

Social Security Column

A SOCIAL SECURITY CARD AND NUMBER LESSON

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Are you looking to replace your Social Security card just because you don't have it? Then rest assured: you really don't need to replace it. What's most important is that you remember your Social Security number.

Remember, during your formal education, when you used to memorize passages from a book, or answers for a test? In the same way, you should memorize your Social Security number.

Knowing your Social Security number is important when it comes to work, taxes, banking, and other types of business. Treat your number as confidential information and keep it protected.

Memorizing your number means you don't need to carry your Social Security card with you unless you need to show it to your employer. Keep it in a safe place with your other important papers.

If you really do need to get a replacement card, it's easy to apply for a new one. Simply complete an *Application for a Social Security Card* (Form SS-5) and show us original documents proving your U.S. citizenship or immigration status, age, and identity. The application includes examples of documents you may need; you can find the application at www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber.

Then, take or mail your completed application and documents to your local Social Security office. We will mail your Social Security card to you.

If your card is lost or stolen, you can apply for a replacement for free. However, with some exceptions, you are limited to three replacement cards in a year and 10 during your lifetime.

Learn more at www.socialsecurity.gov.