



---

## Uploaded to the VFC Website

▶▶▶ **October 2013** ◀◀◀

---

This Document has been provided to you courtesy of Veterans-For-Change!

Feel free to pass to any veteran who might be able to use this information!

For thousands more files like this and hundreds of links to useful information, and hundreds of "Frequently Asked Questions, please go to:

[Veterans-For-Change](#)

---

*Veterans-For-Change is a A 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization*

*Tax ID #27-3820181*

*CA Incorporation ID #3340400*

*CA Dept. of Charities ID #: CT-0190794*

---

### ***If Veterans don't help Veterans, who will?***

We appreciate all donations to continue to provide information and services to Veterans and their families.

[https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=\\_s-xclick&hosted\\_button\\_id=WGT2M5UTB9A78](https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=WGT2M5UTB9A78)

---

### **Note:**

VFC is not liable for source information in this document, it is merely provided as a courtesy to our members & subscribers.



# Avoid Losing Your Credit Card Rewards

by Bill Hardekopf

---

If you pay off your credit card balance on time every month, then using a credit card can actually make you money. That's because of the rewards that come with over half of the credit cards on the market.

The rewards come in many popular forms, such as cash back, airline miles or points. But they can also be things like merchandise from your favorite NFL team, NASCAR souvenirs, and discounts at bookstores or home improvement stores.

Consumers should realize you don't "own" your rewards, and there are ways to lose them. That can be very costly if you have accumulated a significant amount.



Here are seven ways to lose your credit card rewards and how you can protect them.

1. **Miss a payment** - New reward points are added to your total after you make your monthly payment. If you fail to make this payment each month, you will not receive those rewards. Some issuers may withhold rewards if you don't make payments on time. You may be able to reinstate them after the payment is made, but that reinstatement fee can be costly. Late payments can happen to anyone from time to time. To avoid this, set up a payment alert or regular electronic payments through your bank.
2. **Break the cardholder agreement** - If you do something that violates the credit card agreement, you could forfeit your rewards.
3. **You close the account** - If you close your account, you will lose your rewards. The rewards don't transfer or cash out with you, so use the rewards before closing the card.
4. **Issuer closes the account** - If the card issuer closes the account for any reason, the cardholder loses the rewards.
5. **The credit card company changes the rewards program** - Your credit card company has the power to change your rewards program at any time, and this could set you back with your

rewards. They will send a notice before the changes, so pay attention to the notices that you get in the mail. For example, Southwest Airlines informed members this week that its Rapid Rewards frequent-flier program is increasing the number of points needed to get Southwest's cheapest tickets. The "Wanna Get Away" reward flight bookings made on or after March 31, 2014 will require 70 points per dollar. This is a 16.7% increase from the 60 points per dollar currently required.

6. **Inactivity** - You can lose rewards on some cards if you don't use the card within a certain time period. If you plan on only using the card sporadically, read the fine print to learn what could happen to your rewards. Some airline rewards expire after 18 months of inactivity. Make a small purchase each month to keep your account active, or set up a recurring payment on the card.
7. **Returned purchase** - If you return a certain purchase, you forfeit the rewards and they will be deducted from your account.

Protect your points by using them. Letting your points accumulate forever carries the risk of losing them. Have a plan for your rewards and find the way to make them work for you.

---

Bill Hardekopf is CEO of [LowCards.com](http://LowCards.com), a site that simplifies the confusion of shopping for credit cards. It is a free, independent website that helps consumers easily compare credit cards in a variety of categories such as lowest rates, rewards, rebates, balance transfers and lowest introductory rates. It also gives an unbiased ranking and review for each card.