The Ultimate Credit Card Guide – One-Stop Solution for All Your Queries with RR & ROI Analysis!

Disclaimer

This document is intended for **informational and educational purposes only** and does not include any referral or affiliate links. The content is based on available data and personal research, but users are strongly advised to verify details directly from official sources before making any financial decisions.

1. This project aims to provide a **minimal yet effective** selection of credit cards to maximize returns while ensuring practical usability.
2. Premium and ultra-premium, private credit cards with fees exceeding ₹15,000 have been **excluded**, as they are typically **invite-only** or require a high annual income. Examples include **Axis Reserve, Axis Olympus, Magnus for Burgundy, YES Private, and IDFC Private**.
3. Certain credit cards not included in this list may still be **useful for specific categories**, and users may consider them based on their individual spending habits.
4. This project is **independent and unbiased**, containing no referral or affiliate links. The sole purpose is to educate and raise awareness about credit card offerings and it's advantages.
5. **Direct links** to official issuer websites are provided wherever applicable to help users access the latest terms, features, and revisions.
6. Reward rates mentioned are based on the **best possible redemption values** allowed by the issuer. However, **some exclusions apply**, and actual values may vary.
7. Reward calculations are based on **common redemption options** for practicality. While minor variations may exist, the overall return remains competitive.
8. Some previously available credit cards, such as **SBI Air India Signature Card and Kotak Privy League Signature Card**, have been **discontinued** and are no longer offered.
9. **Income eligibility criteria** for each card are **not included** in this document. Users should check the official issuer's website for specific eligibility requirements.
10. **Partner brands, eligible categories, and reward structures** may change over time at the issuer's discretion. It is recommended to verify these details before making a decision.
11. **Service availability** may vary by location. Before applying for a card, users should confirm with customer support to avoid unnecessary **credit inquiries** that could impact their **credit score**.
12. **Milestone rewards and Base Rewards** may have an expiration period if unredeemed within a specified timeframe. This information is included wherever applicable.
13. For those who **frequently travel abroad**, it is important to consider **forex markup fees** when selecting a card for international transactions.
14. **Cashback vs. Reward Points:** Some cards offer **direct cashback**, while others provide **reward points** that require manual redemption. Choose based on personal preference.
15. Some issuers charge **redemption fees** for converting reward points into vouchers, airline miles, or other benefits. Always check for hidden fees.
16. Certain credit cards have **reward points that expire** after a fixed period (e.g., **2-3 years**). Users who do not redeem frequently should consider cards with **non-expiring or long-validity points**.
17. **Dynamic Reward Programs:** Some Banks frequently update their **reward structures**, meaning today's best card may not remain the best in the future. Staying updated is essential.
18. **Credit Score Impact:** Applying for multiple credit cards in a short period can lead to **hard inquiries**, which may impact your credit score. It is advisable to **space out applications** strategically.
19. **Hidden Exclusions in Reward Categories:** Some **spending categories** (e.g., **insurance, utility bills, wallet loads**) may not earn rewards, despite falling under an eligible merchant category. Always check the fine print.
20. **Merchant Category Code (MCC) Impact:** Certain reward programs are tied to **MCCs**. If a transaction is **not classified correctly**, it may not be eligible for rewards, even if it appears to be within a listed category.

Contents

Definitions & Abbreviations

This section provides a list of abbreviations used in the project along with definitions of key **credit card and finance terms** to help beginners understand credit card usage effectively.

Abbreviations:

- **RR** – Reward Rate
- **ROI** – Return on Investment
- **LTF** – Lifetime Free (No annual fee)
- **MCC** – Merchant Category Code
- **UPI** – Unified Payments Interface
- **NA** – Not Applicable
- **MRCC** – Membership Rewards Credit Card (by American Express)
- **DCB** – Diners Club Black (HDFC credit card)
- **DCP** – Diners Club Privilege (HDFC credit card)
- **Forex** – Foreign Exchange (currency conversion)
- **T&C** – Terms and Conditions
- **CIBIL** – Credit Information Bureau (India) Limited (Credit Score Agency)
- **MAD** – Minimum Amount Due
- **TAD** – Total Amount Due
- **BT** – Balance Transfer
- **EMI** – Equated Monthly Installment
- **APR** – Annual Percentage Rate
- **NPV** – Net Present Value
- **TAT** – Turnaround Time (processing time)
- **LOV** – Line of Visibility (transaction settlement time)

Key Credit Card & Finance Terms for Beginners:

Fair Usage Policy (FUP) – Surcharge on High-Value Transactions

Most banks enforce a **Fair Usage Policy** to ensure that credit cards are used only for **personal expenses** and not for business-related or speculative transactions. If a transaction **exceeds a certain amount**, the bank may **charge an additional fee** (usually a **1%-3% surcharge**) claiming it violates their fair usage norms.

Common FUP violations that may incur charges or lead to account closure:
✅ **High-value transactions exceeding a specific amount on selected categories**
✅ **Excessive rent payments**.
✅ **Using personal credit cards for bulk business expenses.**
✅ **Abnormally high spending in specific MCCs (e.g., Insurance, Rent, Education through 3rd party Apps, or Wallet Loads, Utility bill payments)**

Tip: Always read the bank's T&C to understand spending restrictions to **avoid surprise charges!**

1. **Reward Rate (RR)** – The percentage return a user gets in the form of reward points or cashback on spending. **RR (%) = (Value of rewards earned / Amount spent) × 100**
2. **Return on Investment (ROI)** – The actual value a cardholder gets after deducting annual fees, redemption charges, and other costs, reflecting the net benefit instead of just reward accumulation.
3. **Minimum Amount Due (MAD)** – The minimum portion of the bill a cardholder must pay to avoid late fees. Paying only the MAD still incurs interest on the remaining balance.
4. **Total Amount Due (TAD)** – The full credit card bill generated for a billing cycle, including all purchases, fees, and charges. Paying the TAD before the due date avoids interest charges.
5. **Total Outstanding** – The total amount owed on the credit card, including the current month's bill and any previous unpaid amounts.
6. **Balance Transfer (BT)** – A facility that allows transferring outstanding debt from one credit card to another at a lower interest rate. Some banks offer 0% BT for a limited period.
7. **Annual Percentage Rate (APR)** – The yearly interest rate charged on unpaid balances if the full bill is not paid.
8. **Late Payment Fee** – A penalty charged if the MAD is not paid by the due date. The fee varies based on the outstanding balance.
9. **Interest-Free Period (Grace Period)** – The number of days between a purchase and the payment due date during which no interest is charged if the full bill is paid on time.
10. **No-Cost EMI** – An EMI option where no additional interest is charged. However, processing fees may apply, and some banks adjust pricing to recover costs.
11. **Regular EMI** – A payment plan that allows users to convert purchases into monthly installments with an added interest rate.
12. **Processing Fee** – A one-time charge on transactions like EMI conversion, balance transfer, and cash withdrawal. It is usually a percentage of the transaction amount.
13. **Forex Markup Fee** – A charge applied on international transactions in foreign currency. Premium cards may offer lower rates.
14. **Dynamic Currency Conversion (DCC)** – A service where international transactions are processed in the cardholder's home currency instead of the local foreign currency. It often results in higher conversion charges.
15. **Fuel Surcharge Waiver** – A discount or waiver on the extra charges applied to fuel transactions, usually up to a capped limit per billing cycle.
16. **Railway Surcharge Waiver** – A waiver on the extra charges levied on railway ticket bookings done via IRCTC or other platforms.
17. **Cash Withdrawal Through Credit Card** – The ability to withdraw cash from ATMs using a credit card, which is subject to a **cash advance fee** and incurs interest from the withdrawal date.
18. **Cash Advance Fee** – A charge applied when withdrawing cash using a credit card. It is a percentage of the withdrawn amount.
19. **Zero Lost Card Liability** – Protection against fraudulent transactions if the lost or stolen card is reported to the bank immediately.
20. **Roadside Assistance** – Complimentary or chargeable emergency roadside services like towing, fuel delivery, or repair assistance offered by some premium credit cards.
21. **Concierge Service** – A premium feature offering assistance with travel, dining reservations, event bookings, and more.
22. **Airmiles** – A type of reward earned on travel-based credit cards, which can be redeemed for flight tickets or travel benefits.
23. **Points Transfer Program** – The ability to transfer earned reward points to partner airlines, hotels, or loyalty programs.
24. **Reward Redemption** – The process of using earned reward points for cashback, travel bookings, merchandise, or gift vouchers. Some banks charge **redemption fees**.
25. **Points/Miles Conversion** – The ratio at which credit card reward points convert into Airmiles, travel points, or cashback.
26. **GST on Credit Card Transactions** – Tax applied on charges like interest, late payment fees, cash withdrawals, and processing fees.
27. **Card Network –** The payment network facilitating transactions, such as **Visa, Mastercard, RuPay, American Express, and Diners Club**.

28. **Merchant Discount Rate (MDR)** – The fee charged to merchants by card networks for processing credit card transactions.
29. **Secured vs. Unsecured Credit Cards**

- **Secured Credit Card** – Issued against a fixed deposit (FD), helping users with low or no credit score build credit.
- **Unsecured Credit Card** – Issued based on creditworthiness without requiring collateral.

30. **Lien on FD-Backed Cards** – Banks can hold the FD as collateral, and in case of default, the bank can liquidate the FD to recover dues.
31. **Business Credit Cards** – Credit cards designed for small businesses, offering higher limits, business-related rewards, and expense tracking features.
32. **Corporate Credit Cards** – Cards issued to employees of companies for business expenses, usually with centralized billing and spending controls.
33. **Chargeback** – A transaction reversal process where a cardholder disputes a charge and requests a refund from the issuing bank. It applies in cases of fraud, defective products, or service issues.
34. **Disputed Transactions** – Transactions that a cardholder challenges due to unauthorized charges, incorrect billing, or failed but debited transactions. The bank investigates and may issue a refund if found valid.
35. **Refund** – The process of returning the money to the cardholder for a canceled, returned, or disputed purchase. Refunds take time to reflect, depending on the merchant and bank processing time.
36. **Capping on Rewards** – A maximum limit set on reward points or cashback earnings within a billing cycle. Some banks cap rewards on certain categories like wallet loads, rent payments, or utilities.
37. **Regulation by RBI** – The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) regulates credit card issuance, interest rates, fees, dispute resolution, and consumer protection measures under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007.

Sheet 1: Credit Card Database

General Credit Card Information

These columns provide basic details about the credit card and its issuing bank.

- **Issuer:**
  - The name of the bank or financial institution issuing the credit card.
  - Helps identify the provider and compare cards from different issuers.
- **Card Name:**
  - The official name of the credit card.
  - Ensures clarity when referencing a specific card.

Fees & Charges

Understanding the costs associated with the card, including one-time and recurring fees.

- **Joining Fee Incl GST:**
  - One-time fee paid when getting the card, including 18% GST.
  - Some cards offer **"Welcome Benefits"** to compensate for the fee.
- **Annual Fee Incl GST:**
  - Recurring yearly fee, including 18% GST.
  - Many cards have **fee waivers** based on spending conditions.
- **Fee Waiver Condition:**
  - Specifies how much you need to **spend in a year** to waive the annual fee.
  - Important for assessing the long-term cost-effectiveness of the card.
  - Some cards exclude specific type of **txns like Rent, wallet** etc. these are discussed in **sheet 5.**

Rewards & Benefits

This section covers the rewards structure and redemption methods.

- **Reward Type:**
  - Specifies whether the card offers **Cashback, Reward Points, Air Miles,** or other types of points.
  - Cashback is **direct savings**, while reward points and miles often provide **higher value** when used wisely.
- **Reward Structure:**
  - Detailed breakdown of how rewards are earned on different types of spending.
- **Capping on Rewards/Cashback/Miles:**
  - Any **limits** on the maximum rewards that can be earned per month/year.
  - Important for high spenders who maximize reward benefits.
  - This can effect the overall RR.
- **Redemption Methods:**
  - Different ways to **use earned rewards**, such as:
✅ Cashback (direct statement credit)
✅ Flight/Hotel bookings
✅ Online shopping vouchers/Gift cards
✅ Conversion to partner loyalty programs (e.g., airline miles)
  -

Special Benefits & Privileges

Additional perks that come with premium and mid-range cards.

- **Key Benefits:**
  - Covers **Welcome & Renewal Benefits, Special Discounts, Golf,** Insurance and more.
  - Some cards provide **free memberships** (Amazon Prime, Zomato Gold, etc.)
- **Milestone Benefits:**
  - Extra rewards when you **reach a spending target** (e.g., ₹3L spend = bonus 10,000 points).
  - Encourages higher spending but should be **achievable** based on your usage.
  - There may be some exclusions in milestone count that are discussed in sheet 5.
- **Airport Lounge Access (Per Year/Quarter):**
  - Specifies **how many free visits** you get at **domestic & international lounges per Qtr/Year**.
  - Useful for frequent travelers.
- **Spend Condition for Airport Lounge Access:**
  - Some banks **require minimum spending** (e.g., ₹5,000/month) to unlock lounge access.
  - Important for occasional travelers who may not meet the condition.
- **Railway Lounge Access:**
  - Complimentary railway lounge access for **frequent train travelers.**
  - Some banks recently started imposing a **minimum spending requirement** for railway lounge access.

Spending Categories & Reward Rates (RR)

This section provides details on how rewards apply across different spending categories.

- **Travel / Hotels:**
  - **Reward Rate (RR)** on flight bookings and hotel stays.
  - Some cards offer **direct conversion to airline miles (e.g., Vistara, Etihad, Accor, Air India).**
- **Base RR:**
  - The standard reward rate on **general spending** (non-category-specific purchases).
  - Useful for understanding the card's **minimum return value.**
- **Online Shopping:**
  - RR on e-commerce purchases like **Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, and others.**
- **Online Shopping(specific platforms):**
  - RR on e-commerce purchases only on specific brands/Merchants – Co branded cards**.**
  - Some cards have **exclusive partnerships** (e.g., Axis Flipkart Card).
- **Online Transactions:**
  - RR on all **other digital spends** (excluding shopping category).
  - Includes **bill payments, OTT subscriptions, and miscellaneous online payments.**
- **Offline Transactions:**
  - RR on **in-store purchases** at retail shops, malls, and local stores.
  - Generally lower than online spends but still important for users who prefer offline shopping.
- **Utility Bill Payments:**
  - Rewards on bill payments for **electricity, water, broadband, gas, etc.**
  - Some banks **exclude bill payments from reward eligibility.**
- **Movie Tickets:**

  - Details of **exclusive discounts and offers** on BookMyShow, district, etc.
  - Cards with exclusive movie benefits are discussed here.
- **Food & Dining:**
  - Special offers on restaurants and food delivery platforms (e.g., Zomato, Swiggy, EazyDiner).
  - Some premium cards provide **exclusive dining privileges** with partner restaurants.
- **Grocery / Department Stores:**
  - RR on grocery purchases **both online (BigBasket, Blinkit) and offline (supermarkets).**
- **Fuel:**
  - RR on fuel transactions (only specific fuel credit cards offer this benefit).
  - Many banks **exclude fuel spending from earning rewards.**
- **Fuel Surcharge Waiver:**
  - Covers details of **fuel surcharge exemptions**.
- **UPI Transactions:**
  - **Reward Rate (RR) on Merchant UPI payments** using RuPay credit cards.
  - Useful for users leveraging **credit cards on UPI for everyday spending.**

International Transactions

Details on transactions outside India and UPI-based rewards.

- **Mark-up Fee Incl GST:**
  - The **forex markup fee**, including 18% GST, on international transactions.
  - Some cards often have **lower markup fees** (1% or lower).
- **International Transactions:**
  - Net return on foreign spends **after deducting the markup fee.**

Suitability & Personal Recommendations

These columns help users identify **if the card matches their needs.**

- **Best for:**
  - Specifies if the card is ideal for **travel, shopping, fuel, business, or premium lifestyle.**
  - Helps users **quickly filter** the best cards based on their spending habits.
- **Recommendation:**
  - Direct suggestion to **"Consider" or "Avoid"** the card based on its value proposition.
  - Verdict is based on reward rates, fees, and market alternatives.

References & Latest Updates

Keeping track of official sources and changes in card benefits.

- **Links / References:**
  - Direct links to **official bank websites** and reliable sources.
  - Ensures information accuracy for users before applying.
- **Latest Revisions:**
  - Tracks **changes in terms & conditions, devaluations, and benefit updates.**
  - Useful for monitoring how a card evolves over time.

Sheet 2: Quick Report

Quick Report - Credit Card Comparison

1. **Numeric Data Format:**
   - All **data points are numeric**, making it easier to **sort & filter** based on different parameters.
   - This helps users quickly compare reward rates (RR), fees, and benefits.
2. **Reward Rates (RR) Highlighting:**
   - The **best RR values are highlighted** for easy identification.
   - RR is purely based on **earn rates before considering fees & redemption costs.**
   - **ROI (Return on Investment) is NOT included** in this sheet.
3. **Lounge Access Spend Condition (Final Column):**
   - **Yes:** There is a **spend requirement** for free **Airport/Railway lounge access.**
   - **No:** No spend requirement; lounge access is completely free.
   - **NA:** The card does **not** offer any lounge access benefit.
4. **Filterable Columns for User Convenience:**
   - Users can **apply filters** to each column to **compare cards** based on:
     ✅ **Reward Rates (RR) for different categories**
     ✅ **Annual Fees & Waivers**
     ✅ **Lounge Access Conditions**
     ✅ **Other Major Benefits**
5. **Eligibility Criteria NOT Included:**
   - Since **approval criteria** vary for each bank and individual, this data is **excluded** from Sheet 2.
6. **Total Cards Covered:**
   - **103 credit cards** (3 excluded from **106 cards in Sheet 1**).
   - Periodic updates are made, but users should **verify with the latest revision** for accuracy.
7. ⚠️**Disclaimer on Reward Rates:**
   - The **reward rates (RR) shown** are for **reference only** and do not account for:
     - **Fees, redemption charges, or ROI calculations.**
     - Actual returns **may vary slightly** after deducting additional costs.

Sheet 3: Summary & Key Insights

Best Credit Cards & Key Insights 2025 (Sheet 3 Overview)

This sheet provides a **quick summary and analysis** of the **best credit cards** in different categories based on in-depth evaluation. It serves as a tool to **easily identify top-performing credit cards** based on specific benefits, spending patterns, and fee structures.

Tables & Insights

1 Best Credit Cards Across All Categories Based on Fee Range

- Categorized cards based on **annual fees** to help users **find the best card within their budget.**
- Includes options from **Entry-Level, Mid-Range, Premium, and Super-Premium** segments.
- Helps users compare **reward rates (RR), lounge benefits, fee waivers, and other perks.**

2 Lifetime Free Credit Cards (LTF) – Mar 2025

- List of **Lifetime Free (LTF) credit cards** available **without any annual fee.**
- Includes **best LTF cards** from different issuers with a focus on rewards, cashback, and travel benefits.

3 List of RuPay Credit Cards for UPI Payments

- Includes **RuPay credit cards that support UPI transactions**.
- Some cards offer rewards on transactions **above Rs.2000.**
- Some useful and **high-rewarding** cards are highlighted.

4 Overall Best Performers & Alternatives to These Cards

- A ranking of the **top-performing credit cards** based on **return on spends, benefits, and acceptance.**
- Provides **alternative cards** in case the best card is **not available or has a high eligibility requirement.**

5 Bank-wise Best Credit Cards

- Lists the **best credit card** from each major bank based on **rewards, cashback, and travel perks.**
- Helps users **compare top cards across different banks in one place.**
- Includes cards like **fuel cards, co-branded cards, and fintech tie-ups.**

6 List of Credit Cards Providing Golf Access Benefit

- Includes **credit cards that offer complimentary golf lessons and access to premium golf courses.**
- Details of **frequency (monthly/quarterly) and limitations** on free golf sessions.

7 List of Credit Cards Offering Guest Visits for Airport Lounge Access

- Differentiates between cards that offer **only primary cardholder access** vs. **guest visits.**
- Covers both **domestic and international lounge access** guest visit policies.
- Highlights **spend requirements (if any) for guest access benefits.**

8 List of Cards with Railway Lounge Access (With & Without Spend Requirements)

- **Railway lounge access** is an underrated benefit available on select cards.
- Divided into:
  ✅ **No spend requirement** – Lounge access available by default.
  ✅ **Spend-based access –** Access granted only after meeting a minimum spend condition.

9 Best Credit Cards for International Transactions

- Focuses on **credit cards with the lowest forex markup fees** (1% or lower).
- Includes cards with **high international rewards & lounge access at global airports.**
- Some cards listed **may not be included in Sheets 1 & 2** but are still among the best for foreign transactions.

Why This Sheet Matters?

✅ **Saves time** by offering a summarized version of **Sheets 1 & 2.**
✅ **Helps in decision-making** by comparing the **best cards** side by side.
✅ **Covers multiple perspectives** – general use, travel, shopping, and international transactions.
✅ **Regularly updated** to reflect changes in benefits, devaluations, and new card launches.

This sheet is the go-to reference for anyone looking to choose the best credit card for their needs!

Sheet 4: RR & ROI Calculators

ROI & RR Calculators for AMEX & HDFC Credit Cards (Sheet 4 Overview)

This sheet features **custom-built ROI (Return on Investment) and RR (Reward Rate) calculators** for **select AMEX & HDFC credit cards** that have **complex reward structures.**

List of Cards Covered in This Calculator:
✅ **AMEX Credit Cards**

- **AMEX Platinum Travel**
- **AMEX Gold Charge Card**
- **AMEX Membership Rewards Card (MRCC)**
- **AMEX SmartEarn**

✅ **HDFC Credit Cards**

- **HDFC Infinia Metal**
- **HDFC Diners Club Black (DCB) Metal**
- **HDFC Regalia Gold**
- **HDFC DCP (Diners Club Privilege)**
- **HDFC BizBlack Metal**

✅**Axis Credit Cards**

- **Axis Atlas**

How do the Calculators Work?

- **Pre-set Reward Rates & Point Values:** The calculator **automatically considers the latest RR values** for each card.
- **User Input Required:** The user **only needs to enter their monthly/yearly spends** across different categories (e.g., dining, travel, shopping, fuel, etc.).
- **Automatic Calculation:** The sheet will instantly compute:
  ✅ **Total Reward Points Earned**
  ✅ **Effective RR (%)** based on spends
  ✅ **Approximate ROI (%)** considering point redemption values
- **Accurate Reference Data:** The formulas use **official RR & point values** from the banks' websites.

Why These Cards?

- **Complex Reward Structures** – Some AMEX, Axis, HDFC offer **varied multipliers, milestone benefits, and redemption values** that make manual calculation difficult.
- **Maximizing Benefits** – Helps users **identify spending patterns** that yield the **highest RR & ROI.**
- **Time-Saving** – Eliminates the hassle of **manually calculating rewards across different spending categories.**

Important Notes

⚠️ **ROI & RR values are approximations, not exact figures.**
⚠️ **Bank policies & reward values may change over time; I will update the calculator periodically.**
⚠️ **More card calculators may be added in the future based on demand.**

Sheet 5: Exclusions

Excluded Categories – Transactions That Don't Earn Rewards

Many banks **exclude certain transactions** from earning rewards, cashback, or milestone benefits. These exclusions vary by issuer, but the following categories are commonly **restricted or have minimal rewards.**

1. Government Payments & Tax Payments

- Includes transactions like **income tax payments, GST payments, municipal taxes, property tax, and other government fees.**
- **Reason for Exclusion:**
  - Banks classify these as **low-margin transactions** and often **pass them through without merchant fees.**
  - Since no significant revenue is generated, they **exclude rewards** on these spends.

✅ **Exceptions:**

- Some premium cards **may** provide points on tax payments but at a **reduced rate**.
- Some **Business cards** provide points on this category **Ex: HDFC BizBlack Metal**
- Few banks allow tax payments to contribute towards **milestone spending** even if they don't earn points.

2. Rent Payments

- Includes payments made to **landlords, real estate agents, or rent-paying platforms** like NoBroker, CRED RentPay, Paytm Rent, RedGiraffe, etc.
- **Reason for Exclusion:**
  - These transactions often involve **high processing fees**, making them costly for banks to incentivize.
  - Many banks **actively discourage rent payments** due to the risk of **misuse for artificial spending** (users could cycle credit).

✅ **Exceptions:**

- Some banks **allow milestone benefits on rent payments** but restrict **reward points or cashback.**
- Certain **business credit cards** provide points on rent transactions.

3. Wallet Loads (Prepaid & Digital Wallets)

- Includes **adding funds** to digital wallets like Paytm Wallet, PhonePe Wallet, Amazon Pay Balance, Mobikwik, Freecharge, and others.
- **Reason for Exclusion:**
  - Wallets act as an **intermediary**, allowing users to store and use funds later.
  - Banks restrict rewards to **prevent misuse**, where users could load a wallet, transfer money to a bank, and repeat the process for artificial spending.

✅ **Exceptions:**

- A few credit cards offer **limited rewards** on wallet reloads.

4. Insurance Payments

- Includes payments for **health, life, motor, term, and other insurance premiums.**
- **Reason for Exclusion:**
  - Insurance payments are often **high-value and infrequent**, making them expensive for banks to reward.
  - Some users **prepay multiple years of insurance** to hit milestone spending, which banks try to prevent.

✅ **Exceptions:**

- Some banks **offer reduced rewards** on insurance (e.g., **0.5% instead of 1%**).
- Some credit cards **sometimes include insurance transactions** for milestone benefits.

5. Education Fee & Tuition Payments

- Includes payments to **schools, colleges, universities, and online education platforms** (e.g., Coursera, Udemy, Byju's, Unacademy).
- **Reason for Exclusion:**
  - Banks consider education fees as **essential expenses** and exclude rewards.
  - These payments **don't generate high merchant fees**, making them **less profitable** for issuers.

✅ **Exceptions:**

- Some **student-focused credit cards** provide benefits on educational spends.
- Few banks provide rewards on this category if paid via direct school/college websites.
- Few banks allow **tuition fee payments to count towards milestone spends** but restrict cashback/rewards.

6. Gold & Jewellery Purchases

- Includes purchases from **jewellery stores, gold coins, bullion, and online gold investments (e.g., MMTC-PAMP, Digital Gold, Sovereign Gold Bonds).**
- **Reason for Exclusion:**
  - Gold purchases are **treated as investments**, and banks limit rewards to **prevent misuse**.
  - Large jewellery purchases can be used to **artificially increase spending** for milestone benefits.

✅ **Exceptions:**

- Some credit cards allow rewards **only up to a certain limit** (e.g., ₹50,000 per billing cycle).
- Select co-branded cards with **jewellery brands (e.g., Tanishq)** may offer rewards for **specific transactions**.

Other Commonly Excluded Transactions

These categories **may** or **may not** be restricted, depending on the bank:

- **Fuel Purchases:**
  - Many banks **exclude fuel from rewards** but provide a **surcharge waiver** (usually 1%).
- **EMI Transactions:**
  - Some banks **don't provide rewards on EMI purchases** (especially No-Cost EMIs).
- **Lottery, Gambling & Betting:**
  - Transactions related to **lottery tickets, casinos, fantasy gaming apps, and online betting sites** are usually restricted.
- **Forex Transactions & International Remittances:**
  - Some banks exclude **currency exchange purchases** from earning rewards.

Surcharge & Transaction Fee Information

I have compiled the maximum possible information regarding exclusions, limits, surcharges, and reward rates on various credit card transaction categories. However, some limits are not explicitly mentioned by banks, and all reward rates, fees, and surcharges are subject to change as per bank policies and periodic revisions. Please verify with your bank's official website or MITC (Most Important Terms & Conditions) for the latest updates.

- Rent Surcharge and Limit
  • This column specifies the surcharge applicable when paying rent via credit cards, either as a fixed fee or a percentage of the transaction amount.
  • Some banks impose monthly or yearly limits on rent payments via credit cards, beyond which additional charges may apply.
- Education Fee Payment Charges and Limit
  • Indicates the fee structure applicable to education-related transactions done via Third-party Apps but not Applicable for Txns done directly on school/college/university portals
  • Some banks have set transaction limits or exclude education payments from reward programs.
- Wallet Load Fee and Limit
  • Specifies the transaction fee applicable when loading money into digital wallets using credit cards.
  • Many banks exclude wallet loads from earning reward points or milestone benefits.
- Utility Payment Fee and Limit
  • Covers fees applicable on utility bill payments (electricity, water, gas, broadband, etc.).
  • Some banks impose a surcharge or limit on these payments, and they may be excluded from reward point accrual.
- Fuel Transaction Fee and Limit
  • Specifies the surcharge or transaction fee applicable when using credit cards for fuel purchases.
  • Many banks provide a fuel surcharge waiver up to a certain limit, but reward points are generally not awarded on fuel spends.
- Whether These Categories Are Counted for Annual Fee Waiver
  • YES: Transactions in this category are considered towards the annual fee waiver.
  • NO: Transactions in this category are not counted towards the annual fee waiver calculation.
  • NA: Applicable to Lifetime Free (LTF) cards where an annual fee waiver condition does not exist.
- Reward Rate on These Categories
  • Indicates the reward points, cashback, or other benefits earned on transactions in each category.
  • Some transactions may earn standard reward points, while others (such as fuel, wallet loads, or government services) might be ineligible for any rewards.
- Any Other Exclusions
  • Highlights additional exclusions, such as:
  o Transactions that do not qualify for accelerated reward points.
  o Categories that do not count towards milestone benefits.
  o Any other restrictions mentioned in the bank's MITC or official website.

⚠️ Important Note

- **Always check your bank's T&Cs** before making transactions, as exclusions **vary between issuers.**
- Even if a category is **excluded from rewards**, it might still count towards **milestone benefits** (spending targets).
- Some issuers offer **lower reward rates** instead of outright exclusions (e.g., **0.5% instead of 1%** on insurance payments).
- For excluded categories, consider using a **different payment method** (like debit cards or UPI) where possible.