

Many young people are taking full advantage of the latest government initiatives to boost the housing market. But, by having an excellent credit rating, it doesn't necessarily mean that credit applications will be approved, as the lack of credit history can also have a significant impact on the outcome. A recent survey conducted by a major credit card provider, Aqua, found that three in five 18-24 year olds have never even looked at their credit score, and typically this is the age group most likely to be rejected.

Once you know what lenders are looking for, you will be in a better position to sway their opinion in your favour. With this in mind, we've put together a guide outlining some of the top tips to help people achieve the credit scores that they need for overdrafts and mortgages, so that they stand a better chance of getting their first foot firmly on the property ladder.

Keep Your Information Up-To-Date | it's hugely important to keep the information kept on your file as up-to-date as possible, including phone numbers, addresses, and marital status', as many lenders will use this as a key point of assuring you're reliable as well as stable. If and when you find that information isn't up-to-date, or that you have missed a payment, you can request a 'notice of correction' to your file to explain why. Make sure that the advisory note provides a detailed perspective to any future lenders.

Get on a Roll | getting yourself onto an electoral roll can greatly affect your chances of approval, as credit agencies use this information to confirm your identity, and ultimately to prevent fraud. If you're not on the roll when making an application it'll appear that you don't exist, or that you're starting afresh with no credit record – both of which may have a negative impact.

Know Your Credit Every Time You Apply | before applying for any form of credit, do your research and check whether there is anything in your credit rating that may lead to rejection. Doing so on sites such as Experian or Equifax costs as little as £2, but it can have an impact on your future ability to take out mortgages or other loans.

Space Out Your Applications | by shopping across the market to establish which credit provider is best suited to your needs, the traces of applications can appear on your file and may pose a question to lenders – why are they applying for so many loans in such a short period of time? If you wouldn't

like your research to show on your file, request a 'soft-search' or quotation which does not show on any records, thus protecting your rating. Before committing to searches, establish what kind of search they will be carrying out and whether this may have an effect in the future.

Play Your Cards Right – and Don't Hold Too Many | credit and store cards that you don't currently use will still be shown on your records, and some lenders may worry that too much credit is available to you. One option is to cut down on the number of credit and store cards that you have active so that you're not using too little in contrast to the amount you have available. On the other hand, overloading the ones you do use can result in lenders calculating the percentage that is available to you against what you are using – too much isn't necessarily a good thing!

Build On Your Reputation | mortgage providers need to look at how you have used credit in the past. Increasing the chance of being approved for a credit application can also be affected by staying within overdraft limits, repaying outstanding balances on credit cards or store cards, as well as making payments reliable and steady. Also, building relationships with a mortgage provider beforehand can have an impact on the likeliness of being approved, and this can be done by setting up a current account with them, so that they can experience firsthand your cash flow and reliability, as well as any payments being made to savings accounts.

Stick to Landlines | mobile numbers are a great way of ensuring that you are available to contact at any time, but with more and more phones and deals becoming available, it's easy to switch numbers and forget to change them on credit applications. And, they don't provide the same sense of stability to lenders as home numbers do – so, if you have a landline, be sure to include it on your files.

**Your home may be repossessed if you do not keep up repayments on your mortgage.
A fee of £295 per mortgage is payable on application.**



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