Welcome to Wells Fargo’s Hands on Banking® program!

This fun, interactive, and engaging financial education program is designed for both self-paced, individual learning and group use. These Instructor Guides will help you share this valuable program with groups of any size.

In these guides, you’ll find everything you need to lead participants through real-life scenarios, group discussions, and activities that will encourage them to apply these lessons to their daily lives.

By sharing the Hands on Banking program with others, you’ll help them to take control of their finances and build a brighter financial future.

Program Overview
The Hands on Banking program covers all the basics of smart money management. The curriculum is designed for four age groups: Adults, Young Adults (ages 15–21), Teens (grades 6–8), and Kids (grades 4 and 5).

The Hands on Banking program is an easy and enjoyable way to teach and learn the essentials of financial education: the basics of bank services, the importance of saving, smart money management, using credit responsibly, investing, wealth building, and more. Whether it’s opening a checking account, avoiding identity theft, paying for college, buying a home, or starting a small business, the Hands on Banking program provides real-world skills and knowledge everyone can use.

Using the Instructor Guides
The Instructor Guides can be used alone or as an adjunct to the online/CD-ROM program; however, we strongly encourage you to review the program online or request a free CD-ROM. Even if participants will not experience the program online, gaining familiarity with the online program will help you present it more effectively. The most up to date content can always be found online at www.handsonbanking.org.

Each topic in the Hands on Banking program has its own Instructor Guide which follows the organization of the online program and includes much of the same content. The Adults’ version of the Hands on Banking program includes six topics:

3. Protect Yourself Financially.
4. Using Credit to Your Advantage.
5. Planning Your Future.

Each Instructor Guide includes:

- A glossary of all the relevant terms introduced in the topic.
- A lesson introduction which includes:
  » An overview.
  » Learning objectives.
  » Sample discussion questions to start the lesson.
  » “The Basics”—a list of bullet points outlining the key concepts of the lesson.
- A lesson summary of all the key concepts of the lesson.
- Activities, quizzes, discussion questions, handouts and important tips for key concepts.
- A topic summary that lists all the major concepts of the topic.
- Additional activities designed to extend the concepts presented in the topic to the real world.
- A Library Resource section that includes additional reference materials and handouts.
Lesson Concepts and Icons

Each lesson of a topic will present several key concepts. These concepts are introduced to your participants in a variety of ways, which are represented in the guides by these icons.

Activity
An activity usually involves some sort of class participation, whether it is a matching game, a fill in the blank exercise, or worksheet completion. Typically after an activity you will have the opportunity to lead a discussion.

Discussion
Discussions allow you to introduce key concepts while involving your participants in the conversation and making the information relevant to them. In some places, sample discussion questions are included to help you guide the discussion.

Quiz
Throughout all the topics, there are short quizzes designed to start discussions or quickly test participants’ knowledge of certain concepts.

Handout
All of the Instructor Guides include handouts that are designed as a resource for your participants to use outside the classroom in their daily lives. For example, one handout includes a list of web links for participants to use as they start, grow and manage their small business.

Activity and Discussion Handouts
Sometimes during a lesson, an activity or discussion will also use a handout to teach key concepts. In these cases the Handout icon is placed below the Activity or Discussion icon.

Transition
The Transition icon will let you know when the next concept is related to or follows up on the concept you’re presently discussing or covering with your participants.

Library Articles
The online/CD-ROM version of the Hands on Banking program includes a vast library with relevant articles, checklists, and worksheets for each topic and lesson.

Relevant library articles are recommended at the end of each lesson. These articles provide additional information to use in teaching key concepts (look for the library icon as seen above). We encourage you to review the full library selection online or on the CD-ROM. Feel free to enrich your sessions with additional articles from the library.

You can photocopy these articles and distribute them to participants to start a discussion, or you may want to give them away as handouts for participants to read on their own time. These library articles expand the topic content.
Pre-and Post-tests for Adults and Young Adults
When you use the Adults’ and/or Young Adults’ courses with a group or in a classroom setting, we invite you to use the Hands on Banking pre and post test we’ve developed. They can be accessed in the “Instructional Resources” section of handsonbanking.org.

- The Pre-test will help you to determine what topics to emphasis with your group.
- The Post-test will help you assess participants progress.

We’d like to request that you report the anonymous results of these tests to our Hands on Banking team. Your input will help us to continue to improve the program.

How to Access the Interactive Program
The Hands on Banking program is available free of charge in both English and Spanish.

- Available for free on CD-ROM—all four age groups are included.
- You may order a CD at HOBCD@wellsfargo.com. There is no charge for small quantities of the CD-ROM. Please email for information regarding high-volume requests. Allow two weeks for delivery.

Once again, Thank You!
Thank you for sharing these valuable financial education programs with students and adults in our communities. As an instructor, your training and guidance will provide others with the knowledge and skills they need for a brighter financial future.

We welcome your comments and suggestions for future versions of the Hands on Banking curriculum and the Instructor Guides. And, we would very much like to hear your success stories. Please contact us via email at HOBinfo@wellsfargo.com.
Topic 3 — Protect Yourself Financially

Protect Yourself Financially

Topic Overview
The Protect Yourself Financially topic will introduce money safety and security and teach participants how to avoid losing their hard-earned cash to scams, fraud, and identity theft. Participants will learn how to choose a responsible lender.

This topic includes five lessons:

1. Money safety & security tips
2. Test your judgment
3. Financial service providers can help
4. Resources for further information and assistance
5. Recap

These lessons include a number of hands-on participant activities. Use these activities to help simulate real-world scenarios and activities with your participants.

This instructor guide is based on and follows the structure of the online Hands on Banking® program. We invite you to use and experience the online program as it is an excellent resource that will support your instructional efforts and enhance your participants' experience. It includes a variety of interactive lessons and many helpful resource library articles to augment this guide. Visit www.handsonbanking.org to access the program. Should you require a CD ROM to access the program you may request a free copy at HOBCD@wellsfargo.com.
# Topic 3 — Protect Yourself Financially

## Instructor’s Guide — Adults

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</tbody>
</table>
Glossary

Instructor note:
The Glossary contains definitions and descriptions of valuable terms and phrases related to this topic. Encourage your participants to use the Glossary during and after the class to become more familiar and comfortable with the terminology.

Photocopy the glossary on the next page and hand it out to your participants.
**Glossary**

**Balloon payment**
Is a large, lump sum payment that is due at the end of the term of a loan.

**Credit insurance**
When you apply for a mortgage or personal loan you may be asked if you want to purchase credit insurance. This credit policy protects the loan on the chance that you can't make your payments. Credit insurance usually is optional, which means you don't have to purchase it from the lender.

**Elder financial abuse**
The perpetration of a financial crime against elder citizens and dependent adults, who may be especially vulnerable due to physical or mental incapacity such as improper use of power of attorney, accounts or wills.

**Equity**
The value of your investment above the total of your lien (debt).

**Foreclose**
The legal process by which an owner's rights to a property is terminated, usually because of failure to make loan payments as agreed. Foreclosure typically involves a forced sale of the property at public auction, with the money applied to the remaining debt.

**Fraud**
Intentional use of deceit, a trick or some dishonest means to deprive another of his or her money, property or legal rights.

**Identity theft**
A criminal activity involving stealing personal information from others and forging their signatures in order to apply for credit in their names.

**Log off**
To stop a computer that is connected to a computer system or program.

**Phishing**
Is usually a two-part scam involving email and spoof websites. Fraudsters, also known as phishers, send email to a wide audience that appears to come from a reputable company requesting personal information accounts numbers. This is known as a phish email.

**Point-of-sale**
A merchant transaction (purchase or return) made through a store, telephone, or internet using an ATM Card or Check Card for PIN or signature-based purchases.

**Predatory lending**
When lenders conduct business in ways that is illegal or not in the best interest of borrowers, using tactics that are fraudulent, deceptive, or discriminatory and, as a result, cause the borrower to have difficulties in making payments as agreed.

**Principal**
The total amount of money borrowed, loaned, invested, etc., not including interest or service charges.

**Secure browser**
Websites or web programs that use encryption to protect customer data such as your name, addresses or account information.

**Skimmer**
Your debt card or credit card information is used illegally by an individual such as a store employee after you have made a purchase with your card.
Lesson 1: Money Safety and Security Tips

In this lesson, participants will learn the basics of money safety and security. They will learn how to avoid losing their hard-earned cash to scams, fraud and identity theft.

**Learning Objectives**
After completing this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Explain the basics of money safety and security
- Practice tips and techniques to avoid losing money to scams, fraud and identity theft

**Start the Discussion**
To start a discussion with your participants, ask some open-ended questions. Here are some examples you could use:

- What sorts of scams or frauds have you recently heard about? Have you ever been a target of one?
- How do you currently protect yourself against fraud, scams and identity theft?
- What would you do if you thought your identity had been stolen?

**The Basics**

- There are too many ways that dishonest people or a few businesses may try to take your hard-earned money away.
- There’s a lot to learn about how to protect yourself financially—whether you’re on the phone, on the Web, at the store, or wherever your day may take you.
Security at Home and Online Activity (Instructor Copy)

**Instructor note:**
Photocopy the activity handout on the next page. Ask participants to decide whether or not each tip is a good idea. After your participants complete the activity, walk through each tip and lead your discussion. Ask the participants if they came up with any other tips and techniques.

**Instructions:**
Have participants read the list of tips (in the left column) for keeping their finances safe at home and online. Have them decide whether or not it is a good idea. Write “Yes” or “No” in the right column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Tips for Keeping Your Finances Safe</strong></th>
<th><strong>Good idea?</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be wary of strangers you allow in. Keep sensitive data, credit cards, and checkbooks out of sight.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep credit offers you receive in the mail for one year—or until they expire.</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safely store copies of your driver’s license, credit cards, car registration, I.D. cards, etc.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shred old and unnecessary financial documents, statements, and unwanted credit offers.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After you pay your taxes each year, be sure to shred all of your cancelled checks.</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t send personal information such as account numbers, credit card numbers, or PINs via email.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select one credit card with a low credit limit to use for all your online purchases.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediately after you make a Web transaction, completely close your browser.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each time you make an online purchase, use a different credit card to limit your risk.</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store your new and cancelled checks securely.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn off your computer when you’re not using it—don’t leave it in “sleep” mode.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Never download files or click on hyperlinks in emails from people or companies you don’t know.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Install a firewall, virus protection, and spyware on your computer and update them regularly.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep copies of your Social Security card, passport, and driver’s license next to your phone.</td>
<td>NO</td>
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</table>

To maximize Web transaction safety, use a recent version of your Web browser. Web addresses starting with “https” and Web pages with a padlock symbol in the lower right corner are safest.
Security at Home and Online Activity

Instructions:
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<tr>
<td>Keep copies of your Social Security card, passport, and driver’s license next to your phone.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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</table>

Got some more tips of your own? Write them down here:

To maximize Web transaction safety, use a recent version of your Web browser. Web addresses starting with “https” and Web pages with a padlock symbol in the lower right corner are safest.
## ATM, Debit & Credit Card Security Tips Activity (Instructor Copy)

**Instructor note:** Photocopy the activity handout on the next page. Then, divide your class into small groups. For each section of the activity handout, ask the groups to brainstorm different safety and security techniques for using an ATM and their credit, debit and ATM cards. When they're finished, discuss all the tips and techniques listed below.

### Instructions:
Have participants fill in tips and techniques they can use to keep safe while using the ATM, and their credit, debit and ATM cards.

### ATM, Debit & Credit Card Security Tips

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Tips and Techniques</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **At the ATM** | • Example: Be alert and aware of your surroundings.  
• Avoid using an ATM in out-of-the-way or deserted areas. Use ATMs located inside banks or supermarkets in well-lit public areas.  
• If someone has tampered with the ATM, don’t use it. (A criminal may have attached a “skimmer” to steal your financial information.) If a suspicious person offers help with an ATM, refuse and leave.  
• Put your money and ATM card away before you leave the ATM. Always avoid showing your cash. Always verify that the amount you withdrew or deposited matches the amount printed on your receipt. Shred or destroy your ATM receipts before you throw them away. |
| **Deal with loss and theft** | • Report lost or stolen credit cards immediately to the issuing card company and report a lost debit card to your bank.  
• To respond quickly if your cards or ID are lost/stolen, make a chart that lists the credit card name, the financial institution, the account number, and the 24-hour customer service number. Be sure to store the list in a safe place. Never carry it with you. |
| **Care for your card** | • Sign your card on the signature panel as soon as you receive it.  
• Keep cards away from magnets (they can erase information on the cards’ magnetic strip). |
| **Treat cards like cash** | • Protect cards as if they were cash—never let them out of your possession or control.  
• Don’t leave your credit cards in your car’s glove compartment.  
• Don’t lend your cards to anyone, even family or friends. You are responsible for their use.  
• Always be sure to take your ATM card out of the ATM. |
| **PIN safety** | • Never write down your PIN, especially on the back of your card.  
• Memorize it. Don’t write it down and carry it with you in case your wallet is ever stolen.  
• Never tell anyone your PIN. No one from a financial institution, the police, or a merchant should ask for your PIN. You are the only person who needs to know it.  
• When selecting a PIN, avoid picking a number that is easy for others to guess—for example, your name, telephone number, date of birth, or any combination of these.  
• When entering your PIN at the ATM or when making a point-of-sale purchase, cover the number pad so no one near you can see your PIN. Change your PIN from time to time. |
| **When shopping** | • When shopping, be sure that you get your card back after every purchase.  
• Ensure sales vouchers are for the correct purchase amount before you sign  
• Keep copies of your sales vouchers and receipts in a secure place.  
• Don’t volunteer any personal information when you use your credit card  
• Don’t put your driver’s license number on your checks.  
• Review your statements regularly to ensure there are no suspicious charges.  
• Contact your bank immediately if you see a charge you don’t recognize. |
**ATM, Debit & Credit Card Security Tips Activity**

**Instructions:**
Fill in tips and techniques you can use to keep safe while using the ATM, and your credit, debit and ATM cards.

**ATM, Debit & Credit Card Security Tips**

| At the ATM |  
Example: Be alert and aware of your surroundings. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deal with loss and theft</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care for your card</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treat cards like cash</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIN safety</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When shopping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mail Security Activity (Instructor Copy)

Instructor note:
Photocopy the activity handout on the next page. Ask participants to decide which statements are true, and which are false. After your participants complete the activity, walk through each tip and discuss why it is a good idea or not. Then, open the floor to discuss other tips and techniques your participants may have come up with.

Instructions:
Have participants read through the list of recommended tips concerning mail security. Then instruct them to put a checkmark next to the statements that are true.

Mail Security

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mail Security Guidelines</th>
<th>Yes, That's Right!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notify the post office immediately if you change your address.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get a mailbox that you must unlock with a key to remove your mail.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you move, wait 90 days before informing the post office.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t leave your mail for long periods of time in visible, unguarded areas (e.g., apartment lobbies).</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce your risk of mail fraud by signing up for electronic statements or bills.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When you pay bills by mail, put them in your own mailbox for the mail carrier to pick up.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review your statements both in paper and online to detect suspicious activity and fraud.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you’re out of town, put a hold on your mail delivery or have a person you trust pick it up.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you stop receiving mail, wait at least 7 days before contacting the post office.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t put outgoing mail in your residential mailbox. It could be stolen.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put outgoing mail in a secure USPS mail box or hand it directly to a uniformed USPS mail carrier.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use an electronic bill pay service to help keep your information safe.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you’re going away, ask the post office to send your mail to your temporary address (e.g., hotel).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If a company’s regular bills or statements stop reaching you, contact that company immediately.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you stop receiving mail, call the post office immediately.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tip!
If you use the red flags found on some mailboxes to alert your mail carrier of outgoing mail, you are also alerting potential thieves that outgoing mail is in the box!
Mail Security Activity

Instructions:
Read through the list of recommended tips concerning mail security. Put a checkmark next to the statements that are true.

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you stop receiving mail, call the post office immediately.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Write down any other tips you may have concerning mail security and safety.

Tip!

If you use the red flags found on some mailboxes to alert your mail carrier of outgoing mail, you are also alerting potential thieves that outgoing mail is in the box!
Introduction to Fraud

Instructor Note:
Ask your participants some questions about fraud. For example:

- What is fraud?
- How can someone become a victim of fraud?
- What can fraud do to your financial situation?

Key points:

- You also need to understand fraud—the many ways in which dishonest people may try to take your money.
- If criminals get their hands on your credit, debit, or ATM cards, or your personal financial information such as account numbers, passwords, or Social Security number, they can drain your bank accounts or make charges to your credit cards.
- They might also commit a crime called identity theft by taking out loans and obtaining credits cards and even driver’s licenses in your name.
- Millions of people have been identity theft victims in the United States.
- Identity theft can seriously damage your credit and financial reputation, and it could take years to restore your good credit and name. Don’t let it happen to you!
**Instructor note:**
Lead a discussion about fraud. Ask your participants if they know any examples of fraud, and then use these two common schemes to frame your discussion.

**Two Common Fraud Examples**
Here are two common examples of this growing problem—fraudulent payments and phony lenders.

**Common Fraud Examples**

| Fraudulent payments | There are many variations on the fraudulent payment scam, but there's a typical pattern
|                     |   • Someone gives you money (via an electronic payment, check or money order) and then asks you to send cash in return.
|                     |   • When it eventually becomes clear that the person's story's fake and their payment fraudulent, you are responsible for the money you sent them.
|                     | Examples of this scam include:
|                     |   **Work-at-home:** A company promises you easy money working at home. Then they ask you to help them by accepting a payment and then sending them money (minus your pay) via an electronic payment or money order.
|                     |   **Overpayments:** You advertised an item for sale and the buyer “accidentally” sends you more than the price. The buyer then asks you to deposit their payment and send them the extra amount.
|                     |   **Sweethearts:** A special someone you’ve met online promises to come to the U.S. to be with you. They ask you to send them money directly or to deposit their check or money order and send them the cash to cover their travel expenses.
| Phony lender | You receive a notice that the lender who collects your mortgage payment has sold or transferred your service to another lender. But the notice is a fake, and you start sending your mortgage payments to a phony lender!
|                     | Remember: Under federal law, a loan servicer must notify you at least 15 days before any such transfer. Their “goodbye letter” must include all of the contact information and start date for the new servicer. Contact your original lender to confirm that the transfer of service is legitimate.
|                     | Other variations on this scam include being charged phony taxes or fees.

Older people can be at increased risk of being taken advantage of by family, friends, or strangers.
Instructor note:
At this point in the class, consider using this library article as a discussion resource or a takeaway for your participants. You can find this and other library articles at the end of this topic.

Recommended Article: Protect Your Money and Identity

Remember, the online Hands on Banking® program has dozens of additional library articles that you can use and distribute for this and other topics. Visit www.handsonbanking.org to browse all the available articles.
Topic 3 — Protect Yourself Financially

Suggestions for Seniors Activity (Instructor Copy)

Instructor note:
Photocopy the activity handout on the next page. Ask your participants to think about why older people are at an increased risk of being taken advantage of by family, friends and strangers. Then, tell participants to fill in the blank sections. When they are finished, discuss their answers.

Instructions:
Have your participants read these questions and list their answers for each question in the space provided.

Why do you think older people are at increased risk of being taken advantage of financially by family, friends, or strangers?
- Isolation and loneliness
- Recent losses of loved ones
- Physical or mental disabilities
- Lack of familiarity with financial matters and modern technology
- Having family members who are unemployed and/or have financial, substance abuse, or gambling problems

Can you name some examples of elder financial abuse?
- Stealing an older person’s money or property
- Forging an older person’s signature on financial documents such as checks
- Tricking, forcing or scaring an older person into signing a legal contract, such as a deed, will, or power of attorney
- Using the older person’s credit card, property, or possessions without permission
- One individual promising to another lifelong care in exchange for money or property and not following through on the promise

How can seniors avoid elder financial abuse?
- Recognize the warning signs
- Know the profile of perpetrators
- Take steps to reduce risk
Suggestions for Seniors Activity

Instructions:
Read the questions below. List your answers for each question in the space provided.

Why do you think older people are at increased risk of being taken advantage of financially by family, friends, or strangers?

Can you name some examples of elder financial abuse?

How can seniors avoid elder financial abuse?
Instructor note:
At this point in the class, consider using this recommended library article listed below as a discussion resource or a takeaway for your participants. You can find this and other library articles at the end of this topic.

Recommended Article: Suggestions for Seniors

Remember, the online Hands on Banking® program has dozens of additional library articles that you can use and distribute for this and other topics. Visit www.handsonbanking.org to browse all the available articles.
Instructor note:
Photocopy the activity handout following this section. Cut the page into six strips—each one will include a way to monitor financial activity. Divide the class into six groups (if you do not have enough students for six groups, assign two or more warning signs to a group). Hand a strip to each group. Ask them to fill in why and how they can use these tips to monitor their financial activity. After they are finished, ask each group to share their definitions. Use the chart below to provide feedback.

Monitoring Financial Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How to Monitor Your Financial Activity</th>
<th>Tips and Techniques</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Check your statements</td>
<td>Review your account statements as soon as you receive them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By using online banking services, you can review your transactions quickly and frequently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Notify your financial institution immediately if you notice errors or unauthorized activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If your account statement is late in arriving, call your financial institution to find out why.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Always keep your credit card purchase receipts (including online purchases) and check your credit card statements to make sure the purchase amounts are correct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You can review your transactions more quickly and frequently by going online.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Immediately dispute any charges you did not make by notifying your credit card provider.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put disputes in writing</td>
<td>When you become aware of a disputed item, call your financial institution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Always put disputes regarding your credit card statements in writing; otherwise, you may be held legally responsible for the entire amount of the disputed item.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial institutions have specific instructions for notifying them of an unauthorized transaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ask your credit card issuer about their dispute notification requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider online banking</td>
<td>Consider signing up for online banking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This will allow you to monitor your account activity at any time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never tell anyone your online banking password and change it periodically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t use your Social Security number as your online banking username or password.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Monitoring Financial Activity (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How to Monitor Your Financial Activity</th>
<th>Tips and Techniques</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Check your credit report                | • Check your credit report for accuracy at least twice a year. If a report lists unfamiliar accounts with large credit lines, you may be a victim of identity theft.  
• Also review the “Inquiries” section of your reports. Credit reports also tell you who has reviewed your credit history. If a car dealer in another part of the country has pulled your credit report, for example, you may be the victim of identity theft.  
• When you obtain your credit report, be sure to keep it in a secure place. It contains a lot of your sensitive financial information. |
| If your info’s stolen…                 | • If your confidential financial information has been stolen:  
• Contact your financial institution and credit card issuers immediately and alert them to the situation.  
• Contact one of the three major credit bureaus and discuss whether you need to place a fraud alert on your file. This will help prevent thieves from opening a new account in your name.  
• Here is the contact information for each bureau’s fraud division:  
  Equifax 800-525-6285  
  Experian 888-397-3742  
  TransUnion 800-680-7289  
Report all suspicious or fraudulent activity to the Federal Trade Commission at [www.consumer.gov/idtheft](http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft) or by calling 1-877-IDTHEFT. |
| Contact the FTC                        | • The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) works to prevent fraudulent, deceptive, and unfair business practices in the marketplace and to provide information to help consumers spot, stop, and avoid them.  
• The FTC enters Internet, telemarketing, identity theft and other fraud-related complaints into Consumer Sentinel, a secure, online database available to hundreds of civil and criminal law enforcement agencies in the U.S. and abroad.  
• To file a complaint or to get free information on consumer issues, visit [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov) or call toll-free, 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); TTY: 1-866-653-4261. |
Your Best Defense: Monitor Financial Activity (Instructor Copy)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Check your statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Put disputes in writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider online banking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check your credit report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If your info’s stolen…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact the FTC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instructor note:
At this point in the class, consider using this recommended library article listed below as a discussion resource or a takeaway for your participants. You can find this and other library articles at the end of this topic.

Recommended Article: Protect Your Money and Identity

Remember, the online Hands on Banking® program has dozens of additional library articles that you can use and distribute for this and other topics. Visit www.handsonbanking.org to browse all the available articles.
Instructor note:
Summarize this lesson by reviewing these key points with your participants.

Key points from the Money Safety and Security lesson:

- There are too many ways that dishonest people or a few businesses may try to take your hard-earned money away.
- There’s a lot to learn about how to protect yourself financially—whether you’re on the phone, on the Web, at the store, or wherever your day may take you.
Lesson 2: Test Your Judgment

This lesson gives participants the opportunity to test their judgment when it comes to protecting themselves financially. Participants will examine two real-world scenarios and use what they've learned so far to successfully complete the activities.

Learning Objectives
After completing this lesson, participants will be able to:

• Apply judgments in real world situations when it comes to their own finances.
• Fully understand the importance of taking time to make a sound financial decision.
Scenario Activity—On the Telephone (Instructor Copy)

Instructor note:
Photocopy the activity handout on the next page. Ask participants to choose the best possible option, and then, for each option, instruct them to write a few sentences about why it was right or wrong for the situation. After participants finish, lead a group discussion about their choices, using the consequences and feedback provided below.

Instructions:
Have participants read Sam’s story. Based on his situation, choose the best possible option. Then, for each option, direct them to write a few sentences about why the option was right or wrong for Sam’s situation.

Sam’s Story
Sam receives a phone call from his local electric company. The customer service representative explains a special, time-limited offer on a new kind of light bulb that will cut Sam’s electric bill up to 80%. In order to guarantee his order, all he needs to provide is his customer account number, address, and a credit card number. She explains that due to the popularity of this offer, he must respond during this call or he’ll miss out.

1. **Sign up for the offer! It would be a serious mistake to pass up major savings on a monthly bill.**
   Consequences: Sam made a big mistake! How would he know she was even from the electric company? Now, she has his account number and credit card number and it may have all been a scam!
   Feedback: If an offer sounds “too good to be true,” it probably is. The pressure from the salesperson is one more warning sign to watch out for. If the business/offer is legitimate, you’ll always be given an opportunity to think it over and call back.

2. **Use his credit card to buy the light bulbs, but don’t provide his customer account number.**
   Consequences: Sam should have thought twice, because now he’s worried that she was not from the electric company. His credit card number could be stolen. He should have double-checked with the company and asked for a name and number to call back.
   Feedback: Again, if it’s too good to be true, it usually is. Remember, if the deal is legitimate, there’s no reason for the salesperson to apply pressure. Sam should be able to think about it and call back. Now he’s at risk.

3. **Call the electric company directly using the phone number you know is correct.**
   Consequences: Sam called the electric company by using a number on an earlier statement. He found out they don’t even sell light bulbs! If someone’s pressuring him to buy, he takes it as a warning. If they can’t answer all of his questions first, forget it.
   Feedback: This is the best choice. Whenever you’re contacted by a telephone salesperson (or “telemarketer”), ask questions. The fewer they can answer, the more likely that it’s a scam. If it’s a company you know, call them yourself, or check trustworthy sources for information about the company or organization. If someone contacts you to “award a prize” or “verify a statement,” don’t give them information or money. Instead, alert the US Postal Inspection Service.
Scenario Activity—On the Telephone

Instructions:
Read Sam's story. Based on his situation, choose the best possible option. Then, for each option, write a few sentences about why the option was right or wrong for Sam’s situation.

Sam’s Story
Sam receives a phone call from his local electric company. The customer service representative explains a special, time-limited offer on a new kind of light bulb that will cut Sam’s electric bill up to 80%. In order to guarantee his order, all he needs to provide is his customer account number, address, and a credit card number. She explains that due to the popularity of this offer, he must respond during this call or he’ll miss out.

What should Sam do?

1. **Sign up for the offer! It would be a serious mistake to pass up major savings on a monthly bill**
   Should he choose this option? Why or why not?

2. **Use his credit card to buy the light bulbs, but don’t provide his customer account number.**
   Should he choose this option? Why or why not?

3. **Call the electric company directly using the phone number you know is correct.**
   Should he choose this option? Why or why not?
Scenario Activity—An Urgent Email (Instructor Copy)

Instructor note:
Photocopy the activity handout on the next page. Ask participants to choose the best possible option, and then, for each option, instruct them to write a few sentences about why it was right or wrong for the situation. After participants finish, lead a group discussion about their choices, using the consequences and feedback provided below.

Instructions:
Have participants read Jeena’s story. Based on her situation, select the best possible option. Then, for each option, write a few sentences about why the option was right or wrong for Jeena’s situation.

Jeena’s Story
Jeena receives an email that states her immediate attention is required due to a serious problem with one of her credit card accounts. The message says if she doesn’t act quickly, her account may be closed and her credit record damaged. The email asks her to contact the company immediately about her account by clicking on a link to their Web site. What should Jeena do?

1. Click on the Web link and respond to the questions.
Consequences: Jeena clicked the link and entered all her information, but then called the real company found out the email was a “phishing” scam, which means She gave her financial information to fraudsters! What a mess!”
Feedback: You’re likely to become a victim of fraud if you provide information to someone who requests it…without double checking that the company is legitimate. If you’re not sure whether you’re actually communicating with a company that you know and trust, don’t respond. This could be a “phishing” scam. Contact the company yourself before you respond to an email that says “Immediate attention required” or “Please contact us immediately.”

2. Don’t click the link. Call the credit card company directly at the number printed on your card.
Consequences: Jeena played it safe because she knew one of the ways criminals commit fraud is by directing people to phony Web sites that look real. So unless she initiates the communication, she won’t respond. Instead, she calls the company herself to make sure it’s the real phone number for a real company.
Feedback: You’re right! Not responding to the email is smart. If you provide the requested information, you’re likely to find yourself the victim of fraud. In this case, contact the legitimate company directly – using contact information you know is genuine.

3. Click on the link. Make sure the site looks legitimate. If so, provide the information requested.
Consequences: Jeena definitely made a mistake. The site looked legitimate, but after she entered her information, she had a bad feeling about it. She called her credit card company and found out the Web site was phony and that email was an example of “phishing.” Now it looks like her identity and some money may have been stolen. It’s going to take her tons of time to resolve this mess!
Feedback: If you provide information to someone who requests it without double checking that the company is legitimate, you’re likely to find you’re the victim of fraud. If you’re not sure whether you’re actually communicating with a company that you know and trust, don’t respond. Jeena’s money and identity could now be in the hands of fraudsters.
Scenario Activity—An Urgent Email

Instructions:
Read Jeena’s story. Based on her situation, choose the best possible option. Then, for each option, write a few sentences about why the option was right or wrong for Jeena’s situation.

Jeena’s Story
Jeena receives an email that states her immediate attention is required due to a serious problem with one of her credit card accounts. The message says if she doesn’t act quickly, her account may be closed and her credit record damaged. The email asks her to contact the company immediately about her account by clicking on a link to their Web site.

What should Jeena do?

1. **Click on the Web link and respond to the questions.**
   Should she choose this option? Why or why not?

2. **Don’t click the link. Call the credit card company directly at the number printed on your card.**
   Should she choose this option? Why or why not?

3. **Click on the link. Make sure the site looks legitimate. If so, provide the information requested.**
   Should she choose this option? Why or why not?
Lesson 3: Financial Service Providers Can Help

This lesson will teach participants how financial service providers can help them. They will discover how bank policies can help protect them from fraud and secure their information. They will also learn how to identify a responsible lender and recognize the warning signs of predatory lending.

Learning Objectives
After completing this lesson, participants will be able to:

• Identify bank policies that are in place to protect them financially
• Identify a responsible business lender
• Recognize the warning signs of predatory lenders

Start the Discussion
To start a discussion with your participants, ask some open-ended questions. Here are some examples you could use:

• Describe some safety measures that your bank or financial institution uses to protect you from fraudulent activity.
• Who bears the most responsibility when a fraud occurs? You, the credit card company, the phone company, the government, your ISP?
• Who can you talk to at your bank about protecting yourself from fraud?

The Basics
• When it comes to protecting yourself financially, remember that your financial services providers—such as your bank and other lenders—play a valuable role.
Bank Policies and Procedures

**Instructor note:**
Lead a discussion about bank policies and procedures that help protect people from fraud. Use the talking points and tip below to help frame your discussion.

Financial institutions have policies to help protect you from fraud.

**Bank Policies to Help Prevent Fraud**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID Cards</th>
<th>When you make a transaction at the teller window, the teller will typically ask you to provide two forms of identification.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teller</td>
<td>The teller may ask you specific questions about yourself to confirm your identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATM/Debit card reader</td>
<td>You may be asked to swipe your ATM or debit card and enter your PIN while you're standing at the teller window.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check to deposit</td>
<td>When you make a deposit, you may have to wait a period of time before you can withdraw the money. Check with your bank to confirm their policies and procedures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tip!**
If you plan to move, give your bank your new address. They'll send you a notice at your “old” address to confirm you really made this request—not a criminal trying to steal your mail and identity.
Instructor note:
At this point in the class, consider using this library article as a discussion resource or a takeaway for your participants. You can find this and other library articles at the end of this topic.

Recommended Article: How Checks Work

Remember, the online *Hands on Banking*® program has dozens of additional library articles that you can use and distribute for this and other topics. Visit [www.handsonbanking.org](http://www.handsonbanking.org) to browse all the available articles.
Instructor note:
Lead a group discussion about predatory lending. Use the questions and answers below to frame the discussion.

Key point:
It’s important to remember that signing a loan agreement is a serious financial responsibility. You’ll have to live up to the terms that you agree to. That’s why it’s critical that you avoid predatory lenders and understand exactly what you’re signing. Ask a reputable consumer agency not associated with the lender to help you review the loan agreement before you sign.

What is predatory lending? Do you believe it exists?
- Predatory lending is when a lender will deceptively try to convince you to agree to unfair or abusive loan terms…or violate those terms in some way that will make it difficult for you to defend yourself
- Anyone can be a target.
- Know the warning signs to look for can help you to avoid being a victim.

What does it mean to choose a lender the smart way?
- Always be careful when selecting a lender because there are a few you should watch out for.

What can a responsible lender do for you?
- A responsible lender can help you gain financial flexibility and achieve your goals.

How do you find a responsible lender?
- Look for an established company with a good reputation.
- Ask a money-savvy friend, family member, or work associate for a referral.
- Or, ask your local banker or employer.

What are the good signs of a responsible lender?
- Good lenders will put everything in writing, give you time to shop and compare costs and rates before you sign a loan agreement.
- Good lenders typically work for an established company with a good reputation.
**Predatory Lending Warning Signs Activity (Instructor Copy)**

**Instructor note:**
Photocopy the activity handout on the next page. Cut the page into nine strips—one each will include a warning sign. Divide the class into nine groups (if you do not have enough students for nine groups, assign two or more warning signs to a group). Hand out a warning sign to each group. Ask them to define or explain each warning sign as well as tips to avoid these predatory lending practices. After they are finished, ask each group to share their definitions. Use the chart below to help participants explain each warning sign.

### Predatory Lending Warning Signs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predatory Lending Warning Signs</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Encouragement to include false information</strong></td>
<td>- If a lender has changed any of your income or expense information or leaves your income blank, do not sign the loan application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incomplete loan documents</strong></td>
<td>- Never sign a loan document with missing information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Don’t work with a lender who asks you to sign a document that is not completely or accurately filled in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>“Bait and switch” sales tactics</strong></td>
<td>- When a lender makes promises in order to make the sale, then backs out on the promises after the sale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Carefully read and understand the agreement before you sign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Question anything in the document that is not consistent with what you were told.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Don’t sign the agreement if it is unclear, incomplete, or not as promised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equity stripping or skimming (foreclosure rescue)</strong></td>
<td>- Predatory investors or small companies target low-income homeowners facing foreclosure and trick them into signing away their equity and property.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Example: they might bury a document in a stack of loan papers that signs over home ownership to the loan company, or even forge homeowners’ signatures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Loan flipping</strong></td>
<td>- Refinancing a loan can be a responsible and useful financial strategy, but loan flipping is when a lender persuades a borrower to repeatedly refinance a loan, often within a short time frame, charging high points and fees each time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- This will cost you money and postpones the loan principal from being reduced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bi-weekly loan payments</strong></td>
<td>- Some predatory lenders may charge you up to $1,000 for the “privilege” of paying your loan biweekly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Although this can decrease the total interest you pay over the life of the loan and the time it takes to pay in full, such accounts can often be set up for free or for a one-time fee of a few hundred dollars.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Required (or requested) deed signing</strong></td>
<td>- If you are behind on your mortgage payments, a predatory lender may offer to help find new financing and ask you to deed your property over to the lender as a temporary measure to prevent foreclosure. But then the promised loan never comes, and the lender who made you the offer owns your home.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Predatory Lending Warning Signs Activity (Instructor Copy) (continued)

Predatory Lending Warning Signs

| Advertisements promising “No Credit? No Problem!” | • These are often warning signs of scams. Consumers responding to such ads are guided through a phony application process and may even receive fake loan approval documents.  
| | • To receive the approved loan, they are told to pay money up-front for fees or services. Instead they lose their money—and in some cases, their homes. |
| Promises to refinance the loan to a better rate in the future | • No one can make you that promise. Instead, ask the lender if there is anything you can do to get a better rate now. |

Encouragement to include false information

Incomplete loan documents

“Bait and switch” sales tactics

Equity stripping or skimming (foreclosure rescue)

Loan flipping

Bi-weekly loan payments

Required (or requested) deed signing

Advertisements promising “No Credit? No Problem!”

Promises to refinance the loan to a better rate in the future
Lesson Summary

_Instructor note:_
Summarize this lesson by reviewing this key point with your participants.

Key point from the Financial Services Providers Can Help lesson:
- When it comes to protecting yourself financially, remember that your financial services providers—such as your bank and other lenders—play a valuable role.
Lesson 4: Resources for Further Information And Assistance

Instructor note:
Photocopy the informational handout on the next page for your participants. This list is a great resource for them to have in their home or office.

| **Federal Trade Commission** |
| Agency dedicated to preventing consumer fraud. |
| [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov) or call toll-free, 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357) |

| **Fakechecks.org** |
| Web site sponsored by the American Bankers Association and the U.S. Postal Service. |
| [www.fakechecks.org](http://www.fakechecks.org) |

| **ScamBusters.org** |
| Web site dedicated to protecting consumers from scams. |
| [www.scambusters.org](http://www.scambusters.org) |

| **United States Department of Justice** |
| Government site with a focus on the Internet and telemarketing. |

| **FDIC—Don’t Be an Online Victim** |
| Tips from the governmental agency that regulates U.S. banking. |
| [www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/guard](http://www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/guard) |

| **National Consumer’s League Fraud Center** |
| Information and tips for avoiding fraud. |
| [www.fraud.org](http://www.fraud.org) |

| **Anti-Phishing Working Group** |
| A global law enforcement association focused on eliminating fraud and identity theft. |
| [www.antiphishing.org](http://www.antiphishing.org) |

| **Comptroller of the Currency—Consumer Protection News** |
| Federal agency dedicated to a safe banking system. |
| [www.occ.treas.gov/Consumer/phishing.htm](http://www.occ.treas.gov/Consumer/phishing.htm) |

| **Social Security Online—Identity Theft Fact Sheet** |
| Helpful links assembled by the Social Security Administration. |
| [www.ssa.gov/pubs/idtheft.htm](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/idtheft.htm) |

| **Fight Identity Theft** |
| Site for raising risk awareness and presenting steps consumers can take to protect themselves. |
| [www.fightidentitytheft.com](http://www.fightidentitytheft.com) |

| **U.S. Postal Service Inspection—Identity Theft** |
| Collection of helpful tips and links. |
| [www.usps.com/postalinspectors/id_intro.htm](http://www.usps.com/postalinspectors/id_intro.htm) |
### Resources for Further Information and Assistance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Website</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Agency dedicated to preventing consumer fraud.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ftc.gov">www.ftc.gov</a> or call toll-free, 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fakechecks.org</strong></td>
<td>Web site sponsored by the American Bankers Association and the U.S. Postal Service.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.fakechecks.org">www.fakechecks.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ScamBusters.org</strong></td>
<td>Web site dedicated to protecting consumers from scams.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.scambusters.org">www.scambusters.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>United States Department of Justice</strong></td>
<td>Government site with a focus on the Internet and telemarketing.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.usdoj.gov/criminal/fraud/internet">www.usdoj.gov/criminal/fraud/internet</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FDIC—Don’t Be an Online Victim</strong></td>
<td>Tips from the governmental agency that regulates U.S. banking.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/guard">www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/guard</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Consumer’s League Fraud Center</strong></td>
<td>Information and tips for avoiding fraud.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.fraud.org">www.fraud.org</a></td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Anti-Phishing Working Group</strong></td>
<td>A global law enforcement association focused on eliminating fraud and identity theft.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.antiphishing.org">www.antiphishing.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comptroller of the Currency—Consumer Protection News</strong></td>
<td>Federal agency dedicated to a safe banking system.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.occ.treas.gov/Consumer/phishing.htm">www.occ.treas.gov/Consumer/phishing.htm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Security Online—Identity Theft Fact Sheet</strong></td>
<td>Helpful links assembled by the Social Security Administration.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/idtheft.htm">www.ssa.gov/pubs/idtheft.htm</a></td>
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<td><strong>Fight Identity Theft</strong></td>
<td>Site for raising risk awareness and presenting steps consumers can take to protect themselves.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.fightidentitytheft.com">www.fightidentitytheft.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>U.S. Postal Service Inspection—Identity Theft</strong></td>
<td>Collection of helpful tips and links.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.usps.com/postalinspectors/id_intro.htm">www.usps.com/postalinspectors/id_intro.htm</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Topic 3 — Protect Yourself Financially**

**Topic Summary**

_Instructor note:_
_Summarize this topic by reviewing these key points with your participants._

**Key points from the Protect Yourself Financially topic:**
- **Stay alert and aware when you’re at home, on the phone, online, or using the postal service** to protect your hard-earned cash and credit record.
- **Protect your cards as if they were cash** when you shop.
- **Be sure your card is returned to you** and make sure each transaction receipt is accurate.
- **Always keep your receipts in a safe and secure location** and check them later against your statements.
- **Bank policies can help protect you from fraud, but scams, fraud and identity theft are serious problems** that can happen to anyone. And seniors are especially at risk.
- **Always guard your personal information and monitor your financial activity on a regular basis.**
- **Be careful when selecting a lender.** Remember that a responsible lender will answer all of your questions, put everything in writing, and always give you time to decide.

**Additional Activities**
_Some of these activities are designed to extend the new concepts presented in the Protect Yourself Financially Topic. Use these or similar activities to give participants an opportunity to apply what they have just learned to real-life scenarios._

1. Visit [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) to check your report for fraudulent activity.
2. Talk to your banks about online banking. Have them provide an online tour to discuss ways you can set up accounts to help protect yourself financially.
3. Check on the Federal Trade Commission’s website ([www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov)) for information on phony lenders or check schemes. Make sure you’re up-to-date on the latest scams and frauds.
4. If you are going out of town for more than a weekend, have the post office hold your mail and stop delivery of your newspapers. Consider other steps you should take to secure your financial information while you are away.
Appendix

Library Articles & Additional Topic Resources

Use these library articles as a discussion resource or a takeaway for your participants. Remember, the online Hands on Banking® program has dozens of additional library articles that you can use and distribute for this and other topics. Visit www.handsonbanking.org to browse all the available articles.
Protect Your Money and Identity

If criminals get your ATM, debit, or credit cards, or personal financial information such as account numbers, passwords, or Social Security number, they can drain your bank accounts or make charges to your credit cards. They may also commit a crime called identity theft by taking out loans and obtaining credits cards and even driver's licenses in your name.

There are 27 million victims of identity theft every year in the United States. Identity theft can seriously damage your credit and financial reputation, and it may take years to restore your good credit and name.

Don't let it happen to you! Here are tips to help you avoid financial fraud and safeguard your identity, bank accounts, and money:

About fraud and identity theft
- Identity fraud is usually limited to an isolated attempt to steal money from an existing account, such as a charge on a stolen credit card.
- With identity theft, a thief uses your personal information, such as your Social Security number or bank account number, to open accounts or initiate transactions your name. This may cause financial loss or damaged credit.
- If fraudulent transactions occur on your account, it does not automatically mean your identity was stolen. It may be an isolated incident of theft that can be quickly resolved. Contact your bank for more information.

Common ways ID theft happens
According to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), skilled identity thieves use a variety of methods to steal your personal information, including:

1. Dumpster diving. They rummage through your trash looking for bills or other paper with your personal information on it.
2. Skimming. They steal credit/debit card numbers by using a special storage device when processing your card.
3. Phishing. They pretend to be financial institutions or companies and send spam or pop-up messages to get you to reveal your personal information.
4. Changing your address. They divert your billing statements to another location by completing a 'change of address' form.
5. "Old-fashioned" stealing. They steal wallets and purses; mail, including bank and credit card statements; pre-approved credit offers; and new checks or tax information. They steal personnel records from their employers, or bribe employees who have access.
Protect your money and identity (continued)

If you become a victim of identity theft:

• Contact your financial institution and credit card issuers immediately and alert them to the situation.
• Contact one of the three major credit bureaus and discuss whether you need to place a fraud alert on your file. This will help prevent thieves from opening a new account in your name.
• Here is the contact information for each bureau’s fraud division:
  – Equifax 800-525-6285
  – Experian 888-397-3742
  – TransUnion 800-680-7289
• Close any accounts that have been tampered with or established fraudulently.
• File a report with law enforcement officials to help you with creditors who may want proof of the crime.

General fraud prevention tips

• Carry only necessary information with you. Leave your Social Security card or unused credits cards at home in a safe and secure location.
• Protect your Social Security number. Don’t write your Social Security number on a check. Give it out only if absolutely necessary or ask to use another identifier.
• Limit paper statements.
• Shred account statements or documents containing personal or financial information before discarding.
• Review your credit report at least once a year, looking for suspicious or unknown transactions.
• Limit the credit offers you receive.
• Remove your name from marketing lists.
• Never click on links sent in unsolicited emails; instead, type in a Web address you know.
• Keep your personal information in a secure place at home.

Card safety: ATM, debit and credit cards

• Report lost or stolen cards immediately to the company that issued you the card.
• To help you respond quickly in case your cards or ID are lost or stolen, make a chart like this one. Be sure to store the list in a safe place. Never carry it with you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credit card name</th>
<th>Financial institution</th>
<th>Account number</th>
<th>24-hour customer service #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Card safety: ATM, debit and credit cards (continued)

- Sign your card on the signature panel as soon as you receive it.
- Protect your cards as if they were cash—never let them out of your possession or control.
- Do not include your card number in an email.
- Do not give out your card number over the phone unless you initiated the call.
- Be sure that you get your card back after every purchase.
- Don’t leave your credit cards in your car’s glove compartment. A high percentage of credit card thefts are from car glove compartments.
- Don’t lend your cards—credit, debit, or ATM—to anyone. You are responsible for their use. Don’t let your credit cards be used by others, even family and friends.
- Choose a PIN that is easy for you to remember but difficult for others to guess. Don’t use any numbers or words that appear in your wallet (name, birth date, phone number, etc).
- Never tell anyone your PIN. No one from a financial institution, the police, or a merchant should ask for your PIN. You are the only person who needs to know it.
- Don’t volunteer any personal information when you use your cards, other than by displaying personal identification as requested by a merchant.
- Never write down your personal identification number (PIN)—memorize it. Don’t write down your account number and PIN and carry it with you. If your wallet or purse is stolen, someone else could have access to your money.
- When typing in your pin, cover the keypad so others can’t see.
- When selecting a PIN, avoid picking a number that is easy for others to guess—for example, your name, telephone number, date of birth, or any simple combination of these.
- Always make sure that sales vouchers are for the correct purchase amount before you sign them.
- Always keep copies of your sales vouchers, credit card, and Automated Teller Machine (ATM) receipts.
- Always check your billing statement to make sure the purchase amounts are correct and to ensure there are no suspicious charges. Contact your service provider immediately if you see a charge you don’t recognize.
- Always put disputes regarding your billing statements in writing immediately upon becoming aware of the disputed item; otherwise, you may be held legally responsible for the entire amount of the disputed item. Many credit card issuers have specific instructions for notifying them of a billing error dispute. Read your credit card agreement and billing statements carefully for information regarding dispute notification requirements. You may also contact your credit card issuer to ask about their dispute notification requirements.
- Shred or destroy your ATM receipts before you throw them away.
- Keep your cards away from magnets; these can erase the information stored on your card.
- If you receive a replacement card, destroy your old card. Destroy cards for cancelled accounts.
- Shop with merchants you know and trust. Make sure internet purchases are secured with encryption to protect your account information. Look for “secure transaction” symbols.
Protect your money and identity (continued)

ATM security tips

- Think about your personal safety when using an ATM. Because most ATMs give out cash and many accept deposits, it makes sense to be alert and aware of your surroundings no matter where or when you use an ATM. When you’re by yourself, avoid using an ATM in out-of-the-way or deserted areas. Use ATMs located inside banks or supermarkets where other people are around. Use ATMs in well-lit, public areas.
- Be aware of your surroundings when withdrawing funds. If you notice anything out of the ordinary, come back later or use another ATM.
- If it looks like someone has tampered with the ATM equipment, don’t use it. (This could mean that a criminal has attached a “skimmer” to the ATM to steal your financial information.) If a suspicious person offers to help you use the ATM, refuse and leave.
- When typing in your pin, cover the keypad so others can’t see.
- After completing your transaction, remember to remove your card, cash and any printed documents such as receipts or statements.
- Put your money and ATM card away before you leave the ATM. Always avoid showing your cash. Always verify that the amount you withdrew or deposited matches the amount printed on your receipt.
- Take your receipts with you so potential criminals will not know how much you withdrew or how much money is in your account.
- When using a drive-up ATM, keep your car doors locked and your engine running.

Mail precautions

- If you stop receiving mail, call the post office immediately.
- Notify the post office immediately if you change your address.
- Get a mailbox that you must unlock with a key to remove your mail.
- Remove your incoming mail promptly.
- Don’t leave your mail for long periods of time in visible, unguarded areas (e.g., apartment lobbies).
- If you’re out of town, put a hold on your mail delivery or have a person you trust pick it up.
- Consider enrolling in an electronic payment service to reduce the risk of theft of your outgoing checks.
- Reduce your risk of mail fraud by replacing paper invoices, statements and checks with electronic versions, if offered by your employer, bank, utility provider or merchant.
- Review your statements both in paper and online to detect suspicious activity and fraud.
- Don’t put outgoing mail in your residential mailbox. It could be stolen. Put outgoing mail in a secure USPS mailbox or hand it directly to a uniformed USPS mail carrier.
- If you use the red flags found on some mailboxes to alert your mail carrier of outgoing mail, you are also alerting potential thieves that outgoing mail is in the box.
Mail precautions (continued)

- Know your billing and statement cycles. If a company’s regular bills or statements stop reaching
  you, contact that company immediately.
- Use an electronic bill pay service to help keep your information safe.
- If you stop receiving mail, call the post office immediately. Some criminals are able to forge your
  signature and have your mail forwarded elsewhere for the purpose of obtaining information that
  will allow them to apply for credit in your name.
- If you’re told of a forwarding order placed on your mail without your knowledge, go to the post
  office to check the signature and cancel the order. Ask the post office to track down the forwarded
  mail—it can remain in the postal system for up to 14 days, so it may not yet have landed in the
  criminal’s hands.

Bank account security tips

- Report lost or stolen checks immediately
- Review account statements carefully. Ask about suspicious charges.
- Enroll in online account statements if they’re offered through your bank. Review them periodically
  for faster fraud detection.
- Limit the amount of information on checks. Don’t print your driver’s license number or Social Secu-
  rity Number on your checks.
- Store new and cancelled checks in a safe and secure location. Shred cancelled checks when you no
  longer need them.

Mobile banking security tips

- Frequently delete text messages with account balance information, and especially before loaning
  out, discarding, or selling your mobile device.
- Never disclose via text message any personal information (account numbers, passwords, etc.).
- Use the keypad lock or phone lock function on your mobile device when it is not in use. These
  functions password protect your device so that nobody else can use it or view your information.
- Store your device in a secure location.
- Let your bank know as soon as possible if you lose your mobile device or change your phone number.

Telephone safety

- Don’t give your account number over the phone unless you initiated the call.
- When you purchase by phone, for maximum security, use a corded, rather than cordless phone.
- If you’re contacted by a telephone salesperson (or “telemarketer”), ask questions. The fewer ques-
  tions a telemarketer can answer, the less likely that it’s a legitimate business. Write down the name,
  address, and phone number of the businesses or organizations that contact you. Ask for the names
  of other customers who can tell you about their experience with the business or organization.
Protect your money and identity (continued)

Online safety
- Keep your computer operating system up to date to ensure the highest level of protection.
- Use an up to date web browser.
- Install a personal firewall on your computer.
- Install, run, and keep anti-virus software updated.
- Avoid downloading programs from unknown sources.
- Never use your Social Security Number as your username to sign into online accounts.
- Never set your username to be the same as your password.
- Protect your online passwords. Don't write them down or share them with anyone.
- Use secure, encrypted web sites for transactions and shopping.
- Always log off from any banking, e-commerce or merchant web site. If you cannot log off, shut down your browser to prevent unauthorized access to your account information.
- Completely shut down your computer when you’re not using it. Don't leave it in sleep mode.
- Don't send identifying personal information, such as account numbers, credit card numbers, or PINs via email. Financial institutions will never send you an email asking for this type of information.
- Select one credit card with a low credit limit to use for all your online purchases. Tell your credit card provider that you do not want them to raise the limit on this card without your prior written permission.
- Never download files or click on hyperlinks in emails from people or companies you don't know.
- If someone's asking you to buy
  - Unless you initiated the contact, never give out confidential information (such as account numbers, Social Security number, or mother's maiden name) to anyone.
  - Be cautious when you receive offers to buy over the telephone, by mail, or on the Internet. Be especially careful about deals that sound too good to be true. Some of these offers may be illegal scams designed to cheat you. Don't respond to calls or emails requesting your account information to “award a prize” or “verify a statement.”
  - Beware of high-pressure sales people, especially if they tell you the sale must be made now.
  - When in doubt, consult the Better Business Bureau or the U.S. Postal Inspection Service.

Home safety
- Be wary of strangers you allow into your home. Don't leave sensitive information, credit cards or checkbooks lying around.
- Store your new and cancelled checks securely.
- Keep your Social Security card in a secure place.
Home Safety (continued)

• Photocopy your driver’s license, credit cards, car registration, Social Security card and other identification, and keep the copies in a safe place.
• Shred unnecessary financial documents, old bank statements, invoices, and unwanted pre-approved credit offers. If possible, buy a shredder and mix the shredded paper thoroughly before throwing it out.

Monitor your financial activity

• Review your account statements as soon as you receive them. Notify the financial institution immediately if you notice errors or unauthorized activity.
• If your account statement is late in arriving, call your financial institution to find out why.
• Consider signing up for online banking. This will allow you to monitor your account activity at any time.
• Never tell anyone your online banking password and change it periodically.
• Check your credit report for accuracy at least twice a year. If a report lists unfamiliar accounts with large credit lines, you may be a victim of identity theft. Also review the “Inquiries” section of your reports. It tells you who has reviewed your credit history. If a car dealer in another part of the country has pulled your credit report, for example, you may be the victim of identity theft.

What is “phishing”?

• Phishing is usually a two-part scam involving email and spoof websites.
• Fraudsters, also known as phishers, send email to a wide audience that appears to come from a reputable company. This is known as a phish email.
• In the phish email are links to websites that spoof or imitate a reputable company’s websites.
• Fraudsters hope to convince victims to give up their personal information by using clever and compelling language, such as an urgent need for you to update your information immediately.
• Once obtained, personal information can be used to steal money, or transfer stolen money into a different account.
• Fraudsters obtain email addresses from many places on the web. They also purchase email lists and sometimes guess email addresses.
• Fraudsters generally have no idea if people they send phish emails to are actual bank customers or not. They hope a percentage of the phish emails they send will be received by customers.
• A new form of fraudulent emails, called vishing or voicemail phishing, involves emails that contain fraudulent telephone numbers instead of links. Recipients of vishing emails are instructed to call this number and disclose personal and account information. Remember: always communicate with your bank by using a number you know to be associated with it, like the number found on the back of your debit card.
Protect your money and identity (continued)

Email & phish security tips

- Be wary of suspicious emails. Never open attachments, click on links, or respond to emails from suspicious or unknown senders.
- If you receive a suspicious email that you think is a phish email, do not respond or provide any information. Send the email to Anti-Phishing Working Group at reportphishing@antiphishing.org. Also, follow any phish email reporting procedures established by your bank.
- If you respond to a phish email with personal information, contact your bank immediately.

What is “skimming”?

- Skimming is a form of financial fraud where criminals copy the magnetic stripe encoding from your credit card using a hand-held device called a skimmer, which resembles an ATM keyboard. Each skimmer can hold data from hundreds of different credit cards.
- Once your credit card has been swiped through the device, the thief has the information needed to make a counterfeit card.
- Thieves often sell the data to other people. The data can be downloaded into a computer and emailed anywhere around the world and is used to make counterfeit credit cards.
- Monitor your credit card statements carefully and report any unauthorized activity immediately.

About Scams

- Fraudsters try to contact and defraud potential victims using various means. Once they contact potential victims, they use compelling language and scenarios to scam them.
- If you're involved in a situation that matches one of the following descriptions, it could be a scam and you should contact your bank immediately:
  - **Job scams:** You are paid or receive a commission to facilitate money transfers through your account or apply for a job that asks you to set up a new bank account.
  - **Dating scams:** Someone you met through an online dating site or chat room asks you to send money for a variety of reasons including a need for urgent surgery or to make travel arrangements to meet in person.
  - **Lottery or sweepstakes scams:** You receive notice that you are the winner of a lottery that you did not enter, but must pay a small percentage for alleged taxes or other fees before you can receive the rest of your prize.
  - **Internet scams:** You receive a check for something you sold over the internet, but the amount of the check is more than the selling price. You are instructed to deposit the check, but send back the difference in cash.
    - **OR** You receive a check from a business or individual different from the person buying your item or product.
    - **OR** You are instructed to transfer money, or receive a transfer of money, as soon as possible.
- Remember, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
Hands on Banking
Library Article: Protect Your Money and Identity

Scam prevention tips

- Don’t accept payments for more than the amount of the service with the understanding that you send them the difference.
- Don’t accept checks from people you’ve only met online.
- Don’t accept jobs in which you are paid or receive commission for facilitating money transfers through your account.
- Be wary of job offers that require you set up a new bank account.
- You are ultimately responsible and liable for all deposits made into your account, whether they are a check, money order, transfer, etc.
- Don’t accept payments for more than the amount of the service with the understanding that you send them the difference.
- Don’t accept checks from people you’ve only met online.
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- You are ultimately responsible and liable for all deposits made into your account, whether they are a check, money order, transfer, etc.

We invite you to contact Wells Fargo for further information and assistance. Visit our Web site at wellsfargo.com or any Wells Fargo store.
Protect your money and identity (continued)

Resources to learn more
Here is a list of helpful Web sites for further information and assistance to protect yourself financially.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or call toll-free, 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357)</td>
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Suggestions for Seniors

For a variety of reasons, older people can be at increased risk of losing their money and property to family, friends, or strangers. These factors include:

- Isolation and loneliness.
- Recent losses of loved ones.
- Physical or mental disabilities.
- Lack of familiarity with financial matters.
- Having family members who are unemployed and/or have financial, substance abuse, or gambling problems.

Some examples of this criminal activity, often called elder financial abuse, include:

- Stealing an older person’s money or property.
- Forging an older person’s signature.
- Tricking, forcing or scaring an older person into signing a legal contract, such as a deed, will, or power of attorney.
- Using the older person’s credit card, property, or possessions without permission.
- Promising lifelong care in exchange for money or property and not following through on the promise.

People who commit these crimes may:

- Claim to love the older person in order to gain access to their money (“sweetheart scams”).
- Seek employment as personal care attendants, counselors, etc., to gain access.
- Drive through neighborhoods to find persons who are alone and isolated, or contact recent widows/widowers through newspaper death announcements.
- Move from community to community to avoid being caught.

Dishonest business people, or persons posing as such, may:

- Overcharge for services or products.
- Use deceptive or unfair business practices.
- Use their positions of trust or respect to gain agreement from their victim.
Suggestions for seniors (continued)

**Warning signs of elder financial abuse include:**

- Unpaid bills, eviction notices, or notices to disconnect utilities.
- Bank transactions that the older person cannot explain, or unusual account activity, especially withdrawals.
- Bank statements and canceled checks stop being sent to the elder's home.
- The older person has new “best friends.”
- The older person is unaware of financial arrangements that have been made for him or her, or has signed documents he or she didn't understand.
- The level of care being received by the older person is inadequate given his or her financial resources.
- A caregiver shows a high level of interest in the older person’s finances.
- A caregiver gives unlikely explanations about the older person's finances.
- Some of the older person's possessions are missing.
- Suspicious signatures appear on checks or other documents.
- There is an absence of documentation for financial arrangements.

**Some tips for reducing your risk**

- Never allow strangers into your home. They might steal checks, jewelry, or other valuables.
- Never agree to have work done on your home without getting estimates from at least two different vendors with good reputations.
- Consider asking your bank and credit card companies to send duplicate copies of your bills to an adult child whom you trust.
- Tear up or shred unused credit card applications you receive by mail to avoid identity theft.
- Never leave mail in your mailbox for the carrier to collect. Signed checks and information about your bank accounts can easily be stolen this way.
- Ask your bank to call you if a check over a certain amount is ever presented to them for payment.
- Do not send money to people who contact you by telephone. Avoid prize offers, travel packages, and get-rich-quick schemes. Many of these are scams. Say no to requests for money from unknown charitable or religious organizations.
- When on the telephone, do not give out your account numbers or Social Security number unless you initiated the call.
- Stay in touch with relatives so that you aren’t isolated, since isolation can make you an easier target for criminals.
- Perform a background check on all caregivers. Make sure they come from an agency with a good reputation.
- Document your financial arrangements: Put all financial instructions in writing. Keep up-to-date records of all financial transactions in a safe place.
Hands on Banking
Library Article: Suggestions for Seniors

Some tips for reducing your risk (continued)

• Review your health care billing: Question bills for services that you do not understand. Never give your Medicare or other health coverage numbers to unauthorized providers or those claiming to provide “free” health care services.

• Avoid living trust seminars. Some of these are scams. Instead, seek assistance from a lawyer specializing in elder estate planning.

Safe banking for seniors

• Sign up for direct deposit with your bank. This way, deposits go directly into your accounts and can’t be intercepted by others.

• Keep your checks in a safe place.

• Don’t sign a blank check allowing someone else to fill in the amount.

• Review your bank statements every month.

• Check your credit history every 3-6 months.

• Never give someone your ATM, credit card, personal identification number (PIN) or Social Security number. Check your bank statements carefully for unauthorized withdrawals. Be cautious of joint accounts, as both parties have equal access to the money. When in doubt, contact the bank to stop payment on checks, to flag or to put a hold on the account, or to close an account.

• Be cautious about signing powers of attorney: Before signing a power of attorney for a bank account, general purposes, or for financial management, know and trust the person that you are naming as the agent. A power of attorney is a powerful legal document that can sometimes be used by dishonest persons to “legally steal” someone’s money and assets. Consult an attorney or make an appointment with legal services before executing a power of attorney.

• If you need help writing out your bills, consider automatic bill payment services through a bank or hiring a bonded professional. If there is someone helping you with personal finances or bill paying, ask a trusted friend or professional to regularly review bank and other financial statements.

• Establish relationships with financial professionals: Get to know your banker, attorney and/or financial advisor. They can help detect changes or unusual activity that might signal problems.

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