



Top 10 Credit Card Traps

1. **Universal default** The utility bill you sent in a little late may be the reason for your card's skyrocketing interest rate.
2. **Change of terms** Credit card terms are always in flux--those long notices in tiny print may mean you lose.
3. **Teaser rates** The low rate you signed up for expires you pay more.
4. **Minimum payment** If you pay the minimum payment every month you may be on the hook for a very long time. [Click for details!](#)
5. **On time payment** You mail the bill before the due date, but it still might be counted as late.
6. **Double cycle billing** If you alternate between paying off and carrying a balance, you're paying more interest.
7. **Cash advances/convenience checks** The interest rates on these are higher than for your credit card.
8. **Penalty interest rates** Late payments can raise your interest rate from 7% to 27%!
9. **Fees, fees, and more fees** As if the penalties weren't enough, there are oftentimes more fees for pay-by-phone and charging in a foreign country.
10. **Balance transfer switcheroos** A seemingly lower APR increases your debt!

[Click here](#) for Consumers Union tips and more details about these traps.