**What Can a Bank Do for You?**

In the past, when people wanted to save their money, they sometimes put it under their mattresses or in their freezers! They didn't want other people to find it. They thought their money was safe in those places. Now, most people in the United States keep money in banks or credit unions. Banks and credit unions have many services. They can help you save and manage your money.

* Savings Accounts: A savings account is a place where you put or deposit your money so that it will be safe and grow. The bank pays you money, called interest, when you save your money in one of their accounts.
* Checking Accounts: A checking account is a place where you put or deposit your money when you will need to spend it soon. You can pay your bills with checks. The bank or credit union takes the money from your account when it receives your check from a business or company.
* ATM: The ATM (Automated Teller Machine) is a machine that lets you withdraw, or take money from your checking or savings account and deposit money into an account at any time. If you use an ATM that is not from your bank, you usually have to pay for the service. It can cost from $.50 to $4.00 every time you use their ATM machines.
* ATM/Debit Card: You insert the ATM card into the ATM machine to withdraw or deposit money. You can also use the card at stores, supermarkets, gas stations, or restaurants. It is similar to a credit card or cash. Sometimes, you have to pay for the service, as you do at ATM machines.
* Check-Cashing: At a bank or credit union, you do not have to pay a fee for cashing a paycheck or any other check. Many check-cashing businesses charge 10% (of the check) or more to cash your check.

When you want to know how much money is in an account, or if a check has cleared (been paid) on your account, you can call the bank to get automated information. You can also use the Internet or the ATM to get the status of your account. Some banks allow you to transfer money from one account to another over the phone, the Internet or an ATM. There are many services available at banks or credit unions.