

Why Should I Bank?

A bank account can be a great and affordable way to save, manage, and keep your money secure. If you have concerns about opening an account, read on to learn about how having a bank account can be a huge benefit to you and help you become more financially secure.



Default Coach

(646) 810-4050

members+default@change-machine.org

- 1 Banking Is Safe** When your money is in a bank, it cannot be lost, stolen, or damaged. If you keep money where you live or carry a lot of cash with you, your money is not safe. If a bank fails, your money is protected by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC). But banking is only safe when you're the only person who knows your PIN. When you open your account, be sure not to share your PIN with anyone, even with people you trust.
- 2 Banking Is Easy** With online banking and ATMs in many convenient locations, it is always easy to get cash when you need it. With a checking account or online banking, making your payments for rent, utility bills, and other essentials is much easier than getting a money order. You can also have your paycheck direct deposited to your account to get your full paycheck on payday. For details, see [Automate Your Banking](#). You can also use your bank account debit card anywhere you can use a credit card to make purchases. Just make sure you always know your balance so you don't overdraw your account.
- 3 Banking Is Affordable** Once you have a bank account, you will no longer need to fork over your hard-earned money to purchase money orders or to cash checks. Do your research to find accounts that won't charge you any fees. Go to findabetterbank.com or speak with your Coach about fee-free banking options in your area. Track your research on [Which Accounts Work Best For Me](#).
- 4 Prepaid Debit Cards Are Not Ideal** You may have a prepaid card and find it useful, but take a close look at the fees you pay. Chances are you can save money if you open a bank account instead. For more, see [Get Past The Hype: 5 Things To Know About Prepaid Debit Cards](#).
- 5 "But If I Open A Bank Account, I'll Lose My Benefits"** Definitely a valid concern, but your benefits will not be affected as long as you maintain less than \$2000 in your account(s).
- 6 "But I'm Undocumented. I Can't Open An Account"** Yes you can! Even if you're undocumented you can (and should!) open a bank account. Check out [Get Banked In America](#).
- 7 "But I Owe A Lot Of Money And I'm Afraid My Creditors Will Take It"** Your concern may be valid, but if you follow a few simple guidelines, your money should be safe. See [Protect Your Assets From Judgments](#). In New York, the first \$1920 in a bank account is safe from private creditors. If you owe money to the government, different rules apply. Consult with an attorney about your options.