

Why shred?

"Dumpster diving," or rifling through trash cans for personal information, is a common tactic used by identity thieves. You are taking a terrible risk if you don't shred sensitive material.

What should I shred? In short, destroy all sensitive information including junk mail and paperwork that includes account numbers, birth dates, passwords and PINs, signatures, and social security numbers. To protect your privacy, you should also consider shredding items that include names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses.

Below is a list of specific items to consider shredding for your safety and privacy:

- Address labels from junk mail and magazines
- ATM receipts
- Bank statements
- Birth certificate copies
- Canceled and voided checks
- Credit and charge card bills, carbon copies, summaries and receipts
- Credit reports and histories
- Employee pay stubs
- Employment records
- Expired credit and identification cards including driver's licenses, college IDs, military IDs, employee badges, medical insurance cards, etc.
- Expired passports and visas
- Legal documents
- Insurance documents
- Investment, stock and property transactions
- Luggage tags
- Medical and dental records
- Papers with a Social Security number
- Pre-approved credit card applications
- Receipts with checking account numbers
- Report cards
- Resumés or curriculum vitae
- Signatures (such as those found on leases, contracts, letters)
- Tax forms
- Transcripts
- Travel itineraries
- Used airline tickets
- Utility bills (telephone, gas, electric, water, cable TV, Internet)