

---

## Establishing Good Credit in College

Weekly Educational Update – November 27, 2019

---

**Good credit may open doors.** It is vital to securing a loan, a business loan, or buying a home. When you establish and maintain good credit in college, you create a financial profile for yourself that can influence lenders, landlords, and potential employers.

Unfortunately, some college students do not have good credit. In fact, Credit Karma says that the average 18-to-24-year-old has a credit score of 630. A FICO score of 730 or higher is considered good.<sup>1</sup>

**What are the steps toward a good credit score?** To start, you need to utilize credit. About 15% of your credit score is built on the length of your credit history, so the sooner you purchase goods and services with a credit card and pay off that debt, the sooner you create a record of credit use.<sup>1</sup>

**Aim to reduce the balance to \$0 every month.** Does this sound like a challenge? It may not be if you just use a credit card to purchase everyday things. When you start splurging with a credit card, paying off the balance in full can become a problem.<sup>1</sup>

**Pay your credit card bill on time.** Roughly 35% of your credit history develops from your pattern of payments: how on time they are, how late they are. One approach to consider is scheduling automated payments from your bank account, schedule reminders, or just try to pay the bill as soon as it arrives.<sup>1</sup>

**Refrain from applying for 2-3 credit cards at once.** About 10% of your credit score reflects your history of credit inquiries, so if you suddenly apply for another 2-3 cards, you could hurt your score.<sup>1</sup>

Another potentially bad move is jumping from card issuer to card issuer – that is, getting a card, then closing that credit card account and opening a new one after a few months because you find another credit card with better perks. In doing this, you end up giving yourself a shorter credit history per credit card account.<sup>1</sup>

**What if you have problems getting a traditional card?** If you have no income, you might run into this – or, there might be other reasons that make it hard for you to qualify for one. If this is the case, consider going to the bank or credit union where you have a savings account and applying for a secured credit card. With these types of cards, you transfer some money into an account linked to the use of the card, and that amount represents your credit card limit. You can also ask to become an authorized user on a credit card held by one or both of your parents.<sup>1</sup>

**You can potentially help your credit score in other ways.** Consistent bill paying is a plus for your credit history. If you do become an authorized user on a parent's credit card and they use credit responsibly, just being linked to that account history could help your credit rating. If you are living off campus, you might end up co-signing a lease so make certain you understand you and your roommates' financial obligations. Financially negligent ones could hurt your credit rating if, for example, you are sharing utilities costs. With financially trustworthy roommates, you may avoid that kind of credit score damage. Lastly, if you move while in college, be vigilant about having your bills forwarded to you, to avoid missing payments.<sup>1</sup>

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK



*“Be thankful for what you have; you’ll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don’t have, you will never, ever have enough.”*

- Oprah Winfrey

## RECIPE OF THE WEEK



### Sweet Potato Casserole



Thanksgiving is here! If you still need a last-minute dish, this sweet potato casserole is sure to be a hit with any crowd.

[6 to 8 servings]

### Ingredients

**For the Filling:**

- ½ stick of butter
- 1¾ pounds of sweet potatoes (approximately 3 or 4 whole potatoes)
- ½ cup milk
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- A sprinkle of salt
- 2 large eggs

**For the Topping:**

- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup brown sugar, packed
- ½ stick butter, melted
- A sprinkle of salt
- 1 cup pecans, chopped

**Directions:**

1. Peel and cube the sweet potatoes and add them to a large pot of salted water. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat and let them simmer until tender, about 15 to 20 minutes.
2. Mash the sweet potatoes.
3. For the filling, preheat the oven to 350° F. Whisk together the butter, mashed sweet potatoes, milk, brown sugar, vanilla, salt, and eggs. Transfer to a baking dish.
4. For the topping, combine the flour, brown sugar, butter, and salt, and mix until the ingredients clump together. Stir in pecans and spread evenly over the sweet potato mixture in the baking dish. Bake until the top is golden, about 25 to 30 minutes.

Recipe adapted from The Food Network<sup>2</sup>

**End-of-the-Year Tax Tips**

With all the hustle and bustle of the holidays, taxes are likely the last thing on your mind. You have until April, right? Well, there are a few end-of-year tips that you should get ahead on now to save yourself time (and money) come April.

- **Donate stock that has appreciated in value** - You can donate stock that has appreciated in value that you've had for at least a year. This can result in significant income tax savings. Also, donating stock saves you more on taxes than donating cash because there's no capital gains tax when these stocks are given to a nonprofit. You also save on future capital gains taxes.
- **Increase your 401(k) contributions** - You're allowed to contribute up to \$19,000 this year if you're under 50 and \$25,000 if you're 50 and older, and contributing more to your 401(k) by the end of the year means that you will have a lower income tax. This is especially beneficial if you're between tax brackets.

\* This information is not intended to be a substitute for specific individualized tax advice. We suggest that you discuss your specific tax issues with a qualified tax professional.

Tip adapted from Kiplinger<sup>3</sup>



### Tips for Cleaning Your Grips

Lots of golfers make cleaning their grips a priority in the summer because their hands are sweating in the heat, but cleaning your grips in the winter is just as important because your hands may actually be drier than normal. Here are some easy tips when cleaning your grips:

- There are fancy solutions on the market that will help you clean your club grips, but all you really need is some good, old-fashioned soap and water. Dawn liquid soap is one of the best for getting off grease and grime.
- Make sure your water is super-sudsy. This will help you clean your grips more easily.
- Simply fill a bucket with sudsy soap and water, then use a clean cloth to collect some suds and rub them into your grip.
- Try to get more soap than water on the grip.
- Once you've scrubbed, run the grip under warm water. Don't make the water too hot, as this can destroy the glue underneath your grip.

Cleaning your grips this time of year will help if your hands are dry while playing.

Tip adapted from Golf Monthly<sup>4</sup>



### Healthy Holiday Eating: Part 2

We're back with more healthy holiday eating tips to help you navigate all the delicious food, without adding inches to your waistline.

- **Take 10** - Before you go back for seconds, take a 10-minute break. It can take close to 20 minutes for your stomach to inform your brain you've reached satiety, so if you eat too quickly or go back for that second helping right after you're done with your first, you might end up overeating. Instead, get up, walk around, and maybe even mingle for 10 minutes, then see if you're still hungry.
- **Eat a Pre-Party Snack** - If you're on your way to a holiday party, eat a healthy snack before you go, so you don't arrive famished and want to eat everything in sight. The best pre-party snacks combine lean protein with complex carbohydrates, such as an apple and peanut butter, a turkey sandwich, or a couple hardboiled eggs.
- **Dust Off Your Dancing Shoes** - One of the most fun ways to work off a few extra calories is to hit the dance floor! After you're done eating, take some time to get moving and enjoy the music. If you're at a party without dancing, go for a walk with friends and family between dinner and dessert.

Tip adapted from Harvard Health<sup>5</sup>



### Have a Green Thanksgiving

This Thanksgiving, think about the environment when you prepare your meal and have people over. Here are some tips on how to reduce waste, energy, and resources needed:

- Use reusable dinnerware instead of disposable options.
- Purchase the food locally when possible, and choose organic options when available. By using mostly local food, you reduce the energy needed to transport food. Plus, locally grown produce and meat tastes better!
- Speaking of meat, eat less of it when possible. The meat industry is the number one source of methane gas in our environment, and eating less meat can have a positive environmental impact in many ways.
- Get outside and enjoy the beautiful outdoors. This holiday is all about giving thanks, so step outside and show gratitude to Mother Nature for all her beauty. Even if you're in the heart of the city, a walk outside does the body good.

Tip adapted from Harvard University<sup>6</sup>

***Share the Wealth of Knowledge!***

*Please share this educational update with family, friends, or colleagues.  
We love being introduced!*

Securities and Advisory Services offered through LPL Financial, a Registered Investment Advisor. Member FINRA/SIPC.

These are the views of Platinum Advisor Strategies, LLC, and not necessarily those of the named representative, Broker dealer or Investment Advisor and should not be construed as investment advice. Neither the named representative nor the named Broker dealer or Investment Advisor gives tax or legal advice. All information is believed to be from reliable sources; however, we make no representation as to its completeness or accuracy. Please consult your financial advisor for further information.

By clicking on these links, you will leave our server, as the links are located on another server. We have not independently verified the information available through this link. The link is provided to you as a matter of interest. Please click on the links below to leave and proceed to the selected site.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://thesimpledollar.com/how-to-build-good-credit-in-college/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/food-network-kitchen/sweet-potato-casserole-3364945>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.kiplinger.com/slideshow/saving/T023-S002-money-moves-to-make-now-to-prepare-for-2020/index.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.golf-monthly.co.uk/features/the-game/how-to-clean-your-golf-clubs-and-grips-69550>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/12-tips-for-holiday-eating-201212245718>

<sup>6</sup> <https://green.harvard.edu/tools-resources/green-tip/tips-green-thanksgiving>