



First 7 Days in

UK



○ Day 1: The Basics & Staying Connected

- ☑ **Call Home:** Let your family know you've arrived safely.
- ☑ **Get a UK SIM Card:** Do this immediately. You will need a UK number for almost every form you fill out this week. Look for providers like VOXI, EE, or giffgaff (which often have student-specific deals).
- ☑ **Transport Card:** If you're in London, get an Oyster Card or use a contactless bank card. For elsewhere, look into a 16-25 Railcard, it costs £30 but saves you 1/3 on all train travel across the UK.

○ Days 2–3: University & Immigration Admin

- ☑ **University Enrollment:** Head to your campus. You must complete your "Right to Study" check. This usually involves showing your passport and your eVisa share code.
 - ☑ **Collect Student ID:** This is your "passport" to the library, student discounts (via the UNiDAYS or Totum apps), and campus buildings.
 - ☑ **Access Your eVisa:** Ensure you have logged into your UKVI account to view your digital status. You no longer need to "collect" a plastic BRP card if you were issued an eVisa.
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○ Days 4–5: Financial Setup

- ☑ **Open a Bank Account:** You will need a Student Status Letter from your university (you can usually download this from your student portal once enrolled).
 - **High-Street Banks:** Barclays, HSBC, or Lloyds. They may take 1–2 weeks to open.
 - **Digital Banks:** Monzo or Revolut are often much faster (sometimes active in hours) and are great for immediate use while your high-street account is being processed.

○ Days 6–7: Health & Community

- ☑ **Register with a GP (Doctor):** Do not wait until you are sick. Use the NHS Find a GP tool. Registration is free and ensures you can access healthcare under the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) you already paid.
 - ☑ **Grocery Run & Essentials:** Visit a local supermarket (Tesco, Sainsbury's, or Aldi/Lidl for better prices) to stock your kitchen. Pick up a universal power adapter if you haven't already.
 - ☑ **Explore & Socialize:** Walk your commute to campus so you don't get lost on your first day of class. Attend at least one "Freshers" event, it's the easiest way to make friends before the workload kicks in.
 - ☑ **Document Safety:** Keep digital scans of your Passport, CAS, and Insurance on a secure cloud drive (Google Drive/Dropbox).
 - ☑ **Accommodation Inventory:** If you're in a dorm or private flat, take photos of everything on Day 1. If there's a scratch on the wall or a broken light, report it immediately so you aren't charged for it later.
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Small Things That Can Make a Difference

○ Master the Supermarket "Yellow Sticker"

- ☑ **The Timing:** UK supermarkets (Tesco, Sainsbury's, M&S) apply "yellow stickers" to items nearing their expiry date. Go around 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM. You can find bread for 10p or ready meals for 50p.
- ☑ **The Tiers:** Aldi and Lidl are significantly cheaper than the others. Marks & Spencer (M&S) and Waitrose are the "treat yourself" tiers.
- ☑ **Clubcards:** Get a Tesco Clubcard or Sainsbury's Nectar card immediately. Some items are literally 50% cheaper if you have the loyalty card.

○ Conquer the British Weather

- ☑ **Layering over Heavy Coats:** Don't just buy one massive puffer jacket. Invest in thermal base layers.
 - ☑ **The Umbrella Trap:** Cheap umbrellas will turn inside out within ten minutes of a British wind gust. Buy a windproof umbrella or, better yet, a decent raincoat with a hood.
 - ☑ **Vitamin D:** From October to March, the sun disappears by 4:00 PM. Many students feel sluggish or sad (SAD - Seasonal Affective Disorder). Take Vitamin D supplements; it's a game-changer for your energy levels.
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○ Transportation Hacks

- ☑ **Split Ticketing:** If you're traveling between cities, use websites like TrainSplit. It's often cheaper to buy a ticket from London to Birmingham and another from Birmingham to Manchester than one direct ticket, even if you stay on the same train.

Coach over Rail: If you're on a tight budget, National Express or Megabus are much cheaper than trains, though they take twice as long.

Walking is Free: UK cities are very walkable. Download Citymapper, it's much more accurate for UK public transport than Google Maps.

○ Don't Pay Full Price (Ever)

- ☑ **Student Discounts:** Your student email is your greatest financial asset.
 - **UNiDAYS & StudentBeans:** Download these apps for discounts on clothes, tech, and pizza.
 - **Council Tax:** As a full-time student, you are exempt from Council Tax. If you live in private housing, you must provide your certificate of enrollment to the local council, or they will send you a massive bill.
- ☑ **Too Good To Go:** Use this app. It allows you to buy "Magic Bags" of leftover food from cafes (like Pret or Greggs) and restaurants for about £3-£4 at the end of the day.

○ Social Etiquette & Safety

- ☑ **The Queue:** Brits take queuing (lining up) very seriously. Never “cut in.” It is considered the ultimate social sin.
 - ☑ **Pub Culture:** You don’t have to drink alcohol to go to a pub. It’s a community hub. Many students study in pubs during the day because they are cozy and have Wi-Fi.
 - ☑ **Important Safety Note: Scams:** International students are often targeted by scammers pretending to be from the Home Office or HMRC (Tax Office).
 - ☑ **The Rule:** No UK government agency will ever call you and demand money via bank transfer, gift cards, or crypto, nor will they threaten you with immediate deportation over the phone. If you get a suspicious call, hang up and call your University’s International Office.
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Monthly Student Budget Template

Expense Category	Outside London (Avg)	Inside London (Avg)	Money Saving Tips
Rent	£550 – £850	£900 – £1,400	Aim for shared houses
Household Bills	£60 – £100	£80 – £150	Often included in student accommodations
Groceries	£160 – £220	£200 – £280	Shop at Aldi or Lidl; buy store brands.
Transport	£50 – £70	£100 – £140	Get a 16-25 Railcard + Student Oyster.
Mobile & Internet	£15 – £30	£15 – £30	Use SIM-only deals (e.g., Voxi or Smarty).
Socializing	£80 – £150	£120 – £200	Use the Too Good To Go app for cheap eats.
Study Materials	£20	£20	Always check the library or eBay for used books.
Total Monthly	£935 – £1,440	£1,430 – £2,220	

○ Travel

- ☑ **The Railcard Link:** If you are in London, you can link your 16–25 Railcard to your Oyster card at any Tube station window. This gives you a 34% discount on off-peak Tube fares, not just national trains.
- ☑ **Coach over Train:** Traveling to another city? Check FlixBus or Megabus. You can often get tickets for £5–£10 if you book a week in advance.

○ Subscriptions & Apps

- ☑ **UNiDAYS & StudentBeans:** Never buy clothes, tech, or skincare without checking these apps first.
 - ☑ **Library Resources:** Don't buy a laptop or expensive software (like Adobe or Office 365) until you check what your university provides for free. Most UK unis give students free access to the entire Microsoft Office suite.
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Budgeting Tips

○ Rent & Utilities

- ☑ **The Council Tax Trap:** As a full-time student, you are 100% exempt from Council Tax. If your landlord or the local council sends a bill, don't just pay it. Get a "Student Status Letter" from your university and submit it to the council immediately.
- ☑ **Energy Bills:** If bills aren't included, the Energy Price Cap still fluctuates. Use "radiator reflectors" (cheap foil sheets) and thick curtains to keep heat in during the winter, heating is your most expensive utility.

○ Food & Shopping

- ☑ **The "Reduced" Hour:** In most supermarkets, the final markdowns (Yellow Stickers) happen between 6:30 PM and 8:00 PM. You can often find meat, bread, and veg for pennies.
 - ☑ **Bulk Buying:** Find your local "International Supermarket" (often found on high streets). Large bags of rice, lentils, and spices are significantly cheaper there than at major chains like Waitrose or M&S.
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Set up your Local life

○ Master the "High Street" Essentials

- ☑ **The Pharmacy:** In the UK, you go to Boots or Superdrug for medicine, toiletries, and even meal deals.
- ☑ **The "Everything" Store:** Visit Poundland or B&M. These are perfect for buying cheap cleaning supplies, hangers, stationery, and snacks for a fraction of supermarket prices.
- ☑ **The Post Office:** Locate your nearest one. You might need it to send documents or pick up packages that couldn't be delivered to your flat.

○ Understanding Your Neighborhood

- ☑ **Safety First:** Walk around your neighborhood during the day to find the best route to the nearest grocery store and bus stop.
 - ☑ **The Local "Library":** Local council libraries (different from your uni library) are great places for free Wi-Fi if your home internet is still being set up, and they often have community noticeboards for local events.
 - ☑ **The "Big Shop":** Try to do one "big" grocery shop at an Aldi or Lidl by Day 5 so your kitchen is stocked and you aren't tempted to spend £10 - £15 a day on takeaway food.
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Professional Foundations (Career & Work)

○ The University Careers Service

Most students believe that they need careers services only in their final year. However, the reality is that—† they have dedicated International Career Consultants.

Visit them in the first week to ask for advices.

Part-Time Job Boards: Most universities have an internal portal (like Handshake or MyCareer) where local employers specifically post jobs for students. This is much safer than looking on random social media groups.

○ National Insurance (NI) Number

You can start working without NI, but you must apply for it as soon as you have a job offer (or even before). It ensures you are taxed correctly and that your work is legal.

Go to the official UK government website to start the application. It is free, never pay a third-party website to do this for you.

○ LinkedIn "Localizing"

Update your LinkedIn location to your new UK city on Day 1. This triggers the algorithm to show you local networking events and roles which are great for flexible income.





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