is like the code that "unlocks" your card, and gives you access to your money. Don't tell anyone your PIN, and when you enter your PIN on a key pad, try and shield the number pad from sight. Thieves can and do watch from a distance to see what numbers you're pushing, and can steal your PIN easily if you're not careful.

Important Info! Read This!

Your bank, First American Bank, has a fraud detection service working behind the scenes to protect your debit card. If your card or card number is stolen and someone is trying to use it to take your money, the fraud detection service may call you to make sure you are really trying to buy those cool shoes on your vacation in Europe. What!? You're not in Europe? Your card, or at least a version of your card might be. That's

called "card cloning", and it happens more than you think.

These fraud specialists that work for us may call you and verify a transaction. **Be sure the bank has your current phone number at all times.** Be aware that no one calling on our behalf will EVER ask you for a PIN. They will just tell you about a transaction that seems out of the ordinary for you, and ask you if that seems right to you. If it does, you're good. If it doesn't, your card will stop working, and a new card will come to you. Call your personal banker for help, that's why they are there or to ask questions.

Rule 3: Know your account balance, don't spend more than you have.

Your debit card is an easy way to access your money. That's the good news. The bad news is, your debit card is an easy way to access your money. Huh?? Having access to your money, good thing. Overdrawing your account, bad thing. Avoid NSF Fees!

Also, just because your ATM receipt says you have money in your account doesn't really mean you can spend more with your debit card! The ATM receipt may not account for all the stuff coming out of your account. Talk to your banker to understand "float".



Rule 4: Keep track of your debit transactions, and review your bank account **OFTEN** with the First American Bank online banking system.

It can be hard to write down debit transactions when you use the card to buy things at the mall, but it's a good habit to have. Also, have your banker help you get set up with online banking so you can see every day what's happening with your account.

Hey, you can even look at your account when you get home from the mall. Bet that cool new shirt you bought is already showing on your bank account statement. Also, if stuff is charged to your account that shouldn't have been, it's way easier to fix if you see it right away. Your banker can help you if this happens... just ask.

Other Stuff to Know

Avoid Fees!

Your First American Bank debit card will work in most all ATM machines. But, the banks that own ATM machines may charge you to use their machine. If you pick a machine that has this symbol (the Privileged Status Network) you won't be charged a fee.



If you are buying something and using your debit card, this is called a "point of sale" transaction (POS). Most of the time, you can get cash back along with paying for your purchase if you are using your PIN number to make the purchase. This is always at no charge for the transaction, so if you plan ahead and take advantage of this, you can avoid fees at ATMs. This is a good thing.

Debit or credit?

We already talked about the difference between a debit card and a credit card. But, when you buy something with your debit card, the store clerk may ask you if you would rather have a debit or a credit. If you choose credit, you'll have to sign your name. If you choose debit, you'll have to enter your PIN into a keypad. It's a little cheaper for the store if you choose a debit transaction, and it's probably slightly more secure to use your PIN than to sign your name to a credit transaction.



Rule 5: If you lose your debit card, call your banker right away!

If it's on the weekend or after business hours, and the bank is closed, call Shazam (the company we work with to issue your debit card) at 1-800-383-8000. Then, call your banker, too, when the bank is open for business. Know your bank's telephone number, or at least where to find it.