

Your Credit and Budget Work Together

Good credit and a thoughtful budget go hand in hand. Staying organized, making payments on time, and borrowing responsibly help you maintain eligibility for future loans and start your career with confidence.

Quick Recap:

Keep credit healthy. Pay on time and manage balances wisely.

Use your budget as a guide. Plan ahead for costs and reduce financial surprises.

Borrow only what you need. Revisit your plan each semester to stay on track.

Graduate and professional school are big investments in your future. By building healthy credit habits and a sustainable budget, you'll stay on track today, tomorrow, and long after graduation.

[Learn more about graduate loans and financial wellness.](#)



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Financial Skills

*That Support You in
Grad School & Beyond*



Discover simple strategies to manage your budget and credit, helping you borrow smart, qualify for loans year after year, and stay financially confident throughout grad school.



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Managing & Maintaining Your Credit

Why Your Credit Matters in Graduate School



Strong credit plays a key role in your borrowing experience. Lenders look at your credit history to determine your eligibility, interest rate, and even whether you'll need a cosigner. Maintaining good credit gives you more flexibility and keeps your financial options open year after year.

Tips for Maintaining Good Credit

- Pay on time — every time. Even one missed payment can impact your credit score.
- Keep balance(s) low. Aim to use less than 30% of your available credit.
- Limit new accounts. Opening too many new cards or loans at once can lower your score.
- Review your credit report annually. Review your report at AnnualCreditReport.com to check for accuracy and dispute any errors.
- Communicate with your cosigner. On-time payments help protect both your credit and theirs.

Pro Tip: Smart credit habits today can pay off tomorrow. Building good credit in grad school may help you qualify for better rates or refinancing options down the road.

Budgeting for Graduate Students

Make Your Budget Work for You

Your budget is your financial roadmap. It helps you plan for tuition, living expenses, and those “extras” that come with grad school, all while protecting your credit and keeping your borrowing manageable. A solid budget gives you control and confidence as you move through your program.

Budgeting Tips to Stay on Track

- Know your total costs. Include tuition, fees, books, housing, transportation, and program-specific expenses. Consider recurrent monthly expenses for groceries, take-out, utilities, cell phone, etc.
- Plan for variable costs. Budget for exam prep, internships, or travel — the costs that don't come every month.
- Automate your savings. Even \$25 a month adds up and builds healthy financial habits.
- Track and adjust. Review your spending monthly and make changes as needed to stay on target.
- Borrow with purpose. Revisit your loan totals annually to ensure you're borrowing only what you truly need.

