



# The Best **Bank** in Every State

**C**ould you walk away from bank branches completely? For most people, the answer is still no.

The way Americans bank has evolved dramatically in the past decade, with a combined two-thirds of consumers saying they bank most frequently via phone or computer, according to the American Bankers Association. Convenience is paramount for consumers, says Rob Rubin, director at bank consultancy firm Novantas, and that means constant access. "Mobility is where consumers are defining convenience today," he says. "Can I bank wherever I want? Can I have access to cash whenever I want?"

Yet most people still aren't ready to go without a physical outpost. More than 70% of consumers visit branches regularly, J.D. Power's most recent U.S. Retail

Banking Satisfaction Study found.

It turns out we're demanding customers: We want digital capabilities to handle routine activities, but we also want at least occasional access to physical locations and human help. That's true even of 18- to 34-year-olds, who are less likely to go 100% online than their Gen X peers, Novantas finds.

That's why this year, with data from Bankrate.com, MONEY reinvented its Best Banks analysis. We identified the best online bank and best stand-alone CD, but we also chose a local winner in every state. To pick the champions here, we required minimum balances that were \$1,500 or less, and we assumed that you could put up with online statements to avoid fees.

Why bother switching banks? After all, unwinding direct deposits and online bill payments can be a real hassle. But the payoff is

real. While some banks have reintroduced no-fee checking accounts, punitive fees—including for overdrafts and outside ATM use—continue to climb, on average. Interest payouts are rare for checking accounts and meager even on most savings accounts.

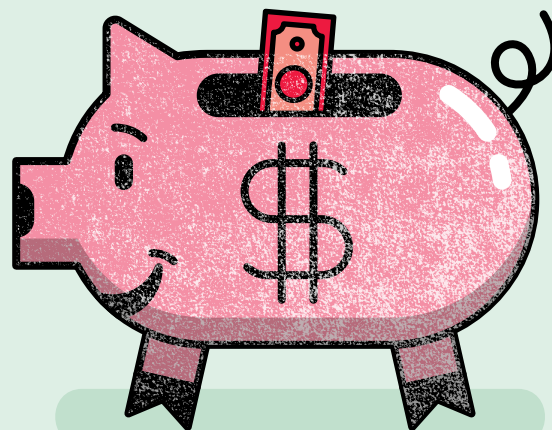
Those trends don't show any signs of reversing, says Greg McBride, chief financial analyst at Bankrate. So if you're paying a monthly service fee or storing a large balance in a no-interest checking account to avoid a fee, it's time to make a switch, McBride says.

The good news: Some banks do buck the trend. And MONEY estimates that a bank with no maintenance fees or ATM fees could save you \$142 a year, vs. typical account fees. Add in a savings account with a leading interest rate and you could net another \$25—or even more. Read on to find the best way to put some extra money in your pocket.



In an era of rising fees, it can be hard to find a bank that fits all your needs. Here are MONEY's picks from across the U.S.

BY KAITLIN MULHERE AND MEGAN LEONHARDT



# Best Bank in Every State



## ALABAMA

### Redstone Federal Credit Union

**WHY IT WINS** Redstone's fees are below average across the board, and its Share Savings Account pays an interest rate three times as high as the next highest rate on savings accounts available in the state.

**CAVEAT** There is a \$1 out-of-network ATM fee. To avoid that, use a Co-Op network, Presto, or All-point ATM, which together have more than 900 locations in the state. Branches: 22 Eligibility: Open to members or employees of 1,500 organizations in Alabama.

#### KEY TERMS

**Share Savings Account**  
Monthly fee: \$0  
Interest 0.45%



## ALASKA

### Alaska USA Federal Credit Union

**WHY IT WINS** Broad membership rules and no ATM fees pushed Alaska USA far ahead of other big banks here.

**CAVEAT** There are \$5 fees on both basic checking and savings accounts, but both are easily waived. Branches: 36 Eligibility: All state residents

#### KEY TERMS

**Convenience Checking**  
Monthly fee: \$5, waived with recurring direct deposits  
Outside ATM fee: \$0



## ARKANSAS

### Arvest Bank

**WHY IT WINS** Arvest has low fees—including a \$17 overdraft fee, roughly half the industry average—plus one of the highest J.D.

Power scores in its region for customer satisfaction.

**CAVEAT** You can't waive the \$2 fee for out-of-network ATMs, so be careful where you withdraw cash. Branches: 113

#### KEY TERMS

**Free Blue**  
Monthly fee: \$0 with e-statements  
Outside ATM fee: \$2



## CALIFORNIA —TIE—

### OneWest Bank + First Tech FCU

#### WHY ONEWEST BANK

**WINS** OneWest offers accounts without monthly fees and with free out-of-network ATM visits. The bank also has a broader network—especially in Southern California—than other banks or credit unions here with competitive account terms.

**CAVEAT** OneWest's reputation has been marred by reports of aggressive reverse-mortgage and foreclosure practices. Branches: 70

#### KEY TERMS

**Personal Checking**

Monthly fee: \$0 with e-statements  
Outside ATM fee: \$0

#### WHY FIRST TECH FCU

**WINS** First Tech's account terms are among the most impressive MONEY saw. Its rewards checking account, for example, pays 1.58% interest and gives you free out-of-network ATM use. To qualify, you need one direct deposit and 12 debit card purchases per month.

**CAVEAT** There are only six branches, largely in Northern California. The credit union is part of the Co-Op branch network, but count on those only for routine needs, such as deposits or money orders. Branches: 6

Eligibility: Work for one of 775-plus tech companies or join the Financial Fitness

Association for \$8 a year.

#### KEY TERMS

**Dividend Rewards Checking**

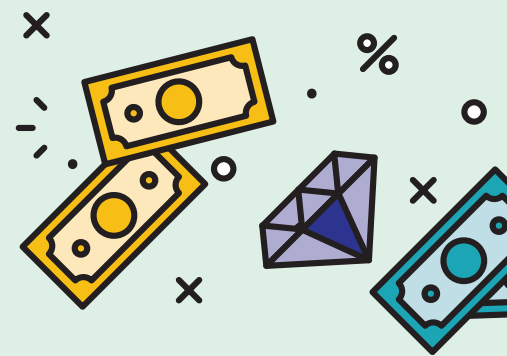
Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$0 if rewards qualifications met, otherwise six free per month and then \$2  
Interest: 1.58% if rewards qualifications met, otherwise 0.05%



## COLORADO

### First National Bank of Omaha

**WHY IT WINS** First National is the only bank in Colorado whose basic checking account doesn't charge for out-of-network ATMs. More unusual is



## The Best Online Bank

More than two-thirds of Americans now rely on phones and computers to handle much of their banking, according to American Bankers Association research. If you can go without the traditional branch experience, an online bank can be a great solution with fewer fees and more bang for your buck.



## ARIZONA —WINNER IN 4 STATES—

### Washington Federal

**WHY IT WINS** Washington Federal is the only bank MONEY surveyed in Arizona that offers basic checking without a monthly fee or an out-of-network ATM fee.

**CAVEAT** If you write a lot of checks, note that Washington

Federal's Basic Checking allows only 25 free checks a month. Beyond that, they're 15¢ each. Branches: 31

#### KEY TERMS

**Basic Checking**  
Monthly fee: \$0 with e-statements  
Outside ATM fee: \$0



## Bank of Internet USA

**WHY IT WINS** With the highest interest rate on checking among online banks (up to 1.25%), and three separate checking accounts—Rewards, Cashback, and Essential—that refund all outside ATM surcharges, BofI is a clear winner. There are also no overdraft fees on the Rewards and Essential accounts.

**CAVEAT** To earn the whopping 1.25% interest on BofI's Rewards Checking account, you'll need to set up direct deposit and use your debit card regularly (15 transactions a month). And if you prefer to stash your savings in a separate account, try Ally, whose 1.2% rate beats BofI's 1.05% on savings.

### KEY TERMS

#### Rewards Checking

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$0, and refunds all surcharges from other ATMs  
Interest: 1.25% once you meet all the requirements

the bank's generous \$20 threshold for overdrafts; it also forgives one per year.

**CAVEAT** There are only 24 locations here. Denver and Boulder are covered, but some areas of the state have no physical branches.

Branches: 24

### KEY TERMS

#### Free Checking

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$0



## CONNECTICUT KeyBank

**WHY IT WINS** KeyBank is the only bank with a broad presence here to offer an account with no monthly fee. Its Hassle-Free Check-

ing also eliminates overdraft fees.

**CAVEAT** With the Hassle-Free account, you'll still face out-of-network ATM fees, and you cannot write paper checks. Interest on savings is negligible. Branches: 66

### KEY TERMS

#### Hassle-Free Checking

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$2.50



## DELAWARE Fulton Bank

**WHY IT WINS** Fulton has both a free checking account and interest-bearing checking on which it's relatively easy to waive the monthly fee. The bank is

also a top regional scorer in J.D. Power's customer satisfaction survey.

**CAVEAT** Fulton charges out-of-network ATM fees and has an above-average overdraft fee. Branches: 10

### KEY TERMS

#### Interest Checking

Monthly fee: \$10, waived with a recurring direct deposit or \$1,000 minimum daily balance  
Outside ATM fee: \$2.50  
Interest: 0.02%



## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA Alliant Credit Union

**WHY IT WINS** The interest on Alliant's High Rate

Checking account puts most savings accounts to shame. And its 1.16% savings account rate is one of the highest among all the banks MONEY evaluated. Plus, the credit union reimburses \$20 a month in outside ATM operators' surcharges.

**CAVEAT** There's only one branch in the District, and just a dozen nationwide. Branches: 1  
Eligibility: Donate at least \$10 to Foster Care for Success or work for one of 250 partner companies.

### KEY TERMS

#### High Rate Checking

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$0  
Interest: 0.65% if you receive e-statements and one direct deposit a month



## FLORIDA Suncoast Credit Union

**WHY IT WINS** Suncoast pays a bit of interest on checking, and its ATM fee is easily avoided: Between the Co-Op network and Presto machines in Publix grocery stores, you have in-network access to more than 3,000 free ATMs in Florida.

**CAVEAT** Live outside Suncoast's coverage area? Space Coast Credit Union, on Florida's east coast, is a solid choice, and Fifth Third Bank, with 150 branches statewide, is the J.D. Power customer satisfaction winner for the state.

Branches: 64

Eligibility: Live, work, attend school, or worship in one of 21 counties in southwestern Florida.

### KEY TERMS

#### Smart Checking

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$1.50  
Interest: 0.05%



## GEORGIA Renaissance Bank

**WHY IT WINS** If you set up direct deposit and use your debit card 10 times a month, you can reap a pretty generous interest rate on checking—higher than what's paid on many of our winning banks' savings accounts. Renaissance's 0.26% rate on savings—with no extra requirements—is also decent.

**CAVEAT** No location near you? Bank of the Ozarks, with 71 branches, was also a strong contender here. Branches: 41

## Best Bank in Every State continued...

### KEY TERMS

#### Rewards Checking

Monthly fee: \$0 with e-statements  
Outside ATM fee: \$0  
Interest: 0.76% if you meet requirements



### HAWAII —TIE—

Bank of Hawaii + First Hawaiian Bank

### WHY BANK OF HAWAII

**WINS** There's no monthly fee for Bank of Hawaii's basic checking account, and its 0.04% rate on savings is double what First Hawaiian Bank pays.

**CAVEAT** The out-of-network ATM fee is higher than the national average, so stick with one of the bank's 343 in-state machines. Branches: 64

### KEY TERMS

#### Convenience Checking

Monthly fee: \$0 with e-statements  
Outside ATM fee: \$2.75

### WHY FIRST HAWAIIAN

**BANK WINS** Like its main competitor, First Hawaiian offers free checking; its outside ATM fee, meanwhile, is slightly lower. The \$5 fee on its savings account can be waived with a \$300 minimum balance.

**CAVEAT** Withdraw cash from one of the bank's 284

ATMs or pay the \$2.50 fee. Branches: 57

### KEY TERMS

#### Totally Free Checking

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$2.50



### IDAHO

Washington Federal

### WHY IT WINS

Washington Federal makes it easy to avoid both maintenance and out-of-network ATM fees on checking, and its basic savings pays far more interest than any other Idaho bank MONEY analyzed.

**CAVEAT** Both iPhone and Android phone users give the mobile app below-average scores. Branches: 24

### KEY TERMS

#### Basic Checking

Monthly fee: \$0 with e-statements  
Outside ATM fee: \$0



### ILLINOIS

First Midwest Bank

### WHY IT WINS

First Midwest wins with free checking, geographic reach, and above-average customer

satisfaction, per J.D. Power. It charges above-average outside ATM fees but offers 1,300 free ATMs through the Allpoint Network.

**CAVEAT** If you live near Chicago, consider Alliant Credit Union, which has outstanding interest rates and no ATM fees—but just three branches. Branches: 104

### KEY TERMS

#### Simply Free Checking

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$3



### INDIANA

Huntington Bank

**WHY IT WINS** Huntington's benefits help make it a regional winner in J.D.

**Power's** customer service ratings. One rare perk: You get a 24-hour grace period to deposit money before being charged for an overdraft. The Huntington 5 account refunds some ATM fees and pays a bit of interest, but you need \$5,000 in combined bank accounts to avoid a monthly fee.

**CAVEAT** If you don't qualify for the Huntington 5, there's a high out-of-network ATM fee. Plan withdrawals accordingly. Branches: 43

### KEY TERMS

#### Asterisk Free Checking

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$3



### IOWA

University of Iowa Community Credit Union

**WHY IT WINS** There's no monthly fee on this credit union's basic account, and you can easily avoid the outside ATM fee: All

accounts have access to more than 200 ATMs in Iowa through the Allpoint network, and if you live outside Johnson County, you can get seven free out-of-network ATM transactions per month. The 0.1% interest rate on basic savings topped the other banks MONEY evaluated in Iowa.

**CAVEAT** The savings account allows just three free withdrawals per month; after that, you'll pay \$1. Branches: 17

Eligibility: All Iowa residents

### KEY TERMS

#### Free Checking

Monthly fee: \$0 with e-statements  
Outside ATM fee: \$1.75



### KANSAS

First National Bank of Omaha

**WHY IT WINS** Free checking and savings accounts,

free out-of-network ATMs, and one free overdraft a year: First National Bank has a lot to offer its clientele. The icing on the cake? Terrific customer service, according to J.D. Power's ratings.

**CAVEAT** In many parts of the state, including Wichita and much of the west, you'll be hundreds of miles from a physical branch. Branches: 7

### KEY TERMS

#### Free Checking

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$0



### KENTUCKY

WesBanco

**WHY IT WINS** A below-average ATM fee and an easily waived monthly fee make WesBanco unique in Kentucky. The bank also ranks third in its region in J.D. Power's customer satisfaction study.

**CAVEAT** Customers call the mobile app unreliable. Branches: 19

### KEY TERMS

#### Basic Checking

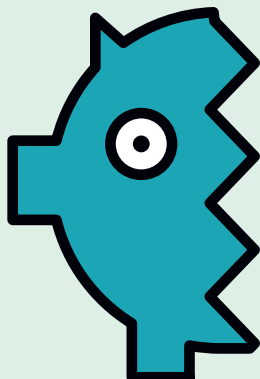
Monthly fee: \$0 with e-statements  
Outside ATM fee: \$1.50



### LOUISIANA

Chase Bank

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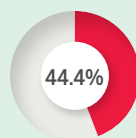


## State of the Banks

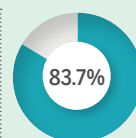
See what the industry's biggest institutions are charging—and paying—you now.

### FREE CHECKING

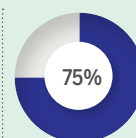
Share of institutions that offer at least one no-fee, no-drama checking account



Traditional bank



Credit union



Online bank





## The Best 12-Month CD



Barclays Bank Delaware

Need to lock up some savings for a bit? A CD is likely your best option. You generally can't touch the cash before the term is up without paying a penalty—enough to keep you from tapping it for everyday purchases.

**WHY IT WINS** Barclays's interest rate was one of the highest among 12-month CD rates surveyed by Bankrate and MONEY.

**CAVEAT** Barclays edged past some close contenders. Goldman Sachs Bank actually offers a higher

1.64% rate, for instance, but it has a 270-day penalty for early withdrawals—three times the industry standard.

**KEY TERMS**

Minimum to open: \$0  
Interest: 1.5%  
Early withdrawal penalty: 90 days of simple interest on the amount withdrawn

**WHY IT WINS** Chase had by far the most branches of the banks MONEY looked at in Louisiana. That was especially important here, where every single bank charged out-of-network ATM fees of at least \$2.

**CAVEAT** Interest paid on savings is minimal—and if you miss the direct deposit or balance requirements for the basic Total Checking account, you'll face a steep \$12 monthly fee.

Branches: 144

**KEY TERMS**

**Total Checking**

Monthly fee: \$12, waived with \$500 in direct depos-

its, \$1,500 daily balance, or combined \$5,000 in Chase accounts  
Outside ATM fee: \$2.50



MAINE  
TD Bank

**WHY IT WINS** Most banks MONEY analyzed in Maine charge both monthly and out-of-network ATM fees on basic checking.

TD Bank offered more branches (helping you stick to in-network ATMs), an easy way to waive

monthly fees, and a reputation for great service.

**CAVEAT** The \$3 outside ATM fee and \$15 monthly fee are both above national averages. If you live near Portland, consider NBT Bank's eChecking account. Branches: 45

**KEY TERMS**

**Convenience Checking**

Monthly fee: \$15, waived with a \$100 daily balance  
Outside ATM fee: \$3



MARYLAND  
Capital One

**WHY IT WINS** Capital One boasts a strong J.D. Power customer service score in the region, a large branch presence, and a decent 0.5% interest rate for its Essential Savings.

**CAVEAT** Costs can add up if you don't use in-network ATMs or follow rules to waive the monthly fee. Branches: 80

**KEY TERMS**

**Essential Checking**

Monthly fee: \$8.95, waived with a \$300 daily balance or \$250 direct deposit  
Outside ATM fee: \$2

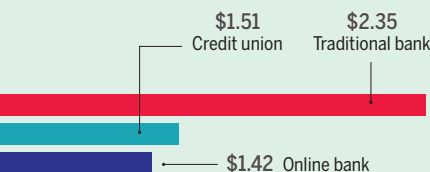


MASSACHUSETTS  
Digital Federal Credit Union (DCU)

**WHY IT WINS** ATM fees are low, and if you meet its requirements—including getting a credit card and setting up direct deposit—fees are waived altogether.

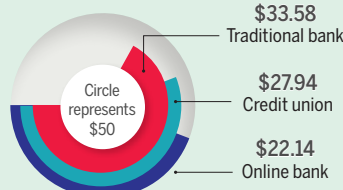
**OUTSIDE ATM FEES**

What you'll pay if you use an out-of-network ATM



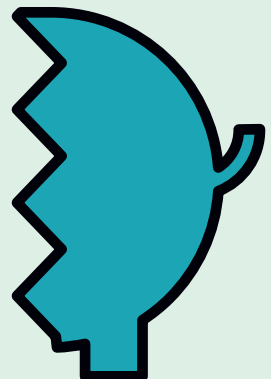
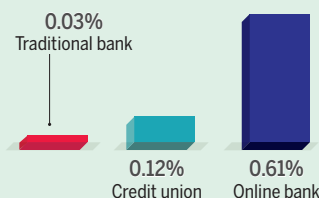
**OVERDRAFT FEES**

How much it costs to spend more than you have



**INTEREST ON SAVINGS**

What the banks are paying out now



NOTES: Based on the 90 brick-and-mortar banks, 50 credit unions, and 15 online banks in MONEY's universe. Outside ATM fees are an average based on accounts that charged fees for using an out-of-network ATM; overdraft fees are also an average. Interest on savings is a median based on all accounts, including some that required a minimum balance.

START HERE

**How often do you think you'll go into a bank branch?**

Rarely. I can't remember the last time I went.

Yes No

Not sure, but I need the option.

**Do you have direct deposit for your paychecks and handle all your bills electronically?**

More than \$2,000 a month

Less than \$2,000 a month

**How much money is usually in your checking account?**

**Do you travel around the U.S. a lot?**

No

Yes

**Can you set up direct deposits of at least \$500 a month?**

No

Yes

**Do you care more about account fees and terms or convenient locations and hours?**

Account fees and terms

Convenient locations and hours

FLOWCHART  
**Find the Best Type of Bank for You**

Banking is personal: What suits your needs might not fit your neighbor's requirements. Answer these questions to figure out the right fit for you.

(Maybe I do need branches after all.)

**Are you OK using your phone or computer to do your banking? (You'll still use ATMs to withdraw cash.)**

Yes

No

**Online Bank**

Online banks tend to have robust websites and mobile apps that make it easy to move money electronically and deposit the occasional check. The best (see sidebar in this story) have no monthly or ATM fees and reimburse other ATM surcharges.

**Best Banks for When You're Broke**

Going paycheck to paycheck? Try Alliant Credit Union's High Rate Checking account or, for more branches, KeyBank's Hassle-Free Checking. To learn more, go to [money.com/bestifbroke](http://money.com/bestifbroke).

**Credit Union**

Credit unions generally offer lower fees and higher interest rates than traditional banks. Many credit unions are also part of larger ATM networks. Use the tool at [mapping.ncua.gov](http://mapping.ncua.gov) to find one in your neighborhood.

**Big Bank**

With broad branch networks and after-hours customer service centers, big banks tend to be more convenient—but you'll need to carry a balance high enough to waive their fees.



## Best Bank in Every State continued...

The capper: 5.12% interest on the first \$1,000 in a savings account, paying you more than \$50 a year. **CAVEAT** Branches are limited. If you live in the Boston or Cape Cod area, Rockland State & Trust has accounts that are also impressive.

Branches: 18  
Eligibility: Residents of Chelmsford, Lowell, Tewksbury, and Worcester; employees of over 700 local companies; and members of eight organizations—including one with low \$10 dues.

### KEY TERMS

#### Primary Savings

Monthly fee: \$0  
Interest: 5.12% on the first \$1,000, then 0.05%



### MICHIGAN

## Lake Michigan Credit Union

**WHY IT WINS** This state offered a few strong options. Lake Michigan clinched it with remarkably high interest on its checking account and \$15 a month in free ATM charges, if you meet its requirements (see below)—plus low ATM fees.

**CAVEAT** If you don't set up direct deposit, make 10 debit card purchases a month, and use online banking, the checking account pays no interest—and you lose the \$15 in ATM credits.

Branches: 39  
Eligibility: Any resident of the Lower Peninsula, among other options.

### KEY TERMS

#### Max Checking

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$1  
Interest: 3%



### MINNESOTA

## Wings Financial Credit Union

**WHY IT WINS** Wings was the only bank MONEY considered in Minnesota to offer a checking account with no monthly fee and several free out-of-network ATM transactions. It also pays a bit of interest.

**CAVEAT** There are few branches outside the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. Branches: 18

Eligibility: Residents of 13 counties around Minneapolis/St. Paul, aviation workers or retirees, or via a \$5 gift to the Wings Financial Foundation, among other options.

### KEY TERMS

#### First Class Checking

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: First

10 free each month, then \$2.50  
Interest: 0.05%



### MISSISSIPPI

## Renasant Bank

**WHY IT WINS** If you can set up one direct deposit and make 10 debit card transactions a month, the Rewards Checking account pays sweet interest. You also get free out-of-network ATM use and \$25 a month in refunds of other ATM operators' charges.

**CAVEAT** If you don't meet the Rewards Checking requirements, you'll face outside ATM fees of \$2.50. In that case, consider Trustmark Bank: It has similar fees but 111 branches, which may make it easier to find free ATMs.

Branches: 84

### KEY TERMS

#### Rewards Checking

Monthly fee: \$0 with e-statements  
Outside ATM fee: \$0  
Interest: 0.76% if you meet requirements



### MISSOURI

## Simmons Bank

**WHY IT WINS** The ATM fee on Simmons's basic checking account is significantly lower than at any other Missouri bank MONEY evaluated, and the Simply Savings Account's interest rate (0.1%) is much higher than any other bank with a large presence here.

**CAVEAT** The bank's Simply Checking account charges for paper checks. If you write a lot of these, you can upgrade to Classic

Checking: you'll have to maintain a \$500 daily minimum balance to avoid a \$6 monthly fee. Branches: 26

### KEY TERMS

#### Simply Checking

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$1



### MONTANA

## Glacier Bank

**WHY IT WINS** Glacier is the only bank MONEY surveyed in Montana that offered free checking with some interest and low overdraft fees. The bank's \$2 out-of-network ATM fee—which can't be waived—is also lower than those of in-state competitors we reviewed.

**CAVEAT** There are fewer than 20 Glacier branches, largely in northwest Mon-

## Why Did You Pick Your Bank?

MONEY and Bankrate asked customers about their banking decisions. Here's what people told us.

### ACCOUNT FEES

#### How much do you pay in fees?



63% don't think they pay any fees for their checking account.

Those who do pay fees estimate that they pay an average of **\$13.92** monthly.

In reality, barely **40%** of the accounts MONEY evaluated were free of monthly fees, and **75%** charged out-of-network ATM fees—which could cost you an estimated **\$15** a month.

**NOTES:** Results of a joint Bankrate-MONEY survey, conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International in August 2017. Based on the answers of 786 of 1,003 adults who said they have a checking account.

### STICKING AROUND

#### How many years have you been with your bank?

People say they've had their main checking account at the same bank for **15.7 years** on average.

### WHAT CUSTOMERS WANT

#### Why did you first choose your bank—and why have you stayed?

**38%** chose their bank for convenient branch or ATM locations.

**34%** stay put because of good customer service.

**14%** stay because it's too much hassle to change.



## Best Bank in Every State continued...

tana—although customers can also bank at 50 affiliated branches in the state. Branches: 19

### KEY TERMS

#### Easy Interest Checking

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$2  
Interest: 0.01%



### NEVADA

## Washington Federal

**WHY IT WINS** The Basic Checking account has no monthly fees, no outside ATM fees, and a \$25 overdraft fee that is 24% below the Nevada average.

**CAVEAT** There are relatively few branches here, although the bank offers free use of over 260 MoneyPass ATMs in Nevada. Branches: 11

### KEY TERMS

#### Basic Checking

Monthly fee: \$0 with e-statements  
Outside ATM fee: \$0



### NEW HAMPSHIRE —TIE—

## Digital Federal Credit Union (DCU) + TD Bank

### WHY DIGITAL FEDERAL CREDIT UNION WINS

Sign up for direct deposit, e-statements, and a DCU credit card or loan, and you get a checking account with no monthly fee, no out-of-network ATM fees, and a \$15 monthly rebate of other ATM operators' surcharges—plus generous interest on modest savings. Customers have access to the Co-Op network, with over 60 shared branches and 170 ATMs in the state.

**CAVEAT** Without the Co-Op locations, DCU has only a few branches here. Branches: 4  
Eligibility: Employees of over 150 local companies, and members of eight organizations—including one with a low \$10 annual fee.

### KEY TERMS

#### Primary Savings

Monthly fee: \$0  
Interest: 5.12% on the first \$1,000, then 0.05% on remaining balance

### WHY TD BANK WINS

With an above-average customer service score from J.D. Power, and higher rates on savings than other banks here, TD is a good choice for those looking for a bank with a wide network of branches.

**CAVEAT** The only way to avoid ATM fees at TD is with an account that requires a \$2,500 daily balance to waive a monthly fee—too high for our standards.

Branches: 64, and one drive-through location

### KEY TERMS

#### Convenience Checking

Monthly fee: \$15, waived with a \$100 daily balance  
Outside ATM fee: \$3



### NEW JERSEY

## Provident Bank

**WHY IT WINS** Provident Bank stands out in a crowded market. Its Smart Checking account offers high interest rates and no out-of-network ATM fees—as long as you make 10 debit purchases, access your account online, and set up e-statements and one direct deposit per month. Even if you don't hit those marks, it's still a free checking account—and you can qualify again the following month.

**CAVEAT** If you don't have a Provident near you—or just need more branch locations—check out TD Bank, a winner in other states, which has 250 New Jersey locations.

### KEY TERMS

#### Smart Checking

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$0 when requirements met  
Interest: 1.51% for balances up to \$15,000



### METHODOLOGY

## How MONEY Chose the Best Banks

MONEY evaluated the largest 90 brick-and-mortar banks, 50 credit unions, and 15 online banks, as identified by bank consultancy firm Novantas. Bankrate.com, MONEY's project partner, collected data on fees, interest rates, and account requirements for checking and savings accounts. Using Bankrate's data, MONEY compared more than 800 accounts and 18,000 data points.

Data was collected in July and August, and MONEY independently fact-checked information for each winner in September and early October.

When selecting state winners, MONEY excluded checking accounts that required a minimum balance greater than \$1,500 to either open the account or waive monthly fees. Priority was given to banks whose checking accounts had no (or easily waived) monthly fees and low or no ATM fees. MONEY also sought higher interest rates for checking and savings accounts. Additional factors included J.D. Power customer service ratings, when available, from the 2017 U.S. Retail Banking Satisfaction Study, geographic reach within a state, recent enforcement actions, and mobile app ratings in the iTunes and Google Play stores.



### NEBRASKA —WINNER IN 4 STATES—

## First National Bank of Omaha

**WHY IT WINS** First National Bank of Omaha was the only bank MONEY evaluated in Nebraska that had no monthly fee or outside ATM charges. Plus, you get one free overdraft per year, and it's a top performer in J.D. Power's customer satisfaction study.

**CAVEAT** None  
Branches: 47

### KEY TERMS

#### Free Checking

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$0

Washington  
Federal

## NEW MEXICO

Washington  
Federal

**WHY IT WINS** Washington Federal is the only bank MONEY analyzed in New Mexico that doesn't charge out-of-network ATM fees on basic checking; you also avoid a monthly fee.

**CAVEAT** Washington Federal's app earns about two stars in iTunes and Google Play app stores. Branches: 27

## KEY TERMS

**Basic Checking**

Monthly fee: \$0 with e-statements  
Outside ATM fee: \$0



## NEW YORK

Bethpage Fed-  
eral Credit Union

**WHY IT WINS** It's rare to find a fee-free checking account paying 1% interest. To earn that rate, you need to get e-statements, set up direct deposit, and make 10 monthly purchases on your debit card. (Even if you don't hit those marks, the account is still free.)

**CAVEAT** Branches are limited to New York City and Long Island. If you don't want to rely on the 215 shared Co-Op branches and you live elsewhere in New York, check out Northwest Bank or NBT Bank. Branches: 32  
Eligibility: Anyone can join by opening a savings account with \$5.

## KEY TERMS

**Bonus Checking**

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$0  
Interest: 1% if you meet the requirements



## NORTH CAROLINA

Bank of the  
Ozarks

**WHY IT WINS** Bank of the Ozarks is the only bank we saw here offering free checking without forcing you to jump through hoops to duck a monthly fee.

Plus, if you sign up for direct deposit on MyChoice Checking, you'll get four free out-of-network ATM transactions each month.

**CAVEAT** The bank's Personal Savings account has a low 0.05% interest rate. Branches: 24

## KEY TERMS

**MyChoice Checking**

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$1—but if you meet requirements, first four per month are free



## NORTH DAKOTA

## U.S. Bank

**WHY IT WINS** U.S. Bank topped the regional average on J.D. Power's regional customer satisfaction survey and has the most branches here of any bank MONEY surveyed.

**CAVEAT** If you don't meet the requirements to waive the monthly fees, Bank of the West and Great Western Bank both have more flexible fee-free checking—but neither has more than a branch or two in-state. Branches: 24

## KEY TERMS

**Easy Checking**

Monthly fee: \$6.95 with e-statements, waived with \$1,000 in direct deposits a month or \$1,500 monthly balance  
Outside ATM fee: \$2.50



## OHIO

Wright-Patt  
Credit Union

**WHY IT WINS** Wright-Patt tops Ohio rivals by offering a checking account with no monthly fee and a few free out-of-network ATM transactions a month; you also get access to about 340 Co-Op branches. Another plus: MagnifyMoney's 2017 Mobile Banking App Study ranked Wright-Patt's app in the top 10 nationally.

**CAVEAT** Eligibility is limited, and most of Wright-Patt's branches are near Columbus and Dayton. If you live elsewhere in the state, check out Huntington, which also offers free checking and has over 500 branches throughout Ohio—and is a J.D. Power customer service winner. Branches: 31

**Eligibility:** Those who live, work, worship, or attend school in most areas of Dayton, Columbus, and Cincinnati; current or former Wright State University employees and students; and military personnel, among other options.

## KEY TERMS

**Totally Fair Checking**

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: at least two free, then 60¢



## OKLAHOMA

Tinker Federal  
Credit Union

**WHY IT WINS** Tinker offers a checking account with no monthly or out-of-network ATM fees, as well as a savings account that pays 0.25% interest—higher than many in-state rivals.

**CAVEAT** The whopping 1.49% rate on Click Checking has a few restrictions: You'll need to make 10 debit card purchases, pay at least one bill online, log in monthly, and get e-statements and a monthly direct deposit. Eligibility is also somewhat limited. Branches: 32

**Eligibility:** Residents of three Oklahoma counties plus the Oklahoma City Empowerment Zone, and military personnel, among other options.

## KEY TERMS

**Click Checking**

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$0  
Interest: 1.49% on up to \$30,000, if requirements met



## OREGON

First Tech  
Federal Credit  
Union

**WHY IT WINS** First Tech's signature account, Dividend Rewards Checking, pays 1.58%—the highest of any bank in Oregon that MONEY analyzed. Via the Co-Op network, you can bank at over 80 additional affiliates in Oregon, plus another 650 ATMs.

**CAVEAT** Dividend Rewards has several restrictions. If you're not a debit card user, opt for the no-fee Checking Plus account. Branches: 14

**Eligibility:** Employees of over 775 private companies and the state government, plus Lane County residents. Or join a participating nonprofit like the Financial Fitness Association (\$8 a year).

## KEY TERMS

**Dividend Rewards Checking**

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$0  
Interest: 1.58% if requirements met



## PENNSYLVANIA

## Northwest Bank

**WHY IT WINS** Northwest wins for a checking account with neither monthly fees nor ATM fees, plus a broad branch footprint and a high customer service score from J.D. Power.

**CAVEAT** While Northwest's terms are good, Philadelphia's Police & Fire Federal Credit Union is even better—albeit with far fewer branches. Its free checking pays 1% on your first \$5,000—worth \$50 a year.

Branches: 109, along with seven freestanding drive-through locations

## KEY TERMS

**MyNorthwest Checking**

Monthly fee: \$0 with e-statements  
Outside ATM fee: \$0



## RHODE ISLAND

## Citizens Bank

**WHY IT WINS** Waive the monthly fee with just one deposit (of any amount) during each statement period. That's one of the most flexible options among the Rhode Island banks MONEY surveyed, and Citizens also offers a broad branch footprint.

**CAVEAT** The outside ATM fee is high. And Citizens' basic savings account pays only 0.01% on low balances. Do better on savings by adding a separate CD or online account. Branches: 78

## KEY TERMS

**One Deposit Checking**

Monthly fee: \$9.99, waived with one deposit a month  
Outside ATM fee: \$3

## Best Bank in Every State continued...



### SOUTH CAROLINA Synovus

**WHY IT WINS** Synovus wins with easy ways to waive monthly fees on both checking and savings accounts. The bank also gets a high customer service score from J.D. Power. **CAVEAT** You can't waive the outside ATM fee—although you get free ATMs in the state's 59 Publix stores. Branches: 38

#### KEY TERMS

##### Access Checking

Monthly fee: \$10, waived with \$500 direct deposit or \$1,000 daily balance  
Outside ATM fee: \$2.50



### SOUTH DAKOTA First National Bank of Omaha

**WHY IT WINS** First National's Free Checking is easily the best account in South Dakota. There are no monthly or outside ATM fees, and no extra requirements. The bank ranks second regionally in J.D. Power customer service rankings.

**CAVEAT** There are only four branches in the state. Branches: 4

#### KEY TERMS

##### Free Checking

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$0



### TENNESSEE First Tennessee Bank

**WHY IT WINS** With plenty

of branches and basic checking that makes it easy to waive a monthly fee, First Tennessee comes out ahead here. On its Select Checking, you even get one free overdraft per year. **CAVEAT** You'll earn a low 0.01% rate on savings. Branches: 151

#### KEY TERMS

##### Express Checking

Monthly fee: \$7, waived with direct deposit and e-statements  
Outside ATM fee: \$3



### TEXAS Frost Bank

**WHY IT WINS** Frost has a checking account with an easily waived monthly fee and a broad physical footprint that includes 1,200 ATMs. It won top J.D. Power honors in Texas this year.

**CAVEAT** San Antonio residents have one better option: Security Service Federal Credit Union, whose Power Checking has no monthly fee and a lower out-of-network ATM fee. Branches: 136

#### KEY TERMS

##### Personal Account

Monthly fee: \$8, waived with \$100 direct deposit, \$1,000 daily balance, or \$5,000 in another account or loan  
Outside ATM fee: \$2



### UTAH America's First Federal Credit Union

**WHY IT WINS** America's First has a checking account that pays some inter-

est with no monthly fees—and its Share Savings pays 0.1% interest on even minimal balances.

**CAVEAT** The Co-Op network will give you access to over 500 free ATMs in Utah—but if you stray, you'll pay an outside ATM fee. Branches: 107

Eligibility: Residents of or workers in five Utah counties, plus workers in Utah's food industry and employees of partner organizations.

#### KEY TERMS

##### Free Checking

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$1.50  
Interest: 0.05%



### VERMONT NBT Bank

**WHY IT WINS** NBT charges no monthly fee and has a low out-of-network ATM fee.

**CAVEAT** If there's no NBT near you, check out TD Bank, a winner in other states that has 31 branches in Vermont. Branches: 4

#### KEY TERMS

##### eChecking

Monthly fee: \$0  
Outside ATM fee: \$1.25  
Interest: 0.01% starting with balances of \$100



### VIRGINIA Union Bank & Trust

**WHY IT WINS** Union offers both free checking and interest-paying checking and savings accounts with easily waived fees. Its mobile apps get very high ratings of 4.6 from iPhone and Android phone users.

**CAVEAT** Union has a high

\$36 overdraft fee.

Branches: 111

#### KEY TERMS

##### Interest Checking

Monthly fee: \$10, waived with \$750 daily balance  
Outside ATM fee: First five free each month, then \$2.50  
Interest: 0.03%



### WASHINGTON Boeing Employees Credit Union

**WHY IT WINS** BECU lets you avoid monthly and out-of-network fees on checking and savings, while paying incredible interest rates. On its Member Advantage Checking, you earn a whopping 4% on up to \$500.

**CAVEAT** BECU's locations are centered around Seattle. Elsewhere, consider Washington Federal, a multistate winner with over 82 branches here.

Branches: 46

Eligibility: Anyone who lives, works, worships, or attends school in Washington.

#### KEY TERMS

##### Member Advantage Savings

Monthly fee: \$0  
Interest: 6% on up to \$500, then 0.05%



### WEST VIRGINIA WesBanco

**WHY IT WINS** No monthly fees, low outside ATM fees, and high customer service scores from J.D. Power make WesBanco a winner.

**CAVEAT** While the Statement Savings has an easily waived monthly fee, it pays just a 0.05% rate.

Branches: 47

#### KEY TERMS

##### Basic Checking

Monthly fee: \$0 with e-statements  
Outside ATM fee: \$1.50



### WISCONSIN Associated Bank

**WHY IT WINS** Associated's checking and savings accounts both waive the monthly fee with a daily balance of less than \$1,500—and the bank scores well in J.D. Power's customer service ranking. **CAVEAT** You can't waive the outside ATM fee—though you do get 250 free in-state Allpoint ATMs. Branches: 151

#### KEY TERMS

##### Associated Checking

Monthly fee: \$11, waived with either \$500 in direct deposit, a \$1,000 daily balance, or \$2,500 in combined funds  
Outside ATM fee: \$2.50



### WYOMING Bank of the West

**WHY IT WINS** Bank of the West offers an interest-paying account with an easily waived monthly fee—a rarity among the Wyoming banks MONEY analyzed. And a generous overdraft policy gives you one free overdraft per year.

**CAVEAT** Bank of the West's Classic Savings pays just 0.02% interest on minimum balances; you'll do better by adding a separate CD or online account. Branches: 24

#### KEY TERMS

##### Any Deposit Checking

Monthly fee: \$10, waived with any deposit  
Outside ATM fee: \$2.50 **M**