

THE STUDENT MONEY MANUAL

2017/18

The essential guide to managing
your money at uni and beyond

The
MONEY
Charity

THE MONEY MAP

WHERE TO FIND THE GOOD STUFF

If getting to grips with uni costs – or making ends meet once you're there – feels like doing Sudoku with a blindfold on, the Student Moneymanual is your cheat sheet!

The fact is there's **lots of financial support** to help you get to and stay at university: we'll show you where it's hiding and how to get your hands on it.

That said, if you want to ace student life, you'll need to

think past tuition fees and scary sums. Master the art of **scrimping, saving** and **always getting a better deal**, and you'll be quids in for a long time to come. You'll find everything you need to get started inside.

Ready?

Let's do this.

The **MONEY** Charity

WE GIVE DETAILS FOR **FULL-TIME UK UNDERGRADS STARTING UNI IN 2017/18, PLUS FIGURES FOR PART-TIME, INTERNATIONAL AND EU STUDENTS WHERE WE CAN. KEEP AN EYE ONLINE FOR UPDATES AND EXTRA INFO!**



The Student Moneymanual is a **beginner's guide** to looking after your cash at uni – do your own research and get expert advice before making financial decisions. Some details may have changed by the time you read this, so always confirm things for yourself!

Links are independently sourced: we think they're useful, but take care when visiting any sites listed.

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5 STUDENTS EVERYONE MEETS

THE SPENDERS AND SAVERS YOU'RE BOUND TO BUMP INTO



The deal hunter

Deal hunters land on campus fresh from a summer of work – and wages – with a clutch of discount codes, life hacks and vouchers to boot. 10/10 for bargain hunting – but make sure you really need or can use everything you blag, or you'll still be burning through cash.



The crash test dummy

Students who glide through life thanks to parents, gramps and anyone else who can be tapped for a loan when times are tight. While back-up is handy, planning out – and sticking to – a money plan means you'll always have your own airbags if you need 'em.



The high flyer

Less flappy bird, more social butterfly, and always on the guestlist – but saying 'yes' to every invite going can cause serious wallet fatigue. Cherry-pick the best dos to avoid a massive money hangover at the end of term.



The professional hobbyist

Gym bunny, foodie or fashionista? While the rest of us are building up to getting off the couch, you're knee deep in hobbies or recording your latest podcast. Top marks for motivation, but following every interest without considering cash flow can quickly sink the budget – be selective!



The pressure cooker

More likely to blow a vein than their Student Loan: they're so worried about future 'what ifs' that they lose sight of the present. Remember, you can grip your wallet as tight as you like – but you're not going to brew any diamonds in there ...

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

However you rate yourself right now, chances are you'll have been all of the above by the time you graduate – and that's OK. Whatever money moves you've got, we'll show you how to work them for better returns. Read on!

THE ESTIMATOR

WANT TO GET A HANDLE ON UNI COSTS? START HERE!



Rent

Don't forget deposit, inventory and cleaning costs. Cost cutter: live at home or get a flat share.

YOU SAY £

We say £400-£1,000/month

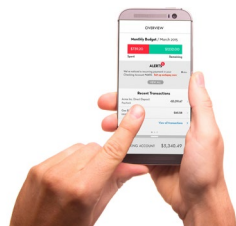


Food

Learn to cook; love leftovers: save on your weekly grocery shop and snacks. Don't forget meal deals.

YOU SAY £

We say £120/month and up



Bills

Cheaper if you share (or stay with your folks). Check what's included in the rent and shop around for better tariffs if you need to!

YOU SAY £

We say around £100/month



Transport

Getting to/from lectures, nights out, trips home. Car or bike running and maintenance costs.

YOU SAY £

We say up to £200/month



Study costs

Books, lab kit, stationery, printing and photocopying, field trips or final show. Avoidable extra: library fines.

YOU SAY £

We say £50-£200 up front then around £40/month



Entertainment

Gym, sports and society memberships, hobbies, socialising, gigs and anything else that floats your canoe.

YOU SAY £

We say £80-£150/month

FROM BILLS TO BUTTER, YOU CAN USUALLY KNOCK COSTS DOWN BY SHARING TO SPREAD THE EXPENSE.



Personal costs

Clothes, shoes and toiletries. You may need to splash out on home maintenance or cleaning stuff every now and again too.

YOU SAY £

We say £50-£200/month

Gifts

Birthdays and Christmas don't come cheap unless you're a whizz with a sewing machine and glue gun.

YOU SAY £

We say £20/month or more

One-off costs

Moving costs, furnishing your gaff, computer kit, sewing machine, glue gun, holidays.

YOU SAY £

We say anywhere from £200-£500 per year

READY RECKONER

CAN YOU AFFORD YOUR LIFESTYLE?

MONEY GOING OUT

Total living costs:

£ /month

Add up your estimates to see how much you'll need to get by – but remember monthly costs can vary. You may pay less during vacations or if you find ways to scrimp (p25!).

MONEY COMING IN

Student Loan and/or Grant:

£ /month

Job:

£ /month

Family:

£ /month

Anything else:

£ /month

Total income:

£ /month

Don't panic if your outgoings seem way higher than the money you've got coming in – there are loads of ways to cut back on costs or find extra funds you might not realise you're entitled to. There's more about both later in this guide – or jump to the budget builder on p14 to get started on your money plan.

COUGHING UP

6 WAYS TO PAY FOR A DEGREE (AND WHEN TO USE 'EM)

1. STUDENT LOAN

Student Finance can help you delay some of your studying costs until after graduation – but while fees are a done deal, maintenance cash may not stretch as far as you'd like.

Tuition Fee Loan:

pays for course fees.

Maintenance Loan/Grant:

pay important or fixed costs first (rent, bills, bus passes) and find cash for kicks elsewhere. Anything you don't need immediately can **boost your savings**, too.

2. SAVINGS & SALARY

Salary: good for groceries, giggles and daily living.
Savings: back-up, big spends and treats. Start brewing a nest egg before you get to uni if poss. Even a couple of quid a week could help you cope with lean times later on – see **p21**.

3. BONUS FUNDS

As well as top-up cash for low household incomes, you could get a bite at uni scholarships, business bursaries, course/career incentives and emergency funds (full deets on **p8**).

They often come with criteria about how you spend 'em but, either way, the golden rule is don't wait until you're desperate – **get in early**.

4. INTEREST-FREE OVERDRAFT

Overdrafts can be a handy buffer for emergency or accidental overspending — but look for those that don't charge interest to keep the cost of borrowing as low as possible. Use them wisely (and stick to the terms!) and they needn't cost you a penny: **p16** will see you right.

5. CREDIT CARDS

Credit cards don't have to be a stepping stone to a life of ruin, regret and dodgy behaviour. Used properly they give purchase protection on big-money spends, can help manage a cash crisis, and can even help build a decent credit score for later life.

The key (with any kind of borrowing) is to always have a plan for repaying the balance, or you'll pay over the odds in fees and interest. Tips on **p18-19**.

6. THE FAM

Family support doesn't have to be financial (but if it is, take a look at **p11**). Donated gear, gadgets and furniture, leftovers, hugs and moral support are all as valuable as cold, hard cash.

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH FEES?

MONEYMANUAL TOTS UP TUITION COSTS

Getting a degree is pricey – but most first-time students won't have to pay fees up front. Arm yourself with the facts to get a better deal!

What does it cost?

UK universities and colleges can charge up to £9,250 in undergrad tuition fees. That's per year.

Now, before you throw in the towel, you should know the price tag isn't the whole story:

- Most first-time undergrads won't pay fees up front.
- What tuition costs and how much you pay aren't always the same thing.

Breaking it down

Course fees vary by where you study. Here are the sums if you're starting in 2017/18.

In Scotland: no fees for Scottish and EU students; up to £9,250/yr for those from the rest of the UK.

In Northern Ireland: up to £4,030/yr for NI and EU students, otherwise up to £9,250.

In Wales: up to £9,000/yr. Welsh and EU students can get a Fees Grant which effectively caps tuition at just over £4k anywhere in Wales.

In England: up to £9,250/yr for UK and EU students.

Totting it up

- If you're entitled to reduced tuition in your home country but **study elsewhere** in the UK, you'll be charged the going rate.
- Fees **can change:** find out if yours are guaranteed for the length of your course!
- **Part-time fees** are pro-rata: you pay less each year, but the same as full time students overall.
- **'Private' universities** aren't bound by the £9,250 fees cap – they can charge what they like.

• Fees for **international students** can also be higher! Whether you qualify for UK, EU or international fees depends on residence and nationality criteria (check with your uni).

TUITION FEES PAY FOR THINGS YOU'LL USE AT UNI: **TEACHING, FACILITIES AND SERVICES.** SOME OF IT IS ALSO POOLED FOR BURSARIES AND HARDSHIP FUNDS TO HELP STUDENTS STRUGGLING TO PAY THEIR WAY.

Study now, pay later

Most UK and EU students won't have to pay tuition up front. Instead, you'll be offered a Tuition Fee Loan on pretty favourable terms (p6). You usually can't get the loan if you've previously started a degree or a similar course, or are an international student.

If that's you, you may be asked to pay when you start your course – so plan for other funding, scholarships or savings.

Deal hunting

If you want a cheaper uni, it may be more useful to compare local **living costs** – things like rent, transport and nights out.

Picking a uni by fees alone is a false economy if you miss out on the course or career you really want. And, while higher fees may mean owing more on a Student Loan, it won't make any difference to your **monthly repayments** (and whether you even pay it all back). See how the loan works (**p6-7**) before calling it!

Funding finder

P8

Top-dollar tactics

P28

GAME OF LOANS

STUDENT LOANS MADE SIMPLE



The Student Loan is money you can borrow to pay for uni but, rather than going to a bank, you can get government cash on special terms. As the name implies, **you're expected to pay it back**: more about that on **p7**.

You don't *have* to take out a loan, but you'll need savings, back-up funding or a fairly loaded godmother if not (heads-up – some uni emergency funds expect you to apply for Student Finance *first*).

What's on offer?

1. Tuition Fee Loan (up to £9,250/yr; less for private unis). Goes directly to your college or uni, and isn't 'means tested' on how much you or your folks earn. If you're entitled to the fees loan, it's good across the UK – so, if you're from Scotland (where you can study for free) but study in England (where you can't), you can still borrow for tuition.

2. The Maintenance Loan for living costs is partly means tested: you'll need to declare your household income if

you want the full monty, with payouts on a sliding scale according to how much you or your folks have coming in, and where you live during term. Support can vary from a couple of hundred pounds to several thou each year.

How do you apply?

Through your country's Student Finance body, along with any grants, bursaries or top-up funds you're eligible for – links on **p8** if you need 'em.

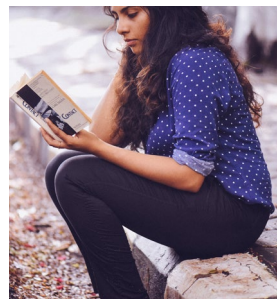
Bottom line

Most of us couldn't afford uni without Student Finance, so the loan's one way to get there. There's also top-up funding, especially for students from lower-income backgrounds, and ways to raise extra cash, so **don't assume a degree is out of your league**.

Just check the funding – or your back-up plan – is up to the job before you load up on loans. Use **p14** to estimate your costs and plan for any shortfall!

MAKE IT PAY

- Don't wait for a firm offer. Dig out the paperwork (passports or payslips) and **apply early** to get paid in time.
- Don't get short-changed by tax: see **p20**.
- Maintenance money lands in your **bank account** once a term (monthly in Scotland) – it's your responsibility to make it last between instalments.
- You need to re-apply for Student Finance **each year** you want it, so stay on the ball!



RE:PAYMENT

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON LOAN REPAYMENTS



How much will you borrow?

Getting an estimate is easy enough. It's **how much you borrow for fees and maintenance X course years**.

Once you take out the loan you can keep an eye on the balance through your Student Finance account.

How much will you owe?

The Student Loan brews **interest** from the day you get your first payment and until you clear the balance – so you'll end up owing more than you originally borrowed (**p18** explains why!).

In **Scotland & NI**, the interest rate is **1.25%**.

In **England & Wales**, interest varies depending on whether you're studying or have graduated. A base rate of 3% is added to 'RPI', a national price index which **can go up or down**.

Interest rates are reviewed every September: keep checking **studentloanrepayment.co.uk** for updates!

When do you pay?

You don't start paying back the loan until you've left your course AND your income hits £21k (£17,775 in Scotland/NI).

Once your weekly or monthly earnings are on target to hit the threshold, automatic payments are taken from your salary before you get paid. You don't make repayments on your whole salary: you pay **9% of the difference** between your income and the threshold amount.

Repayments are flexible – so if you get a bonus, you may pay back a little more that month. But if you drop below the income threshold (or become unemployed) **repayments stop** until you're back on track.

It's a sweeter deal than you'll get from any bank, but remember that as your salary goes up, so will your repayments. You could have larger monthly payments just when you're ready to apply for a mortgage, or have other costs to consider. Here's how monthly repayments could look for students starting in 2017:

EXAMPLE INCOME	MONTHLY PAYMENTS	
	ENGLAND & WALES	SCOTLAND & NI
£17k	£0	£0
£23k	£15	£39
£30k	£67	£91
£50k	£217	£241

Will you pay it all off?

If you don't earn enough to clear the balance over your working life, eventually you'll hit **loan wipeout**: any remaining balance is written off and repayments stop. Wipeout typically kicks in

when you turn 65, or 25-35 years after you take out the loan (depending on which country loans you the cash).

It's impossible to predict whether you'll pay off your whole loan, but you can check your chances with a repayment calculator (there's one at **savethestudent.org**). Whatever the crystal ball says, remember that monthly repayment rates are predictable, with costs capped according to income – and that can make it more manageable in the long run.

HEADS UP

Your loan agreement **can change**: interest rates or the repayment threshold can vary, and there may not always be a wipeout clause. Don't panic! Just keep tabs on your account and aim to stay informed.

IN A NUTSHELL

When it comes to Student Finance it's **salary, not the size of the loan**, that determines monthly repayments. Whether you earn £25k or £50k, you only pay 9% of any earnings **above the repayment threshold** – and anything you still owe at the end of your loan term is **written off**.

LIFE BEYOND LOANS

STUDENT FINANCE

The cash pots on this page are handled by Student Finance, so you apply for them along with tuition or maintenance support. Most of this extra funding is means tested (the higher your household income, the smaller your slice of the pie). Many are also reserved for UK undergrads already living here – but check for yourself so you don't miss out!

Maintenance Grant

Unlike loans, **grants** are yours to keep (unless you leave your course early). The sting in the tail: in Wales and NI, the more grant you get, the less Maintenance Loan you can apply for, unless you're eligible for **Special Support**.

England: no Maintenance Grant. You can apply for a larger Maintenance Loan instead, but the funds on this page could help you plug the gaps!

Northern Ireland: full grant of £3,475/yr on household income under £19k. Partial grant if income is higher than that – but no payout if it's more than £41k.

Scotland: the Young Students' Bursary pays £1,875/yr on household income under £19k. Partial grants are available, but there's nothing once income hits £34k. The Independent Students' Bursary (for students who support themselves) pays £875, but only on income under £19k.

Wales: a Welsh Government Learning Grant of £5,161/yr on household income under £18k. It's then on a sliding scale, down to a £50 payout once income hits £50k.

Special Support Grant (SSG)

Students entitled to state benefits can **swap** the Maintenance Grant for SSG in Wales and Northern Ireland. The payout's the same, but SSG doesn't reduce the amount of Maintenance Loan you can get. It also doesn't count as taxable income (**p20**) so it won't affect any benefits you claim.

Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)

If you have a physical or mental disability (including learning and other non-seen difficulties) **non-means-tested** DSA can help with the extra costs of going to uni: money for specialist or adapted kit, travel or a helper. You'll need proof of entitlement, typically from your doctor, but check if your uni will fund any assessments!

THE STUDY FUNDS YOU DON'T HAVE TO GIVE BACK!

Cash 4 Carers

The **Childcare Grant** and **Parents' Learning Allowance** pays out to students with kids while, if you're financially responsible for another adult, there's an **Adult Dependants' Grant**. There are also bursaries for **care leavers**.

Travel allowances

If your course involves compulsory travel (think clinical placements or a study abroad component), you may be able to claim back some of your costs. Student Finance will send you the relevant claim forms if your course is eligible.

How to apply

As the funds above are all handled by Student Finance, that's who to apply, query or cry to next:

England:
gov.uk/student-finance or
thestudentroom.co.uk/
studentfinance

Northern Ireland:
studentfinancenl.co.uk

Scotland:
saas.gov.uk

Wales:
studentfinancewales.co.uk

UNI CASH

Don't assume **scholarships** are just for book smarts – there are all kinds of criteria, including nationality, gender, subject, and even sporting prowess. Ask your university or college what's on offer, or see scholarship-search.org.uk.

Many universities also dole out **means-tested bursaries** when you accept a place, with payouts based on the household income you give when applying for student finance. It's worth asking up front, though, as there are hidden gems out there.

Emergency back-up

If you find yourself in a financial black hole, don't panic: your uni or college may have **hardship funds** for students struggling to get by.

Funds are usually earmarked for students with kids, with disabilities, or from low-income backgrounds, but there may be cash for others facing difficulty.

You'll need to have enrolled on your course **and** have applied for the full Maintenance Loan you're entitled to before asking for emergency funds. You might also be asked to attend an interview or share your budget (get a head start on **p14**).

As the name suggests, hardship funds are for **unexpected costs** – so you can't bank on getting them, and you can't use them to pay fees. Any cash you get is often non-repayable, though, meaning one less debt to worry about.





CAREER SUPPORT

Some career paths come with extra support. The NHS, for instance, has a funding scheme for medical, dental and social work courses: see nhsbsa.nhs.uk.

Teaching courses are also currently packed with incentives – search 'get into teaching' for your country online.

CHARITY GRANTS

There's tons of money lodged in charity funds – you just need to search creatively! Start with the grants calculator at turn2us.org.uk and drill down through options for health, religion, nationality and family situation to have more chance of finding something you're eligible for. If your folks are (or were) members of a professional organisation, they may be able to claim hardship funds for you, too: ask.

BUSINESS FUNDING

Sponsored degrees can be lucrative, with some businesses stumping up for fees, support and work placements while you study. The trade-off is that you can't pick and choose your subject, degrees can take longer, and you may have to work for the company during or after your degree. There's no one-stop catalogue of corporate sponsorship, so pair web searching with talking to a careers adviser to sniff 'em out.

GO LOCAL

While we can't list everything going, it's worth looking locally for extra support. That includes things like incentives for school leavers, top-up cash for low earners, hardship funds, sponsorship opps or competitions, prizes and awards. Start with your council and go from there.

TOP TIPS

- You can apply for some grants months after your course starts so, if you're eligible and haven't already applied, check it out.
- Read the small print! Does the money need to be repaid, will it affect other support, and does it come with any strings?
- Dropping out of your course may mean having to **repay loans and free funding**. Always talk through your options before ditching your degree.

The golden rule for top-up funding is: find out what's on offer **before you need it**. If you find yourself in a pickle later on, you'll know where to go to get things back on track. Trust us – it helps!

YOUR COURSE MAY START BEFORE YOUR FUNDING LANDS — KEEP SOME CASH TO HAND UNTIL THEN!

HOW TO BORROW MONEY FROM YOUR FOLKS... AND SURVIVE

If you compare how much a degree costs and how much funding is on offer, you'll probably find the sums don't quite meet in the middle – and you or your family are expected to plug the gap.

You'll have more idea of what size cork you need once you've had a go at a budget (p14: try it). And, if family cash is to be part of the deal, now's the time to get things into the open!

- Is it a given that your folks, grandparents or partner will want to support you?
- Do you find it easy to talk about money with your family? What attitudes to spending and saving do you have in common?
- How important is it to you to be financially independent? Are you willing to take advice (or flack) on your budgeting, spending and priorities?

- Can you ask your parents for money-management advice? Where will you get your info if not?

- If your folks can't or won't support you, how else will you cover your costs – savings, earnings, Wednesday night lottery win?

BANK OF MUM & DAD?

Here's what else to ask before you take the money and run:

- Can you afford to help me out?
- How much cash are we talking?
- Is it a lump sum or a regular payment?
- Is it a gift? If not, when and how do you expect me to pay you back?

- Do I need to tell you how I've spent it?

- What's the bail-out plan if I get into trouble?

Whatever answers you get, see what grants, bursaries, scholarships and benefits you're entitled to before selling the family silver: there's cash out there, so make sure you've got all the facts.

FAMILY CASH NOT AN OPTION?

TRY THE LOOT FINDER ON P8, OR THE MONEY MAKERS ON P22.

CASHING IN

MAKE SURE YOUR JOB PAYS ITS WAY



You're probably most familiar with the idea of being an **employee**, where you're usually contracted to work a number of hours at a particular location. You're paid regularly, your boss handles tax and national insurance, and you get at least the National Minimum Wage for your age. You also get paid time off for holidays and sick leave.

A growing number of companies now use **self-employed** workers who pay their own taxes, don't get paid time off, and cover job-related expenses themselves. The company pays for any work you do – but that's it! As a trade-off, freelancers get more freedom in what they do, when and for how much.

While there are big differences between freelancing and being employed, both have their perks and pit-falls: what matters is what works for you!

Being an employee

Being an employee means less paperwork and more job stability, plus workers' rights as standard (**even if you're part-time**).

On the downside, local jobs can be slim pickings – but it's still worth thinking about what makes you happy, and how employment fits your master plan:

- Will you work in term time or just during holidays?
- How will a job fit around your studies or any uni rules about students working?
- Do you want to pay your way through college or get your foot on the career ladder?
- What kind of work do you enjoy? What will you actually accept?

The campus careers adviser can help finesse your CV, and can give you the scoop on vacancies. If your uni offers it, ask about **alumni mentoring**, where former students help you polish your job skills and strategy for free.

Employee rights

- Part-timers are entitled to the same fair treatment as full-time staff, plus pro-rata holiday leave.
- You're entitled to a break if a shift is longer than 4 ½ hours or you work more than 6 hours a day – but you may not get paid for it.
- The minimum hourly wage at 16 is £4.05, rising to £7.05 at 21 and £7.50 at 25. Apprentices get less.
- Tips don't count towards the minimum wage (but do count towards taxable income).
- Beware zero hours contracts, where you're only paid for hours actually worked. While they're a good fit for flexibility, you might find you're stuck with few or short-notice shifts, and have little recourse to complain.

Gigging it

There's often no difference in the type of work you do as a self-employed 'gig worker' (i.e., casual jobs or short-notice hours). While many jobs are home-based – writing, web coding, whatever – just as many are in restaurants, stores and warehouses.

Where there are problems it's usually when companies take on self-employed workers but still dictate hours, impose unfair conditions, or pay peanuts. Definitely check if a company charges staff for stuff (uniform, stock, sick leave, or fees for finding you work), and weigh up whether you'll earn your money back. If not, or you're not hitting minimum wage after costs, look elsewhere.

Gig work can be great for fitting around studies, and for trying on different roles. Just make sure the pay-off or career growth is worth your time and effort – and that it offers enough work, hours or wages to live on.

Going solo

Self-employment can be a sweet deal for students – but you don't have to rely on gig work to make it pay! Whether there's a hobby you'd love to do for a living or you want to up your work experience, starting a business is easier than you think. Have a look at **princes-trust.org.uk** or ask if your SU offers enterprise support.

HOWEVER YOU GET PAID, YOUR EMPLOYER (YOU, IF YOU'RE SELF-EMPLOYED) MUST SORT OUT TAX AND NATIONAL INSURANCE: TRYING TO SWERVE THEM WITH CASH-IN-HAND PAYMENTS IS A BAD IDEA.

NOT ONLY DOES THE TAX OFFICE HAVE A WAY OF FINDING OUT, BUT YOU COULD LOSE OUT ON EMPLOYEE RIGHTS IF YOU DON'T HAVE PAPERWORK AND PAY SLIPS. DON'T GET STUNG.

KNOW-HOW

gov.uk/working-for-yourself
taxguideforstudents.org.uk
worksmart.org.uk

BUILD A BETTER BUDGET

YOUR MONEY

MAKE THE MOST OF IT!

Top tactic: Keep cash for bills in one account, then transfer enough for living costs to a second current account (or a pre-paid card – see p17). Easier to track, harder to overspend!

PAY AS YOU GO

(Things you've got a bit more flexibility with)



A-B-C-D= £

Are you in the black (more money coming in than going out)? Brilliant – lend us a tenner. If not, don't get in a stew:

1. **Increase your income.** Are you getting all the benefits, bursaries and student funding you're entitled to?
2. **Spend less,** get better deals on your bills and get savvy about saving money.
3. It's OK to **ask for advice!** Start with your welfare officer or student money adviser.
4. Think of your budget as a financial MOT and keep it updated (every 6 months should do). **Use our online version** and you won't lose it:

BUDGETBUILDER.THEMONEYCHARITY.ORG.UK

GAME ON

Split this into a weekly or daily allowance, so you always know how much you can spend and still stay on budget. You'll need to track it to make it work – grab a budgeting app, or get a notebook and start scribbling!

MONEY COMING IN EACH MONTH

Don't forget to divide any termly payments or lump sums to get a monthly amount

Student finance £

Uni/other funds £

Family support £

Earnings £

Benefits £

Other £

TOTAL A

£

CONTRACT

(The regular payments you'll probably make through your bank)

LIVING COSTS

How much do/will you spend each month on:

Food £

Local transport £

Long-distance travel £

Study costs (books etc.) £

Clothes £

Toiletries £

Household items and cleaning £

Socialising £

Snacks £

Presents £

One-off costs £

TOTAL D

£

If you want an easy-to-use, interactive app to help you manage your money, we have one at budgetbuilder.themoneycharity.org.uk

There's no magic trick to budgeting – it comes down to willpower. Going without can be tough at times, but having a financial goal – however small – can help you save for the things you really want or need.

BILLS

How much do you/will you spend each month on:

Rent £

Council tax £

Gas £

Electricity £

Water £

TV licence £

Mobile phone £

Broadband £

Insurance £

TOTAL B

£

SAVINGS

How much can you stuff in your savings account each month?

Regular savings £

Special events (holidays, treats) £

Emergencies £

TOTAL C

£

MORE BANK FOR YOUR BUCK

WE ❤️ PIGGYBANKS – BUT THEY'RE JUST NOT THAT COMFY IN YOUR BACK POCKET. MONEYMANUAL TAKES A LOOK AT CASH, CREDIT AND ALL THINGS STUDENT BANKING.

A bank account is just a place to store your cash – but if you think that puts them on a par with a piggybank, think again! Student accounts come with extras that can help you stay on top of your money.

Pick your perks

- **0% overdraft:** lets you access extra or emergency cash for free.
- Most student accounts **cap charges**, but fees for overspending can still be pricey.
- Always have cash in the bank? Compare accounts that pay you the most **interest**.
- It's fine to go for **freebies**; just don't pick 'em instead of a decent overdraft or cheaper fees, which could save you more in the long run.

Once you've bagged a bank account, keep comparing what's on offer and trade-up if you spot a better deal!

Overdrafts explained

Spend more than you have in your account and your bank can charge you interest until you're back in credit. They could even refuse to honour payments you try to make and charge a fee each time. Simplest way to swerve the pain? **Agree an overdraft** in advance.

Say your account includes a £500 **overdraft limit**: that means you can spend your own cash plus up to £500 of the bank's. It's a safety buffer, and at **0% interest** (only available on student accounts!) it means you can borrow for free if you have to.

Crucially, it's only free **while you stick to the terms**. Spend more than the limit and you're back to square one: charges, interest, and much gnashing of teeth.

APPLYING FOR STUDENT FINANCE? YOU'LL NEED A BANK ACCOUNT TO SEAL THE DEAL – THIS PAGE CAN HELP YOU SORT IT!

Because overdrafts are **borrowed money**, you might need to pass a **credit check** to get one, or to get the best deals. So while you'll see big sums advertised, what you actually get can vary (make sure you compare 'guaranteed' amounts, not just 'up to'). The limit might also be linked to year of study, with the biggest buffer in your final year.

Once a 0% deal ends, any overdrawn balance you've got will start accumulating interest – and that can make it harder to pay it off. Get a plan in place early: keep an eye on your balance and think about when and how you'll pay your dues before racking up avoidable interest.

Remember it's not bottomless. If you ride your overdraft limit all year round you might not have much left in an emergency – so keep some back!



CREDIT SCORING

Every time you apply for credit – an overdraft, credit card, even a mobile phone contract – the lender will run a credit check on you. This is a comparison of your financial history against their checklist. If you don't meet their criteria, you may be turned down.

1. If you don't pass with one company or lender, you may pass with another (although avoid making lots of applications in a short space of time as this forms part of the criteria).
2. The credit check is all about risk – do you have a history of paying bills promptly?
3. Get yourself on the electoral roll and check/update information held about current (and previous) addresses on your credit files (do it for free at clearscore.com).
4. A Student Loan **won't** affect your credit rating, but missed bill payments and piling up debt *will*.

Managing your accounts well and building up a decent score can mean you're more likely to get the accounts, loans or credit cards you want later – and on better terms, too.

Smarter banking

Pin-free payments

With a contactless debit or credit card, or a smartphone that supports mobile payments, you can pay in some stores (< £30) just by tapping it on a card reader. Makes shopping super quick; makes spending easier, too!

Easy transfers

Bank apps that let you fling money between family and friends are handy for splitting bills or getting emergency top-ups. Tap the app, select someone from your phone's contact list, and away you go.

Emergency ATMs

Left your card at home? You could withdraw cash using your bank's app instead: request a pin code, tap it into an ATM, and out pops the money.

Prepaid cards

Prepaid cards only let you spend cash you load onto them, so there's less chance of overspending. Some come with apps that give real-time alerts when used, and graph out where your cash goes – perfect for budget tracking!

Top tactics

- Digital banking means your balance is only ever a tap away. Check it before big spends – or set up alerts so you know when you're low on funds.
- Whether it's bank tech or third-party gear, check it's secure, how they protect you, and what they'll do if anything goes wrong.
- Consider a prepaid card just for online or holiday spending: if it's lost or stolen thieves can't go to town on your credit limit.
- Only give out personal or financial info when you're absolutely sure the person or site asking is reputable and secure. Never share your pin or answers to secure questions.
- Download and **read** your statements. If anything doesn't look right – unfair charges, mounting debt or payments you don't remember making – get onto your bank pronto.

BE A BETTER BORROWER

BECAUSE, SOMETIMES, IT'S UNAVOIDABLE

Rather than thinking of credit as 'good' or 'bad', you could be better off considering how **manageable** it is. That means totting up *why* you want to borrow, whether it's *worth the cost*, and if there are *cheaper* ways to pay. The bottom line is: always have a plan for paying it back.

Say you use your credit card to pay for a holiday but end up taking a year to pay off the balance. Chances are you'll pay more than the holiday was worth (thanks to accumulating interest during that time), and will be stuck with the costs a long time after that week in Halkidiki or wherever.

If you're late with your monthly repayments (or skip a couple), you could be hit with penalty fees too – that means finding extra cash on top of what you already owe.

We're not saying you shouldn't borrow money – and we're definitely not saying don't go to Halkidiki with Kev and Larry. We *are* saying "know what you're getting into".

*We've used a simplified example to illustrate that the longer you take to repay a loan, the more it costs. How much it actually costs depends on the credit card, the interest rates and even when in the month you make your purchase.

WHY CREDIT IS TOUGH TO SHIFT

When you spend £100 on a credit card, you don't actually spend any money up front. The card company pays for your purchases, and you pay them back. Handy, huh?

Now, if you pay the £100 back in full when you get your monthly statement, you clear your balance and everything's rosy.

If you only make the minimum payment (say, a fiver), your balance dips to £95. **BUT**, if the monthly interest rate is 2%, you also owe £1.90 in interest. So your balance jumps back to £96.60 – you've only reduced your debt by £3.10.

Do that every month and paying back your £100 spend could* take up to 2 years **AND** cost you an extra £30 in interest.

Credit is handy, but it's a privilege you may end up paying for!

Student borrowing

When you have a means of paying back your debts, credit cards and loans can be useful tools to get what you need in life (from an education to a mortgage). The Student Loan is a good example: it's a form of credit, but one that pays for something – your degree – that has significant value.

Where things start to go banana-shaped is when credit is used poorly, or to mask more serious issues, such as covering other repayments you can't afford.

If you can't manage daily costs without borrowing, at least make sure you've got a 0% overdraft in place (**p16**).

If you're really struggling to stay on top of borrowed cash, don't go ostrich on it. Your university welfare team will have seen it all before, and can help you get back on track.

SAVING UP FOR STUFF OFTEN MEANS PAYING LESS THAN GETTING IT ON TICK, AND PUTS YOU IN CHARGE OF YOUR OUTGOINGS — SEE P21

BORROWING BASICS

1. Most of us borrow at some point, whether for emergencies or big-money spends.
2. Borrowing to buy things you don't need or use, or can't afford to repay, costs you more in the long term.
3. Folk who suss out the options get a better deal than those who don't. This page can help!

Credit cards

Good for emergencies and, for items over £100, these come with **Section 75 protection**, where the lender can step in if you have problems with the retailer. Sounds dandy – and is – but only if you repay in full every month because, as with most borrowing, **interest is the kicker**.

- 0% introductory offers can cap the cost of borrowing (just don't be tempted to supersize your spending – you still have to pay it back!)
- **Never** withdraw cash on a credit card: it's rip-off city!
- **Store cards** are credit cards with more catches and fewer benefits. Be savvy if you sign up, and always pay off in full.

Bank loans

Don't have a student account? Regular loans and overdrafts come with big-boy rules,

including a credit or income check, arrangement fees, interest, and missed payment charges. Unlike the Student Loan, there's no let-off on repayments if your wages drop: banks expect to be paid whatever!

Short-term loans

Quick and easy money with a catch: higher interest and penalty fees. Don't have regular disposable income? Seriously – think twice.

GET A BETTER DEAL

Make the aim of the game **never paying more than you need to**:

- Estimate the **total cost** after interest or penalties and see if you can get a cheaper deal.
- Stick to the terms! Not sticking to deadlines or limits is where credit gets pricey.
- The longer you take to repay, the more it costs: aim to clear your balance ASAP – use **p14** to plan how.
- Don't be scared of borrowing **wisely**, but think of debt like a cold sore: occasionally unavoidable, but you don't want it for keeps!

STRUGGLING WITH BORROWED CASH? GET EXPERT ADVICE: TRY DEBT CHARITY STEPCHANGE.ORG



HEADS-UP!

Surprisingly, your mobile phone contract, TV licence and even utility bills are a form of credit, with consequences if you miss payments. It's not just about interest and penalty fees: late payments go on your credit file, making it harder to get affordable credit in future (**p17**). On the other hand, getting and managing contracts or credit cards well now shows you're a good risk if you want better borrowing deals later on (i.e., for a mortgage or car loan). It's worth planning ahead!

TAX UNTANGLED

If you think tax is super complicated, you've been misled – and you may even have been short-changed. Get to grips with this bad boy (5-minute read!) and you'll know what you're owed.

Why this stuff matters

1. When you claim for **means-tested** financial support (Student Loan, state benefits), payouts vary by how much **taxable** income you have.

2. When you hit the **repayment threshold** on your Student Loan also depends on taxable income.

Include **non-taxable** income in your sums and you could get less support than you're entitled to, or make loan repayments earlier or more often than necessary. Don't be that person. Just don't.

How tax works

We all get the first £11,500 of income each year totally tax-free: that's the current **personal allowance** (it's updated every April).

Only taxable income counts towards your allowance, and you only pay tax on anything you earn above the threshold.

It then works on a sliding scale: the more taxable income you make, the higher your tax rate.

Taxable income

- Wages from a job, self-employment or freelancing
- Tips, bonuses, and some job perks
- Some state benefits (incl. Job Seekers' Allowance).

Your taxable income resets to zero every April (the start of the financial year).

Non-taxable income

- The first grand in bank account interest (less if you earn enough to pay higher-rate tax)
- Money already in, or earned on, an ISA (a special, tax-free savings account)
- Some state benefits (incl. Disability Living Allowance).

Bean counter

Income tax is usually deducted before you get paid, with deductions based on how much tax you'll owe over a year. Because students often have several or short-term jobs, that can mean paying too much tax – and you can claim it back! See gov.uk/income-tax



IN OR OUT?

- Cash-in-hand for employment: taxable! Not declaring it is **tax evasion**.
- Flogging your belongings: typically non-taxable, unless you start trading (buying and selling to make a profit).
- Lotto jackpot: unlikely, but non-taxable.

Not sure if your money's 'in or out'? **Get expert advice:** use the links on this page or talk to your student money adviser.

Funds for uni

P6 & 8

Income inspiration

P12

Easy money makers

P22

Certain tax breaks can reduce your taxable income – like being married or, if you're self-employed, cash you spend on your business. See taxguideforstudents.org.uk for tips.

GET MINTED

THE NO-FUSS GUIDE TO SAVINGS

Finding cash you can do without is a bit like the UK romping to victory in the Eurovision song contest: you've heard it can be done but, frankly, it sounds like crazy talk. The reality is that building up savings isn't always easy – but strategy can get you there!

FIRST STEPS

First-off, **know why you're saving**. Whether you love money, hate being skint, or just crave more of the good stuff in life, **make a wish list**. Get specific. Write it down. Keep it somewhere you'll see it!

Now it's time for the cash hoarding – **making a game of this** makes it easier to stick with. For instance, stash pennies in a piggy bank according to the day of the month (1p on the 1st, 2p on the 2nd and so on). At the end of the month transfer the lot to a savings account and start over. Alternatively, keep going all year (so £3.65 on the last day) and **you'll net £667**. Not exactly small change!

Alternatively, see if your bank does **auto saving**. Whenever you use your debit card they round up your spend to the nearest pound and squidge the remainder into a savings account. Bosh: savings pot. Some third-party apps do the same thing; just check the security and small print before signing up.

FREE CASH

Interest is money the bank pays you for keeping your cash with them so, when it comes to savings accounts, **grab the highest rate going** (then switch banks if you find a better deal later on).

Look for **bonuses** for opening accounts, too: they're an easy way to get the cash party started. Use comparison sites like **moneycompare.which.co.uk** or **moneysupermarket.com** to see what's out there.

Once you've gained a bit of interest, try to **leave it in your account**. It's like a lottery rollover – the fewer cash-outs, the bigger the prize fund!

SECRET SAUCE

You can't always avoid unexpected costs – but savings can get things back on track sooner. Once you get the hoarding habit, **keep going**, even if it's pennies at first. The smart money's in savings, interest is like fertiliser for your funds, and the longer you save, the bigger the pay-off. Go forth and multiply!

EVERY TIME YOU GET INCOME (WAGES, MAINTENANCE LOAN, WHATEVER), SKIM OFF A BIT FOR SAVINGS BEFORE TOUCHING THE REST.



HOW IT'S MADE

MONEY MAKERS YOU CAN RUN ON THE SIDE

1. UP-SELL FOR PROFIT

A bit like clearing out your old clothes or collectables but with a twist: instead of listing your things for sale, you buy bargains to hock for **more than you paid**. Pound stores, Primark, charity shops and car boot sales are all good for stocking up – the trick is to snag limited edition, hard-to-find or in-demand items for next to nowt, then list them online with a mark-up (try **eBay**, **Gumtree**, **Preloved**, **Amazon** or **Facebook**). Just watch for seller's fees and postage costs when setting your price!



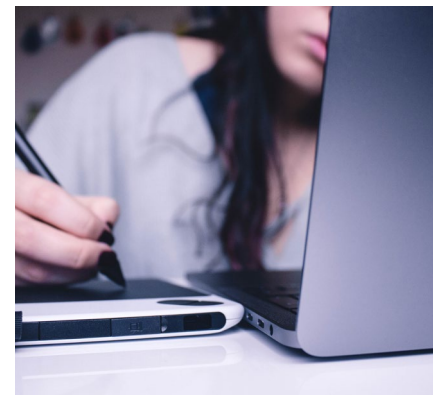
2. MEDIA PAYERS

Stock libraries sell ready-made media (photos, videos, art and even sound effects) to advertisers, app-makers, bloggers, and anyone else who wants 'em. Selling to stock libraries is a no-brainer: you can upload something once, but sell it over and over again – and it's easier than ever to get listed. Try **EyeEm** and **Alamy Student** for phone photos, **audiojungle** for jingles, or search online for your niche.

IF YOU'RE GETTING PAID FOR YOUR TIME, SKILLS OR SERVICES, OR YOU BUY STUFF WITH THE INTENTION OF SELLING IT, YOU'RE EARNING TAXABLE INCOME – AND THE TAX OFFICE MAY WANT A BITE OF IT! GET THE HEADS-UP ON P20.

3. TEACH YOUR TALENT

Whatever your super special talent is, someone out there wants to know what you know! Think: hobbies, language skills, musical know-how, subject knowledge, or even software and gadget tutorials. If you fancy freelancing it, you can run 1-to-1 sessions around the world via video calling or messaging apps – or stay local and pitch yourself around campus or your neighbourhood. For short-order project work, try sites like **fiverr** or **fivesquid**.



4. VLOG YOUR HEART OUT

There's no denying **YouTube** can be a lucrative little earner – but the pay-off can vary massively! Love the spotlight, and like talking even more? Upload often and regularly: how-to vids, product reviews, rants, make-up tutorials, song covers, language and travel tips or anything else you're passionate about. Building up a bank of engaged followers can lead to paid sponsorship and exclusive invites. You can also opt to host advertising alongside your content, which could eventually net you some money.

5. CLICK FOR CASH

Online surveys aren't a fast route to big bucks, but they're easy to keep on the boil between lectures or on the bus. **Prolific** runs surveys about academic research, and is said to be one of the better / more reliable payers. **Swagbucks** can feel like keyboard whackamole – it can take a lot of clicks to earn a payout! Alternatively, **mystery shopping** pays (cash or expenses) for visiting stores, taking photos and writing up your findings: search online for what's going in your neck of the woods, or try task apps like **Roamler** or **BeMyEye**.



GET A HANDLE ON HOUSING COSTS



Whether it's now, next year or after graduation, at some point you're going to want a place of your own. Here's how to swing it.

PRICE IT

Getting a house share or a place in halls means laying down some serious cash. Start prepping in advance and it'll be less painful!

Aim for:

- A month's rent as deposit
- A month's rent in advance
- A month's rent as back-up, if you can

There's talk that **letting agency fees** could be banned or capped in future, meaning an end to unfair charges for tenants. In the meantime, ask up front if you'll be charged for admin, credit checks, references, inventory or cleaning.

SCOUT IT

- Visit several properties, more than once.
- Check the location's good for getting to uni, getting around, supermarkets, and things to do.

- Don't forget: how secure the property/ neighbourhood is could affect the cost of contents insurance (which covers you if your belongings get lost, nicked or wrecked).

SIGN IT

- **Read the contract.** If group letting, ask for individual contracts if you can.
- Ask what's included: supplying your own mattress or microwave can be pricey and a whole heap of hassle.
- Check utilities work, and that there's a certificate for gas servicing.
- Agree any repairs, or agree a discount!
- Check for damp, rodents, smoke alarms and insulation (cheaper to heat).
- Try to negotiate the rent, especially if you're renewing. The worst they can say is no!
- Take photos and do your own inventory.

LIVE IT UP

Renters have rights: the trade-off is they come with responsibilities. Rented accommodation is **your home**, so you should be safe, secure and comfy in it. It's also someone else's property, and they'll want it back in one piece! Treat the place like an investment (it is – your deposit) and you're both laughing.

Regular clean-ups mean fewer slugs, bugs and stink – share out the dirty work if you have to. Report repairs to the landlord asap (and keep notes, in case they're slow to respond). If you've damaged something that's your responsibility, repair or replace it before it becomes an issue.

That said, be assertive about unfair deductions: if you play by the rules you're entitled to your money back. Make sure your landlord uses the **deposit protection scheme**, which safeguards your cash and helps arbitrate disputes.

Need help making sense of your contract or standing up for your rights? Scoot over to shelter.org.uk.

APPS FOR SHARERS

- HomeSlice**
split bills, supplies and chores
- Splitwise**
household money tracker
- Trello**
task manager extraordinaire

BREAKING EVEN

Ending term skint doesn't have to be inevitable: you just have to find ways to spend less, save more and stay sane while you're at it.

We've got seven tips to get you started.

- 01** Rustle up some mates and run a **Come Dine With Me** **cooking contest**. Set a budget for ingredients, stick a few quid in the pot for winnings, then sit back and watch everyone come over all **MasterChef**. The tasty bit: a week's worth of dinners for the work of one.
- 02** Next time a contract comes up for renewal – broadband, gas or power – threaten to go to another provider. Lots of companies only bring out the big discounts when you say you're leaving ... so tell 'em!
- 03** If you buy bottled water because it's convenient, you're fleecing yourself: refilling a bottle from the tap does the job for now! Don't be afraid to ask for free tap water when you're eating out, too.
- 04** Grab an empty jar. Raid your pockets for loose change. Stick the money in the jar. Repeat daily. When the jar's full swap the shrapnel for shopping vouchers at the supermarket, or pay it in at the bank.
- 05** Go freegan once a week. Plan ahead so you've got enough food to get by, then put your cash and cards away and find free alternatives for everything else. Don't just hibernate on freebie day: there's more kudos (and bigger savings) in living large for less.
- 06** Have a **one-in, one-out** policy for clothes and gadgets: sell an item you already have in the wardrobe/cupboard and put the cash towards new gear. Keeps down clutter as well as costs!
- 07** Upgrade your phone every year on a pay monthly contract and you'll pay way more than it's worth. If it ain't broke, shop around for a **sim-only deal** instead – easiest way to slash mobile bills to a tenner a month (or less).



LOSE YOUR LICENCE

You need a TV licence (£147/yr) to watch or record programmes **as they're being broadcast**, or to view any shows on **BBC iPlayer**. Even if you stream stuff on your tablet or only tune in to Freeview – them's the rules!

If you're in a shared house, simplest thing is to split the licence fee between you. If that doesn't apply to you, or you want to swerve the cost altogether:

- See if your parents' licence covers you at uni. The catch is your device can't be plugged into the mains or an aerial (which pretty much limits you to downloads or mobile data).
- Skip BBC shows altogether. You can still catch-up online for the other channels, and make the most of YouTube and on-demand services like Netflix, but you won't need a licence.

Check for yourself: tvlicensing.co.uk/students

THE BLAGGER'S GUIDE TO...

THE PENNY-STRETCHERS THAT COULD SAVE YOU A BUNDLE

UNI HACKS

Wait until you get to uni before loading up on full-price text books or kitchen gear, then check campus notice boards for students getting rid or check local charity shops.

Home-made snacks are cheaper than buying on-the-go – plus silent munchies like grapes or cheese are perfect for lectures/cinema (just lay off the stinky stuff).

Take an extra set of bedding and towels: you can leave one to air dry instead of forking out for dryers.

Walk to uni? Download the **Sweatcoin** app on your phone to earn points for steps, then swap 'em for discounts and freebies.

"Don't take your bank card on a night out!"

Naomi, Nottingham Trent

SUPERMARKET SAVINGS

"Avoid little convenience-style supermarkets: their prices are always way higher than in bigger stores."

Ab, UCL

Put a recent grocery receipt through **mysupermarket.co.uk**, then switch to the cheaper brands or stores it identifies when you next go shopping.

"Cook from scratch and bulk cook meals to freeze instead of buying ready-meals, which are such a waste of money!"

Mary, Nottingham Trent

Shop an hour before closing time and hit the bakery/fresh aisles to grab bargains before they're chucked.

Online outlets **approvedfood** and **clearancexl** sell supermarket goodies past their best before dates, so you can stock-up for pennies. This stuff's fine to eat: it's **use by** dates you shouldn't ignore!

BANK BUSTERS

"I tracked my spending for a couple of weeks and wrote it all down. That way I could see where I needed to cut back, as well as making sure the budget I had to live by wasn't wrong to begin with."

Larry, Limerick University

Set alerts on your phone to check and pay your credit card balance before being stung for late fees. Text reminders from your bank can save you scorching your overdraft or account balance, too.

"I have a 'save the change' account with my bank: when I make direct debits, the bank rounds up the amount to the nearest £ and puts the rest in a savings account."

Grace, RWCMD

BARGAIN HUNTING

Before buying anything **always ask**: Do I need it? Can I afford it? Could I get it for less?

Compare prices before parting with any cash (try **idealo** or **pricerunner** online), then see if you can pay even less with a student discount or from a cashback or voucher site.

Your uni ID card is enough to grab most student discounts, but upgrading to **NUS Extra** (£12/yr) could be worth it for bonus savings, including money off at Amazon. Just don't go OTT on offers: they still cost you!

Make a wishlist of things you want – but only get them if they come up on special offer. By the time it goes on sale you'll probably be over it anyway (which is why marketers dream up ways to get you buy asap!).

COOL BEANS

"Spend your money on experiences rather than things – experiences are more valuable."

Ben, London South Bank

Homemade cleaning products can be just as effective as shop-bought: vinegar, lemon juice or baking soda can shift smears and grime without the price tag – Google it (or ask your gran!)

Forget paying big bucks for branded software if you can get the job done for free. Try **Avast** (antivirus), **Pixlr** (image editing) or **LibreOffice** (the clue's in the name).

FULL-TIME STUDENTS ARE EXEMPT FROM COUNCIL TAX. IF YOU LIVE WITH NON-STUDENTS, TECHNICALLY ONLY THEY HAVE TO COUGH UP FOR IT.



TOP-DOLLAR TACTICS

MAKE UNI DO MORE FOR THE MONEY



There's no sure-fire route to getting a decent degree on the cheap. Even if funds are limited, studying somewhere you have no love for just because it costs less – or having no life when you get there – leaves you poorer in other ways. What you *do* have are informed choices.

BEFORE YOU GO

Compare different unis and locations to see how far your money will stretch (and what it buys you when you get there):

- Any uni funding (bursaries or hardship funds) on offer
- Staff:student ratio or teaching time
- Library size, location and opening hours
- Extra course costs: books, materials, field trips
- Grad employment rates or starting salaries for your course and uni
- Cost and effort of getting home for the holidays
- How much local rents and eats will set you back.

If you're planning on working your way through uni, check what the local job scene is like too!

ONCE YOU'RE THERE

- Switch or ditch bills at least once a year if you can find a better offer. That includes rent, utilities, broadband and phone.
- Make the most of discounted computing, sports, language and skills training. You'll never get them this cheap again!
- Use the facilities your fees contribute to: careers guidance, business advice, the library...
- Get your kicks for free: look for indie gigs, fairs, or council events, or join student societies for cut-price fun.
- Don't cut classes unnecessarily – you're just torching your tuition fees.
- Know how to complain if facilities, access or standards don't cut the mustard. Find out about your uni or union's internal complaints procedure and get vocal!

THE GOOD LIFE

A great uni experience isn't just about how much things cost (although it sure helps to have a money plan before you get there!). There's subject-love and social life of the kind you'll never encounter again, and more life hacks than you can shake a stick at. It won't be easy but maybe, just maybe, it'll be incredible too. Good luck!



THE SECRET OF YOUR SUCCESS



If there's a cautionary tale Moneymanual hears often, it's of students going on a Big Win-style bender with their loan, hoovering up special offer stationery like there's no tomorrow.

In fact, if you're anything like the average student, even basic living costs can shred a term's loan or grant instalment in a matter of weeks. Ouch.

Of course, some of you out there have the steely-eyed fervour of a Shaolin monk. We salute you. For everyone else, learning the art of restraint – whether with money, booze or Kinder eggs – takes practice.

If you need to work at it, everything you need to be more awesome with money is at hand:

How much will uni cost you?

P02-05

How much can you afford?

P14

How loans work

P06-07

Other ways to get cash

P08-13

The back-up plan

P21

Everyday money hacks

P25-27

Money worries don't have to dictate your future: there's funding out there to help get where you want to be. The secret is knowing extra cash won't solve your problems if you don't make it earn its keep! That means being frugal when you need to, smart about long-term freebies like interest on savings, and creative when it comes to increasing your income. It can be done!

Over the next few years you'll have more options than a Britain's Got Talent winner at the after-show party but, like fame, it will be over in a flash.

It's up to you how you want to play things, whether it's utter dedication to getting top marks or going out. Either way, now's the time to relish your choices. Stay awesome. Do your dance. Send us a postcard!

The MONEY Charity

- themoneycharity.org.uk
- hello@themoneycharity.org.uk
- [@themoneycharity](https://www.instagram.com/themoneycharity)
- [facebook.com/themoneycharity](https://www.facebook.com/themoneycharity)
- twitter.com/themoneycharity

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF MONEY MADE SENSE?

HELPING YOUR
WORLD GO ROUND

The
MONEY
Charity

15 Prescott Place
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