



Extension Connection

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The mission of K-State Research and Extension Family and Consumer Sciences is to link education with life experiences to help people improve their lives, their families and their communities. Family and Consumer Sciences professionals support essential life skills including Community Development, Healthy Lifestyle Choices, Leadership & Volunteer Development, Relationship Development and Resource Management.

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Tips for a Strong Financial New Year

The holidays give you the chance to spend time with loved ones and friends, catch up on your favorite TV shows and make resolutions for the New Year. While it can be overwhelming thinking about what you'll do differently next year, focusing on your financial future is a great place to start. For a strong financial new year try these six tips:

1. **Check Your Credit Report.** Because it affects your ability to get a loan or job, and can help you avoid identity theft, you should check your credit report at least once a year. Reviewing it can also help you understand your credit score, a system used by banks, credit card companies, and other businesses to figure out how likely you are to pay back money you borrow.
2. **Manage Your Debt to Rebuild Your Credit.** It's never easy to face financial difficulties but ignoring your debt may cause bigger problems. Learn the things to do right away if you cannot pay your credit card bills. Recovering from a financial blow can take time.

3. **Protect Yourself from Scams.** When a product or opportunity sounds too good to be true, it usually is.
4. **Know Your Mortgage Rights.** How to finance a home can be one of the biggest decisions you'll make? You can prepare for and manage this responsibility by knowing the rules that protect you when shopping for a mortgage and your rights once you have one.
5. **Don't Rush Big Financial Decisions.** When choosing between financial products and services, it's easy to feel pressured into making snap decisions. For example, before applying for a new credit card, think about how you plan to use it and shop around to find the best card for you.
6. **Save for a New Financial Goal.** If your financial situation changes your income goes up or down, or priorities switch you may need to set new objectives for yourself. To reach those new goals think outside of the box, like saving in creative ways. Try setting aside part of your next tax refund to reach that goal.

For additional information, contact the Wildcat Extension District, Crawford County, 620-724-8233, Labette County, 620-784-5337, Montgomery County, 620-331-2690, Pittsburg Office, Expanded Food and Nutrition Education (EFNEP), 620-232-1930.

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