

# *Your Credit Score: A Wrong Number Can Cost You a Lot*

*Myths, lies, misunderstandings, frightening stories, and ads from for-profit companies trying to sell you, have created an entire country of people who generally know how important their credit score is, but not much more. And what most people think they know just isn't true.*

More and more of you live in a world that knows you by one number or another, instead of your name. From your PIN to your social security and employee number, many of these are unavoidable. But there's one number that tells the world a lot more about you than any other, and not always accurately; it's arguably the most important number in your life: your credit score.

That magical number between 300 and 850 is calculated off a super-secret formula that nobody really understands, but controls more parts of your life than you realize – in way more areas of your life than it should. It really is the one number you may not want to live without.

Nothing about your credit score is black and white. The various parts of your score that will move up or down depend entirely on your handling of credit. Anything you did (or didn't do) will raise or drop your score. But how long anything negative will take to correct, depends on a number of factors that are unique to you and your credit report. In other words, there isn't a sure-fire answer that states, if you do this or that, your score will move up by 27 points on February 12th next year. The good news is that the basics of what impacts your score aren't difficult to understand, so it is possible to have total control over what you want your score to be. The actions