

# Around the House

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## Points of Interest...

- 5 Steps to Increase Your Credit Score
- Tips if You're Selling Your House & if You're Buying a Home
- Can't Save Enough Money?
- GetHuman.com – Telephone Shortcuts to Reach a Real Person.

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## How You Can Improve Your Credit Score

By: Linda Ferrari, [www.CreditResourceCorp.com](http://www.CreditResourceCorp.com)

Good credit is your golden ticket to financial freedom. Planning for tomorrow, by working on increasing your credit score today, can eliminate the risk of paying higher rates on mortgages, consumer loans and even insurance premiums. Here are 5 steps to dispute errors on your credit report!

**Step 1** – Make sure that you only send your dispute letter to the credit bureau(s) reporting the derogatory information. Not all creditors report to all bureaus. If you send a dispute letter to a bureau who is NOT reporting derogatory info, you run the risk of having the information ADDED to that bureau and your score would go down.

**Step 2** – Make sure you send dispute letters by certified mail with a return receipt so that you can prove delivery.

**Step 3** – Include copies of any supporting documents

**Step 4** – Keep a log of letters sent, dates and names of people you have talked to about making corrections to your report.

**Step 5** – Each bureau has SEVERAL mailing addresses. If your first dispute comes back without being changed, send it to another address. You can access all of the addresses at [www.CreditResourceCorp.com](http://www.CreditResourceCorp.com) and click on “Resources” in the toolbar.

Errors can appear on your credit report. These can be human errors. They could even be unauthorized accounts set up in your name by an identify thief. Your credit score is so important to your current financial well-being and is instrumental in you getting lower rates on virtually everything you buy!



**Grow Your Credit Score!**

## 4 Tips if You're Selling...4 Tips if You're Buying

### 4 Tips if You're Selling

#### **Tip #1 – Get Real About the Price!**

It's a big mistake to base the price on yesterday's market. Pricing the home at the "best" price right from the start will help it sell quicker. Not only should you check what homes like yours have sold for within the last 60 days, check the listing prices, too.

#### **Tip #2 – Interview Real Estate Agents.**

Consider hiring an experienced agent, who has been through the good times—and the bad. Create a list of questions; ask each agent you interview the SAME questions, so you can get an idea of how each will work for you. Be sure to ask, "How will you market my home?" and ask for specific details.

#### **Tip #3 – Hire a Home Stager.**

You've got to "glam up" your home. Get rid of the clutter. Re-arrange the furniture. Re-paint and choose colors and curtains that make the room appear spacious.



#### **Tip #4 – Offer an Incentive.**

Don't offer trips or big screen TVs. People will assume you are desperate. Instead, consider offering to pay part of the buyers' closing costs or offering a \$1000 selling bonus (extra) to the agent bringing the buyer to you.

### 4 Tips if You're Buying

#### **Tip #1 – Since You Can't "Time" the Bottom, Just Pick a Great House.**

This is the best buyers have had it in 2 years! Rates go up and down. So do real estate values. Rates are low. Inventory is high. Find the perfect place and drive a hard bargain.

#### **Tip #2 – Buy Now Because Rates are Low.**

While the Federal Reserve has slashed prime rates, mortgage rates don't necessarily follow the Fed. However, fixed rates are extremely low and even if home prices fall further, a 1% increase in the rate could decrease your purchasing power by \$25,000.

#### **Tip #3 – Don't Buy a Cheap House.**

Buy good schools. So what if you get a good deal on a foreclosed home. Look for areas with highly rated schools because they fare much better during economic down turns.



#### **Tip #4 – Interview Real Estate Agents.**

Since the seller pays most agents, and more sellers are offering commission incentives on their home, make sure you are not being steered to a home where the agent makes more money. Agree up front that any extra bonus be used towards your closing costs.

## Just Can't Seem to Save Enough Money?

"Why did I *buy* THAT thing?" Walking around your house, have you ever looked at an item you purchased and wished you would have put the money in the bank instead?

It's no secret that our spending habits are driven in part by the crowd we hang around with. But there's more than envy and status involved here. Most of us don't like to do the math and even fewer actually *enjoy* keeping a budget.

According to Ronald Wilcox and his new book called *Whatever Happened to Thrift?*, he says that our brains trick us when it comes to spending habits.

"We tell people about it when we go out to eat at a nice restaurant, but we don't convey the same information when we eat mac and cheese at home." As a result, we have a skewed view of our friends' standard of living. We also see people in the news, who are doing better than we are and it distorts our view even more.



Wilcox's advice? Decide how much you are going to save **FIRST**, and then live on the money you have left every month. Signing up for automatic savings at work will help. His other advice? Widen your social circle to include "thrifty-minded" friends!

## About Approved Team Lending.....

*Approved Team Lending is a team of Experienced Mortgage Professionals dedicated to putting our clients FIRST. We strive to build long-term relationships by helping clients achieve their goals and uphold a culture based on integrity and fair dealings. We feel that keeping our clients informed about new loan programs, ways to improve credit, and tips on managing their financial well-being are critical in maintaining good relationships. Once you join our team, you will fully experience what it means to have your needs put first.*

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## Trapped in Telephone Purgatory?

Has this ever happened to you? Your latest credit card statement comes in the mail. You find an error. However, you can't bear the thought of making that dreaded phone call to the so-called *customer service department*. The idea of facing the telephone maze of pressing buttons, repeating personal information, over and over again, is so daunting, you actually look at the dollar amount and consider paying the charge so you don't have to deal with the telephone purgatory.

Thanks to a computer programmer/blogger named Paul English, you can now talk to a real human in a fraction of the time. Paul and his Internet friends have taken the time to compile a huge list of major companies, along with telephone shortcuts you can use to reach a real person in record time. For example:

FedEx®	Say "agent" at each prompt
America Online®	Don't press or say anything
Citibank	Press 0# 0# 0# 0# 0# 0# (6 times)
E-Bay®	Press 0 after the 1 <sup>st</sup> 2 prompts
MasterCard®	Press 000 at each prompt



To view the entire list of company phone numbers and instructions, visit [www.GetHuman.com](http://www.GetHuman.com) and click on the database link. Consider book marking this site because companies are constantly changing their phone number.