

## Banking

### Choosing a Bank

Most people choose banks with branch offices or ATM's near where they live, work, or study. It is not difficult to change banks, so if you choose one and decide you do not like it, you can always choose a different bank. All the banks and credit unions list on the comparison chart are covered by the [Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation](#) [1] or [National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund](#) [2] which provide U.S. government insurance for your account. As of 2011 the deposit insurance limit is \$250,000.

### Opening a Bank Account

To open an account, you will need identification, such as a passport. F and J-visa holders do not need a Social Security number to open a bank account or for most other financial transactions. Banks may ask you to fill out an [Internal Revenue Service form W-8BEN](#) [3] to prove that you are exempt from the requirement of providing a Social Security number.

After you have opened your account, you can also sign up for online banking. Most banks do not require a social security number for online banking.

As of June, 2010, the following Ann Arbor banks will allow you to sign up for online banking without a social security number if you do not have one: Bank of America, Bank of Ann Arbor, Chase, Citizens Bank, Comerica Bank, Flagstar Bank, Midwest Financial Credit Union, PNC, U-M Credit Union, United Bank & Trust-Washtenaw.

When you open your account, be sure that you understand any fees that might apply. Read the banking terms and explanations section below before opening your account.

### Banking Terms and Explanations

#### Automated Teller Machine (ATM)

You can complete many transactions at an ATM, including cash withdrawals, deposits, and transfers between checking and savings accounts. You can also view your account balance. This is free at your own bank and its branches, but you may be charged a transaction fee when you use a different bank's ATM. You will need an ATM card or a debit card to use the ATM machine.

#### ATM Safety Tips

ATMs are conveniently located all around Ann Arbor and on the U-M campus. They are convenient, but

you must be cautious when using one. Thefts do occur, usually at night and in poorly lit areas. To protect yourself and your money:

- Stand directly in front of the ATM, so no one can see you enter your personal identification number (PIN).
- Do not keep your PIN in your wallet or with your ATM card.

### **Credit Card**

A credit card allows you to charge items without having to pay the costs immediately. A monthly statement will show the charges made on the card and the amount you have to pay the credit card company. If the full amount is not paid by the due date, fees and a high interest rate might apply.

### **Credit Unions**

Credit Unions are nonprofit, cooperative financial institutions owned and run by their members. There is a [University of Michigan Credit Union](#) [4] with branches on campus.

### **Currency Exchange Services**

Services to exchange currency are not offered by most banks in Ann Arbor. There is a currency exchange service at Detroit Metro Airport. Two local travel agencies, [Boersma Travel](#) [5] and [Conlin Travel](#) [6] will exchange currency.

### **Debit Card (also called Check Card)**

A debit card is connected to your checking account and is used almost like a regular credit card (such as MasterCard or Visa), except that the charges made are deducted from your checking account immediately upon purchase. Your debit card can also be used in the ATM machine. There is no charge for the service, but there may be a limit on the number of transactions per month. Check with your bank.

### **Direct Deposit**

Direct Deposit can be used to have your salary deposited into your bank account by your employer. There is no charge but there may be a limit on the number of free direct deposit transactions per month.

### **Minimum Opening Deposit**

This is the amount needed to open a bank account. You might have to pay a monthly charge if the account balance drops below a certain level during the month. Students may be able to avoid this fee by opening a special student account.

### **Online Banking and Bill Paying**

Online banking allows you to visit a secure web site and check your bank balance, transfer funds, etc. Most banks offer online banking free of charge if you have a checking account with them. Ask your bank about any charges for services. Also ask if a social security number is required for online banking; some but not all Ann Arbor banks have this requirement.

### **PIN**

Personal Identification Number: Used at ATM machines and with debit cards to verify your account. To protect your account, do not give your PIN to anyone who should not have access to your account.

### **Statement of Account**

Every month you will receive a statement of account for your checking and/or savings account in the mail. It reflects all activity in your account(s) and gives your current account balance. You can also

arrange to view your bank statement online.

### **Travelers' Checks**

Check the web site of the financial institution (American Express, for example) that issued your travelers' checks for a list of banks that will cash your checks. Also, if you have an account at a local bank, that bank will also usually be able to cash your travelers checks.

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**Source URL:** <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/resources/life/banking>

### **Links**

[1] <https://www.fdic.gov/>

[2] <http://www.ncua.gov/about/ncusif.aspx>

[3] <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw8ben.pdf>

[4] <https://www.umcu.org/>

[5] <http://boersmatravel.com/>

[6] <http://conlintravel.com/leisure-travel/>