

Payment Processing Cost Calculator

Fill in your numbers. Compare pricing models. Stop overpaying.

Step 1: Your Current Numbers

Fill in what you know (estimate if needed):

Field	Your Number
Monthly processing volume	\$ _____
Average transaction size	\$ _____
Estimated transactions/month	_____
Current processor	_____
Current effective rate	_____ %
Monthly fees (software, PCI, statement, etc.)	\$ _____

How to find your effective rate: Look at last month's processing statement. Divide total fees by total volume. Example: \$540 in fees ÷ \$20,000 in volume = 2.7% effective rate.

Step 2: Compare Pricing Models

Use the formulas below to estimate your cost under each model.

Flat Rate (Square / Stripe / PayPal)

Processor	In-Person Rate	Online Rate
Square	2.6% + \$0.10	2.9% + \$0.30
Stripe	2.7% + \$0.05	2.9% + \$0.30

PayPal	2.29% + \$0.09	2.99% + \$0.49
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Your estimate (in-person, using Square rates):

- Monthly volume × 2.6% = \$ _____
- Transactions × \$0.10 = \$ _____
- **Total monthly cost:** \$ _____

Your estimate (online, using Stripe rates):

- Monthly volume × 2.9% = \$ _____
- Transactions × \$0.30 = \$ _____
- **Total monthly cost:** \$ _____

Interchange-Plus

Typical markup: 0.2-0.5% + \$0.05-0.15 on top of interchange.

Average interchange: ~1.7-1.9% for most small business transaction mixes.

Your estimate:

- Monthly volume × 2.1% (estimated total) = \$ _____
- Transactions × \$0.15 (estimated per-txn) = \$ _____
- Monthly account fee (if any): \$ _____
- **Total monthly cost:** \$ _____

Your Current Processor

- Monthly volume × your effective rate = \$ _____
- Monthly fees = \$ _____
- **Total monthly cost:** \$ _____

Step 3: The Comparison

	Flat Rate	Interchange-Plus	Your Current
Processing fees	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Monthly fees	\$0	\$ _____	\$ _____
Total/month	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Total/year	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

Annual savings vs. current	\$ _____	\$ _____	—
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Quick Reference: Cost at Common Volumes

(Pre-calculated for Square flat rate vs. typical interchange-plus)

Monthly Volume	Avg Txn	Square (2.6% + \$0.10)	Interchange-Plus (~2.0% + \$0.15)	Monthly Savings
\$5,000	\$50	\$140	\$115	\$25
\$10,000	\$60	\$277	\$217	\$60
\$15,000	\$75	\$410	\$330	\$80
\$20,000	\$80	\$545	\$438	\$107
\$30,000	\$90	\$813	\$650	\$163
\$50,000	\$100	\$1,350	\$1,010	\$340

Rule of thumb: If you process over \$10,000-15,000/month, interchange-plus almost always saves money.

Step 4: Hidden Fees Checklist

Before you sign with any processor, ask about each of these. If they can't give you a straight answer, that's your answer.

Fee	Typical Range	Your Processor
PCI non-compliance fee	\$19-100/month	\$ _____
PCI compliance fee	\$0-99/year	\$ _____
Batch/settlement fee	\$0.10-0.35/day	\$ _____
Statement fee	\$5-15/month	\$ _____
Monthly minimum fee	\$10-25/month	\$ _____
Early termination fee	\$0-500	\$ _____
Equipment lease (monthly)	\$0-79/month	\$ _____

Chargeback fee	\$15-35/each	\$ _____
Account setup fee	\$0-100	\$ _____
Gateway fee (online)	\$0-25/month	\$ _____
Annual fee	\$0-120/year	\$ _____

Total hidden fees per month: \$ _____

Add this to your processing cost for the true total.

Red Flags — Walk Away If You See These

- Equipment lease longer than 12 months (buy outright instead — usually \$300-500)
- Contract longer than 1 year with early termination fee
- Tiered pricing (qualified/mid-qualified/non-qualified)
- "Free" terminal that requires a 3-year processing commitment
- Rate quotes that don't include the per-transaction fixed fee
- Refusal to show you a sample statement

Negotiation Script: Calling Your Current Processor

Use this when you're processing \$10K+/month and want better rates.

Before the call:

- Have your last 3 monthly statements handy
- Know your monthly volume, average transaction size, and effective rate
- Get a competing quote (even a rough one)

The call:

You: "Hi, I'd like to speak with someone about my processing rates. I've been with [processor] for [X months/years] and I'm reviewing my options."

They'll transfer you to retention or a relationship manager. That's who can actually lower rates.

You: "I'm currently processing about \$[X] per month with an effective rate of [X]%. I've been comparing other processors and I'm seeing rates around [competing rate — use interchange-

plus numbers]. I'd like to stay with you, but I need the rates to be competitive. What can you do?"

They'll usually offer something. If the first offer isn't good enough:

You: "I appreciate that, but it's still higher than what I'm seeing elsewhere. Can you match [target rate]? I'm happy to commit to staying for another year if the pricing works."

What to negotiate:

- Percentage rate (even 0.1-0.2% matters at volume)
- Per-transaction fee
- Monthly/annual fees waived
- PCI compliance fee waived
- Early termination fee removed from your contract

What's usually not negotiable:

- Interchange rates (set by Visa/Mastercard, not your processor)
- Assessment fees (set by card networks)

Typical outcome: 0.1-0.3% reduction on markup, which saves \$120-\$1,800/year depending on volume.

Your Decision

Based on your numbers above:

- Stay with current processor (rates are competitive)
- Negotiate with current processor (use script above)
- Switch to flat-rate (under \$10K/month, simplicity matters)
- Switch to interchange-plus (over \$10K/month, savings matter)
- Get quotes from: _____

Action items:

- _____
 - _____
 - _____
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