

This Holiday Season, Shop For Yourself

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- Here's an idea for the holidays: Why not get yourself something?
- It's free, no shipping or tax, plus It will actually save you money. You don't have to camp outside Walmart at 3 a.m. on Black Friday, or Tuesday like the gentlemen below
- And there is a no questions asked return policy that never expires.

- What could possibly be this good?
- **A new free no strings attached checking account.**
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- What banks offer such good deals?

- Capital One 360, and Charles Schwab, and USAlliance Financial.

- In the post-recession era with tighter banking regulations, free no strings attached checking accounts are hard to find.

- Banks will typically require you to have a minimum balance, direct deposit, or a minimum amount of transactions to avoid fees. Otherwise, there is usually a monthly maintenance fee.

- Not so with Capital One 360, and Charles Schwab, and USAlliance Financial. In addition to being free, and require no minimum balance, they have many unique features and perks that make them all worthwhile opening.
- Here is a breakdown of how I take advantage of the benefits these accounts have to offer.

- Capital One 360: This account, formally called ING Direct, is my primary account.

- It gives you access to withdraw money without a fee from over 30,000 ATM machines.

- There is a feature called person to person payment where you can send money to someone instantly I find this very convenient when I owe someone money.

- The online account records will also account for charges that are pending, as well as checks that have been sent, but not yet cashed This alleviates the need to wait for transactions to clear, and balance a check book.

- A customer is permitted to open up to 25 saving accounts, which can be given nicknames to help keep track of your expenses.

- A feature to set up a savings goal keeps track of your progress next to an account makes sure you're on track to reaching your targeted savings amount.

- Whenever you make a transfer between accounts or set a goal, you can write a memo detailing the the reason for that transfer.
- Recently customers were given the ability to withdraw and deposit money into these accounts at a regular Capital One branch. Plus, there customer service is terrific.
- As an account that is convenient and helps keep all your finances in order, Capital One 360 is a great choice.
- ***Here is a link to their website: <https://home.capitalone360.com/>***
- Charles Schwab: Known mostly as a brokerage firm, Charles Schwab, known mostly as a brokerage firm, offers a free checking account with several worthwhile perks.
- The one I primarily take advantage of is their ATM fee rebate. Regardless of what bank or fee you incur from withdrawing money, you are refunded that fee at the end of the month. This saves time looking for your bank's branch, and fees waste your hard earned money. I always keep my Schwab debit card with me, and never think twice about where I will withdraw money.
- There is never a fee for ordering more checks.
- For someone not internet savvy, customer is given pre paid envelopes that can be used to mail in checks for deposit into your account.
- There are branches available in the NYC area to visit if one prefers to deposit checks in person.
- Two notes of importance with these accounts: One has to open a free brokerage account together with this checking account.

However, you aren't forced to invest money. Additionally, one can't deposit or withdraw cash at any of these branches.

- As an account to save you from those nagging ATM and check ordering fees, a Schwab checking account is a great compliment to any of your existing accounts.
- ***Here is a link to their website: <https://www.schwab.com/>***
- USAlliance Financial: USAlliance Financial is a credit union that offers benefits for all of your financial needs.
- There are several branches around NYC, ATM fee rebates for up to \$15 a month, and the chance receive your paycheck two days early if you set up direct deposit.
- They also have a savings account for kids that earn 2.99% interest on the first \$500 in the account.
- ***Here is a link to their website: <https://www.usalliance.org/products-and-services/deposit-products/my-life-checking>***
- Between these three accounts, I have access to branches, save money by avoiding nagging fees, and I even help my kids.
- All for free. Happy holiday shopping!