

7 hidden fees on your card processing statement

Grab your most recent monthly statement and a highlighter. Check each box below if you find the fee on yours. Most statements have at least a few.

- ☐ **1. PCI non-compliance fee**
A monthly charge, often labeled "PCI non-compliance" or "non-validation", added when a yearly security questionnaire wasn't filled out. Many owners never knew they had to do it.
Look for: *PCI, non-compliance, non-validation*

- ☐ **2. Statement and account fees**
Small monthly charges for the statement itself, account maintenance, online reporting or "customer service". Each one looks minor, but together they add up every month.
Look for: *statement fee, maintenance, account fee, reporting fee*

- ☐ **3. Monthly minimum fee**
If your processing fees for the month come in under a set amount, you pay the difference. Slow months and seasonal businesses get hit hardest.
Look for: *monthly minimum, minimum discount*

- ☐ **4. "Non-qualified" surcharges**
Under tiered pricing, many cards (rewards cards, business cards, keyed-in sales) get moved to a higher "mid-qualified" or "non-qualified" rate. The low rate you were quoted may apply to only some of your sales.
Look for: *qualified, mid-qual, non-qual, NQ surcharge*

- ☐ **5. Equipment lease**
A terminal lease can run for years and is often non-cancelable, even if you switch processors. Over the full term, leases often cost far more than buying the same equipment.
Look for: *lease, rental, equipment fee, a separate leasing company*

- ☐ **6. Early termination and auto-renewal**
Some contracts charge a fee to cancel, or "liquidated damages" based on what the processor expected to earn. Many renew on their own unless you cancel in a short window.
Look for: *your contract's term, renewal and cancellation sections*

- ☐ **7. Quiet rate increases**
Processors can raise rates and fees with a short notice printed in the messages section of your statement. If no one reads that section, the increase goes unnoticed.
Look for: *"Important notice", "pricing update" messages at the end*

Your 2-minute effective rate check

Add up every fee on the statement, then divide by your total card sales for the month. That's your effective rate: what you really pay per dollar of card sales, no matter what rate you were quoted.

Total fees ÷ total card sales × 100 = effective rate %

Want a second set of eyes?

Send us a recent statement for a free, line-by-line rate review. If we can't beat your current rates and fees, we'll pay you \$500.*

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*Requires a recent processing statement from your current provider. See guarantee terms at upwardmerchant.com/terms. This checklist is general information, not legal or financial advice. Fee names vary by processor.