

Further information

Consumer Direct is a telephone and online consumer advice service funded by government and managed by the Office of Fair Trading. It operates in partnership with Local Authority Trading Standards Services to offer consumers clear, practical and impartial advice and information.



To find out about credit unions, contact the Association of British Credit Unions (ABCUL) on 0161 832 3694 or at www.abcuk.org, or contact the Scottish League of Credit Unions on 0141 774 5020 or at www.scottishcu.org

To compare the different bank and building society savings accounts available go to the Consumer Financial Education Body (CFEB) website www.moneymadeclear.org.uk

Citizens Advice may also be able to help you work out the best way of paying for Christmas – check the phone directory to find your nearest branch.

Local Authority Trading Standards Services may also be able to help – check the phone directory for your nearest trading standards office or visit www.tradingstandards.gov.uk

To find out about compensation limits for banks, building societies in the UK and credit unions in England, Scotland or Wales contact the Financial Services Compensation Scheme on 0800 678 1100. For credit unions in Northern Ireland contact the Registry of Credit Unions and Industrial & Provident Societies on 028 9090 5343. Registry of Credit Unions and Industrial & Provident Societies is part of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment.

Call **0800 389 3158** for more free copies of this leaflet or to request a different format.

SAVE

XMAS

A quick guide to paying for Christmas

Many people lost money when Farepak collapsed.

If you're one of those people who want to put a bit away each week so that you'll have enough to get what you need at Christmas there are quite a few options.

You might want to stop yourself getting at your money before Christmas. You might prefer vouchers to cash. And perhaps you want the money collected from your home.

Use this leaflet to decide what will work for you.

The table below lets you compare some of the different options.

To find out how to start using one of these ways to pay for Christmas, there's more information on the back of the leaflet or you can call Consumer Direct on **08454 04 05 06**.

	Do I get interest on my money?	Will I get a bonus?	Is it difficult to take money out before Christmas?	Will they collect the money from my home?	Is there any protection if the scheme goes bust?	Can it pay out in vouchers?	Does it pay out just before Christmas?	Do I have to buy from a particular shop or supplier?
Standard bank and building society savings account	Yes	Sometimes	With some accounts you have to give notice to take your money out or you lose interest	No	Yes*	No	It's up to you when you take your money out	No
Special building society Christmas account	Yes	Yes	May lose the bonus and have to close the account	No	Yes*	No	Most do	No
Credit union savings account	You may get a dividend	Sometimes	No	No	Yes*	No	It's up to you when you take your money out	No
Special credit union Christmas savings account	You may get a dividend	Sometimes	May lose the dividend or bonus and have to close the account	No	Yes*	Some have voucher schemes	Yes	No
Post Office® Christmas Club (with the Bank of Ireland)	No	Savers will receive a booklet of special offers for use at selected retail partners	Yes	No	Yes†	You can choose 'One4all' gift vouchers or an e-card (like a pre-paid credit card)	Yes	There is a list of retail partners signed up to accept the card as a method of payment or 'One4all' gift vouchers which can be spent in many high street shops
Christmas hamper and voucher schemes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Companies belonging to the Christmas Prepayments Association have arrangements in place to protect your money. Ask about the level of protection before you use them.	Yes	Yes	This depends on which goods and vouchers you choose
Christmas clubs with local shops (like butchers, corner shops and toy shops)	No	No	Yes	No	If the shop closes or goes bust you're unlikely to get all your money back	No	Yes	Yes
Hamper scheme from your milkman	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	If the company goes bust you're unlikely to get all your money back	Yes	Yes	Yes
Supermarket stamp schemes for Christmas	No	Yes	Yes	No	If the company goes bust you're unlikely to get all your money back	No	Yes	Yes

* If the bank, building society or credit union goes bust, you may be able to get compensation from the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) up to a maximum of £85,000 from 31st December 2010. There are a number of conditions and exclusions that apply to any compensation you might receive. For details visit www.fscs.org.uk

† The Post Office Christmas Club is not protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. It is however protected by the Irish Deposit Guarantee Scheme and you may be able to get compensation up to a maximum value of €100,000. There are a number of conditions and exclusions that apply to any compensation you might receive. For details visit www.itsyourmoney.ie