



**Irish Banking
Culture Board
(IBCB)**

Guide to the Basic Bank Account





What is a 'basic bank account'?

All EU residents have the right to a 'basic bank account' no matter their financial situation or where they live in the EU.

A 'basic bank account' is a current account that allows you to have access to essential daily banking services if you do not currently have a bank account in Ireland.

This guide is for people who may need or want a basic bank account. It explains:

- [how to contact a bank](#)
- [what to expect](#)
- [what you must do.](#)

The IBCB and our member banks want to promote access to banking so that everyone can access financial services.



How can a basic bank account help me?

Bank accounts help everyone manage their money efficiently and safely. Bank staff will help you to find out which is the best type of account for your needs. Having a bank account will mean you can access financial products and services that you need.

A basic bank account will allow you to:

- [receive money \(like salary or social welfare benefits\)](#)
- [keep your money safe](#)
- [make payments \(including with a debit card\)](#)
- [withdraw and lodge cash](#)
- [use online or mobile banking.](#)

There are no maintenance or day-to-day fees for a basic bank account for the first 12 months. Ask your bank about other fees or charges before you open your account.

Your bank can explain what happens after 12 months.

The basic bank account does not include an overdraft facility.

You can get more information from the bank you are dealing with.



How can I open a basic bank account?

There are rules about opening a basic bank account. These may vary depending on the bank you choose. Bank staff can tell you about them.

The following rules apply to everyone who wants to open a basic bank account.

- You must be over a certain age – this is shown in your bank’s terms and conditions.
- You must be legally living in the European Union.
- You cannot already hold another current account or payment account in the Republic of Ireland.

If you already have an account, but need to open a new one, talk to your bank.

You must prove your identity and address

The law requires banks to confirm your identity and verify your address. This requirement is included in the anti-money laundering and fraud prevention legislation. This means that to open a basic bank account you must provide documents to prove your identity and address.

You can prove your identity to your bank by showing them, for example, your:

- passport
- driver’s licence.

You can prove your address by showing, for example:

- a recent utility bill (example: a gas or electricity bill)

Banks can accept other forms of identification or proof of address. This can vary depending on the bank. Contact them or check their websites to see what they can accept. Banks understand that some people do not have a passport or driver’s licence, or a utility bill with your address on it. Your bank can try to work with the identification documents you do have. It may take a little longer to open the account if you have other forms of identification.

Different ways to open your account

Banks generally provide different ways to open a basic bank account. You can either visit your local branch or contact the bank by phone. You may also be able to apply through your preferred bank’s mobile or online channel.

You will need to complete an application

You must complete an application that gives the bank some information about you including your:

- name
- address
- date of birth.

Bank staff can help you with the application.

You will need certain documents

You may need to bring your documents to the bank. If you need to visit a bank branch or office with your documents, you will generally need to make an appointment to complete the application. It is a good idea to check with the bank in advance about what documents to bring.

You may bring someone with you

You can also bring someone with you to help with your application. The bank may ask this person for some identification such as a passport or driver's licence.

Once you have completed the application and provided the necessary documents, the bank can process your application.

Other bank accounts and services

Banks also provide a range of other accounts to support your financial needs. These can include:

- other types of current account
- savings account
- personal loans
- mortgages
- credit cards
- personal insurance
- financial planning products (example: pension).

You must meet certain conditions before you can get:

- personal loans
- mortgages
- credit cards.

Your preferred bank will give you information about:

- the cost of bank credit
- terms and conditions
- fees and charges.

This is to make sure you can afford the products you choose.



How do I contact a bank?

Bank	Phone number	Website
AIB	0818 724 020	https://aib.ie/our-products/current-accounts/basic-bank-account
Bank of Ireland	0818 354 454	https://personalbanking.bankofireland.com/bank/current-accounts/basic-bank-account/features-benefits/
EBS	0818 654 322	https://www.ebs.ie/daily-banking/ebs-moneymanager-account-and-debit-card
KBC	New account opening: 1800 51 52 53 Customer service: 1800 93 92 44	https://www.kbc.ie/en-US/current-account/basic
Permanent TSB	1800 928 939	https://www.permanentsb.ie/everyday-banking/current-accounts/basic-payment-account/

The banks' websites show the nearest branch or office to you and how to make an appointment to open an account. Banks must comply with consumer protection rules, which protect customers. Your bank can explain these rules to you.

Other support available

As well as the supports banks provide, there are independent organisations who you can contact to get more information about banking products and supports.

The Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC)

The CCPC provides independent information to consumers about:

- [their rights](#)
- [personal finance](#)
- [product safety.](#)

They do this through:

- [a consumer helpline](#)
- [their website](#)
- [public awareness campaigns](#)
- [financial education initiatives.](#)

The CCPC provides a breakdown of banking products offered. They compare the:

- [key features](#)
- [fees](#)
- [bank charges.](#)

The CCPC provides a tool on its personal account comparison page that you can use to compare basic bank accounts. You can find this here:

<https://www.ccpc.ie/consumers/money-tools/current-account-comparison/>

<https://www.ccpc.ie>

Citizens Information Board

Citizens Information Board is a statutory body that provides information, advice and advocacy on a broad range of public and social services. Its website carries a large amount of information about services in Ireland:

www.citizensinformation.ie

Citizens Information Board also supports the network of Citizens Information Centres and the Citizens Information Phone Service:

0818 07 4000

<http://www.citizensinformationboard.ie/>

MABS, the Money Advice and Budgeting Service

MABS is also supported by the Citizens Information Board. MABS has been helping people to deal with problem debt for more than 25 years.

You can get impartial advice from MABS to help you manage your money and take control of debt. They offer support:

- [online](#)
- [over the phone](#)
- [face to face](#).

MABS is free, confidential, and independent.

Phone Number: 0818 07 2000

<https://mabs.ie/>

The Financial Services and Pensions Ombudsman (FSPO)

FSPO provides a free service to people who make a complaint to their bank but are unhappy with the outcome of that process.

<https://www.fspo.ie/>

About the Irish Banking Culture Board

The Irish Banking Culture Board

This board was set up as an independent industry initiative. It is fully funded by the five retail banks operating in Ireland:

- Allied Irish Banks
- Bank of Ireland
- KBC Bank Ireland
- Permanent TSB
- Ulster Bank.

It aims to rebuild trust in the banking sector through demonstrating a change in behaviour and overall culture.

<https://www.irishbankingcultureboard.ie/>

