SMS (Text)

Short Message Service, or SMS, works with just about any cell phone sold in recent years. It allows you and your credit union to exchange text messages. Once you have registered your phone with the credit union you can set up your account to send you a text when your account hits a certain balance, or when a deposit has been made.

You can also request your current balance by texting codes, such as BAL to 454545 and receive a quick response. Through different codes you can check latest account history, even transfer money. The credit union will only accept instructions from your phone, so you don't have to worry about someone impersonating you unless you lose or lend your phone out.

Be aware that some scammers send SMS messages purportedly from your credit union in an attempt to gain your personal identification number or PIN; account number; or other information. Any such request is almost certainly fraudulent. OFCU would never ask for your personal information over text.. If you receive a text asking for anything, call your local branch immediately. DO NOT RESPOND TO TEXTS ASKING FOR INFORMATION.

Mobile Web

This method of mobile banking uses a mobile internet browser to access your credit union's website, just as you would from your home computer. A few cell phones still don't have a built in browser but that is quickly changing with the popularity of smart phones. Some financial institutions such as OFCU have formatted their websites to be visible on such devices.

Mobile browsers are in theory just as susceptible to the same kind of security risks as a home computer. In reality they are probably somewhat safer at the moment because creators of password-pilfering viruses and trojan horses haven't yet fully focused on the mobile market. Of course mobile web users are just as susceptible to the phishing scams and spoofed websites that try to trick users into disclosing passwords and other personal data.

The best way to protect yourself is to exercise the same level of safe computing that you do at home. Avoid following links in e-mails purportedly sent from a financial institution, especially those that require you to enter passwords or other confidential information. Instead, use your browser bar to enter your credit union's website address. You could also save your credit unions web address to your bookmarks on your phones browser for quick access.

Mobile Apps

Mobile apps are programs which are downloaded and installed such as OFCU's Mobile app which can be downloaded on Apple or Android phones and tablets.

Although they can require a bit of effort to install, mobile apps are very popular because they are often faster than logging in to a credit union website and their user interfaces can be easier to navigate on a small screen.

In theory, mobile apps are very secure because they don't use a web browsers so these apps are resistant to phishing scams. Just keep in mind that some programs can store private informations on the phone itself and can allow the user to remain logged in for extended periods of time. Users should always manually log out of applications to keep sensitive information secure. To minimize risk of fraudulent apps, you should only download applications from a trusted sites, such as links on OFCU's Website, or a reliable vendor.