

MONEY'S WORTH

for TFCU Members | October 2025



The hidden costs of in-store financing

Promotional financing may sound appealing at first, with no payments, zero interest or low teaser rates, but these offers rarely come without strings attached. Here are some of the most common traps to watch for:

Retroactive interest. "Deferred interest" deals promise zero interest for a set period. But if the balance isn't paid in full within the promotional period, interest can be added retroactively, covering that entire time. These deals are often tied to things like store credit cards. High balances on these cards may also hurt your credit score.

Hidden high rates. Low introductory rates can quickly jump to 20% or more once the promotion ends. Combined with retroactive interest, debt can quickly become unmanageable.

Encouraging overspending. Retailers profit from financing by pushing you into purchasing more now rather than later. Sales staff may even downplay long-term costs to secure the sale.

Credit score impact. Opening store cards typically involve hard credit inquiries that remain on your credit report for up to two years, unlike soft inquiries that have no impact. Opening new cards lowers the average age of your accounts and can reduce your credit score if maxed out to cover a purchase. Late payments may add even more damage.

Promotional offers may look like a bargain, but you should always read the fine print.

At the end of the day, traditional financing is a much safer option. Banks and credit unions, such as TFCU, often provide fixed loans with predictable payments and interest. This strategy can help you avoid hidden traps and support your long-term financial goals.

Promotional offers may look like a bargain, but you should always read the fine print. Before financing a purchase, compare it with a preapproval from a trusted financial institution. ■

Article by Tina Herndon,
TFCU Financial Educator

TFCU events

Branch grand opening: October 3-4, 2025

Owasso branch, 9039 N. 121st East Ave. |
Friday: 11 a.m. - 4 p.m., Saturday: 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Celebrate the opening of our new Owasso branch with giveaways, treats and family fun.

Holiday closing: October 13, 2025

TFCU will be closed Monday, October 13, 2025, in observance of the federal holiday.

International Credit Union Day: October 16, 2025

Visit one of our branches for giveaways, while supplies last, as we celebrate with credit unions around the world.

Wild West Night: October 29, 2025

National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum |
6 - 8 p.m.

Join us for a fun evening raising funds for the TFCU Foundation to support the needs of veterans and first responders. Tickets are \$50 per attendee.



Board of directors nominations

Each year, a nominating and elections committee nominates one candidate from TFCU's membership for each open position on the credit union's board of directors. The selected nominees for these roles will be announced in the January 2026 issue of the *Money's Worth* newsletter.

TFCU members who are not selected by the committee but would like to run for election may pursue nomination by petition. Petition packets will be available in TFCU branches on December 9, 2025, and members will have until January 15, 2026, to collect signatures from 500 TFCU members. Signatures from individuals who are joint owners on TFCU accounts but do not have a primary share account of their own are not valid.

Petition forms with at least 500 valid signatures, along with the forms stating the candidate's biographical information and statement of qualifications for office, must be returned to a TFCU branch by the January 15, 2026, deadline. All required forms will be included in the petition packet.

If there are no nominations by petition, the candidates nominated by committee will be elected by acclamation at the 2026 Annual Shareholders' Meeting. If there is at least one nomination by petition, an election will be held.

Money Tip:

Set a budget for each holiday gift before shopping. A clear per-gift limit keeps your overall spending on track.



your
**cash-back
card**

3%
**cash back
on fuel***



Scan to learn more or visit us at
TinkerFCU.org/Visa-Signature



*Cash back rewards are provided in the form of a statement credit. You earn 3% cash rewards for every \$1 for all eligible fuel and dining purchases. Eligible purchases made in both the 2% and 3% cash rewards category earn rewards on the first \$5,000 posted to the account each calendar year. Once the \$5,000 spend cap is reached, all eligible purchases will earn 1% cash rewards rate until the first day of the next calendar year. To receive this card, Tinker Federal Credit Union (TFCU) membership is required, which involves opening an initial share (savings) account with a \$5 deposit and qualifying for a Visa Signature card account. Visit any TFCU branch, contact our call center at (405) 732-0324, option 6, or 1-800-456-4828, option 6, for questions or go to TinkerFCU.org for more details.

What interest rates mean for your finances

Interest rates are a central part of how the Federal Reserve (the Fed) helps keep the U.S. economy stable. While the numbers may seem abstract, changes to interest rates ripple outward, affecting borrowing, spending, saving and overall economic activity.

As the nation's central bank, the Fed manages the economy in two key ways: adjusting the federal funds target rate by raising or lowering it and buying and selling securities to increase or decrease the money supply. Its ultimate goal is to maintain a low unemployment rate and keep inflation near 2%.

The ripple effect

When the Fed increases the money supply, interest rates tend to fall. Lower rates make it cheaper to borrow, which encourage people and businesses to spend and invest. This boost in economic activity can help fuel growth.

Conversely, when the Fed decreases the money supply, rates rise. Borrowing then becomes more expensive, which slows spending and encourages saving. This helps cool off an overheated economy and can ease inflationary pressures.

Highs and lows

In response to major economic events happening over time, interest rates have swung dramatically. The highest federal funds rate on record was 20%, set in response to runaway inflation in 1979 and 1980. The lowest rate fell to just 0%–0.25% during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic.

TFCU Financial Advisors

6501 Tinker Diagonal
Midwest City, OK 73110
405-737-0006

TFCUFinancialAdvisors.org



Securities are offered through RAYMOND JAMES FINANCIAL SERVICES, INC., Member FINRA/SIPC, and are not insured by NCUA or insured by any other government agency. Funds are NOT GUARANTEED nor are they deposits or obligations of the credit union or any affiliated entity of the credit union, and are subject to risk, including the possible loss of principal. Tinker Federal Credit Union, Tinker Financial Services, LLC and TFCU Financial Advisors are not registered broker/dealers and are independent of Raymond James Financial Services, Inc. Investment advisory services are offered through Raymond James Financial Services Advisors, Inc., a non-affiliated third party provider to Tinker Financial Services, LLC and Tinker Federal Credit Union. All investments and information are intended for U.S. residents only. TFCU Financial Advisors is a registered trademark and 'dba' of Tinker Financial Services, LLC.*

© 2025 Raymond James & Associates, Inc., member New York Stock Exchange/SIPC. © 2025 Raymond James Financial Services, Inc., member FINRA/SIPC. Investment products are subject to risk and may lose value and are not deposits, not FDIC/NCUA insured, not insured by any government agency, and not bank guaranteed. Raymond James® is a registered trademark of Raymond James Financial, Inc. 22-BDMKT-5404 KS 3/22.



Car-buying checklist

Investing in a car is exciting, but it can also come with unexpected costs. It's important you feel informed and confident before buying, and the list below is designed to help you do just that.

To better understand the full cost of ownership:

- Estimate your monthly loan payment.
- Get an insurance quote before buying, as premiums may be higher for newer vehicles.
- Include registration fees and taxes in your budget.
- Consider routine maintenance and repair costs.
- Check the vehicle's fuel efficiency and expected gas expenses.

When reviewing finance options:

- Know your interest rate, loan term and total repayment amount.
- Consider making a down payment to reduce your monthly cost.
- Get preapproved to shop with clarity and confidence.
- Ask about optional protections like Guaranteed Asset Protection and Credit Life and Disability Insurance.
- Explore TFCU's repossessed vehicle inventory potentially lower priced vehicles and loan rates.

When evaluating a vehicle for purchase:

- Compare new and used options for warranty, reliability and depreciation.
- Request a vehicle history report and have it inspected if buying used.
- Ensure the vehicle fits your lifestyle, commute and personal needs.

To make the most informed decision:

- Speak with a TFCU loan officer or financial consultant if you have any questions throughout the process.
- Take your time and do not feel pressured to make a quick decision.

TFCU is here to support you every step of the way. For help reviewing your options or understanding your budget, reach out to a financial consultant with our Member Solutions team by calling 405-319-7991 or email MemberSolutionsReferrals@TinkerFCU.org.

You deserve to make this decision with clarity and confidence. Let us help you get there. ■

Article by Jessica Teszlewicz,
TFCU Financial Educator



Don't wait!
Sign up by Oct 31, 2025

**to get
eStatements
& get \$10!***



**Scan to
learn more**

TFCU
Tinker Federal Credit Union

Federally insured by NCUA

**Receive \$10 deposited in your TFCU Primary Share (savings) account within 7 days of signing up for eStatements & eNotices.*

TFCU
Tinker Federal Credit Union

**For locations, numbers and
hours please visit TinkerFCU.org**

P.O. Box 45750, Tinker AFB, 73145

405-732-0324 OKC

918-592-0324 Tulsa

405-707-7440 Stillwater

580-310-0324 Ada

580-233-3330 Enid

800-456-4828 Toll Free

Federally insured by NCUA

