

Let's Talk Finances

No Cash Payments? Now What?



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In a digital economy, what are my options?

Whether it's ordering take out from an app-based food delivery service, or using a ride share app to get home, cash may not be an option for payment. More retailers are also accepting cashless payments to reduce exposure to high-touch surfaces. When you are used to paying with cash, this can be challenging.

Here are some of the options available to you other than cash or traditional credit and debit cards.

Prepaid Cards

A prepaid card allows you to use a card to make purchases at stores or online without accessing a bank account or using a credit card. These cards are not linked to a checking or savings account, and require you to load money onto the card up front. Here are some prepaid card types:

- **Reloadable prepaid cards** allow you to add money later onto the card after your initial purchase. There are also prepaid cards which are "non-reloadable," meaning you can't add more money onto them in the future.
- A **payroll card** is a prepaid card you get from some employers through which you can receive your paycheck or salary.
- A **government benefit card** is a prepaid card used by some government agencies to provide certain government benefits, like unemployment insurance, food assistance, social security, and others.
- **College ID cards** are sometimes prepaid cards also. Some colleges offer a card that you can only use to pay for things on the school's campus and possibly some nearby stores. Other schools offer a card that you can use at any retail location that accepts that network brand.
- **Gift cards** may have a network logo that allows you to use the card widely, or it may only be usable at certain retailers.

If you already have a bank account, you have additional options for cashless payments. Ask your bank if these features are available with your account type.

Money transfer services: Person-to-person payment services and mobile payment apps have become part of everyday life for many people. Payment services and apps let you send money to people without having to write a check, swipe a card, or give them cash.

Online bill pay or ebill services: These programs generally allow you to sign up on your bank's website to pay your bills electronically. You may also be able to receive bills electronically.

Contactless payments: Often referred to as tap-and-go by banks and retailers, contactless payments are a secure method for consumers to purchase products or services using a special debit, credit, or smartcard (chip card) that utilizes radio frequency identification (RFID) technology or near-field communication (NFC). To make a contactless payment at a store, tap your contactless enabled card near a point-of-sale terminal that is equipped with this technology.