

# Banking in Canada

Version 2

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Most places in Canada accept payments through debit/credit card, therefore, it is important to establish a personal bank account in Canada. Financial transactions such as paying for your rent and bills, receiving payments from employers and withdrawing cash require a bank account.

You may open a bank account with one of these leading Canadian banks based in Toronto.

- **Royal Bank of Canada (RBC)**
- **Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC)**
- **Scotiabank**
- **Bank of Montreal (BMO)**
- **TD Canada Trust**

**Note:** you may be required to visit a branch in person to open an account. Also remember to bring **ID**, your study permit and proof of address to set up an account. You must show original documents, not photocopies.

## Types of Bank Accounts

There are two different types of bank accounts in Canada: chequing accounts and savings accounts.

**Chequing account:** this allows you to deposit and withdraw money as often as you like. Usually when you open a chequing account you receive a chequebook and a debit card. Most international students will only need to open a chequing account to pay for their living costs while studying in Canada.

**Savings accounts:** this is a place to save money over a longer term. Some students may consider opening one of these, if they are working or want to save money for travel or emergencies.

## What to Consider Before Opening a Bank Account

Before opening a bank account, consider the following:

- how you'll use the account, for savings or making payments
- charges or fees on the account
- interest you'll earn on the money in your account

Make sure you understand all the terms, conditions and fees of the account before you sign up. Ask questions about anything that you don't understand. Keep a copy of your account agreement for your records.

## Questions to ask When Choosing a Bank

1. Is there a student account available? Note: Banks normally offer special accounts for students which include minimal or no banking fees.
2. Do I have to pay any monthly fees?
3. Will I be charged when I perform a transaction?

For detailed information on banking in Canada, [visit the Government of Canada's banking guide for newcomers](#).