

# COST OF LIVING FOR STUDENTS 2023

## PLANNING YOUR BUDGET FOR YOUR TRIP TO LONDON

BEFORE COMING TO LONDON, IT IS IMPORTANT TO PLAN YOUR BUDGET FOR THE DURATION OF YOUR STAY. THE COST OF LIVING IN LONDON MAY BE HIGHER THAN IN YOUR HOME COUNTRY. IT MIGHT BE LOWER; IT MIGHT BE MORE EXPENSIVE FOR SOME THINGS AND CHEAPER FOR OTHERS.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE BELOW IS AN ESTIMATE OF COSTS. PRICES CAN VARY A LOT, DEPENDING ON WHERE YOU BUY THINGS AND WHICH LEVEL OF QUALITY YOU CHOOSE.

### FOOD:

#### THE CAFE@ 77

We have a Café on the Student Common Area on the first floor of the school at 77 Gloucester Road, serving affordable refreshments and snacks.

#### WEEKLY COST OF FOOD

The average spend on food in the UK in 2022 was £47.50 / week, including groceries and eating out.

There is a wide range of supermarkets in the UK. Waitrose (opposite 77 Gloucester Road) is expensive but good quality. Wholefoods on Kensington High Street sells very good quality organic food. Sainsbury, Tesco, and the Co-op are cheaper but also have good quality products. Smaller branches such as Tesco Metro and Sainsbury Local are a bit more expensive. Asda and Lidl are the cheapest supermarkets and have the most offers.

[Sainsbury's online Grocery Shopping and Fresh Food Delivery \(sainsburys.co.uk\)](https://www.sainsburys.co.uk)

#### CAFÉS IN LONDON

Prices may vary significantly depending on the café and its location.

**Tip 1:** Ask for a loyalty card at any café you regularly visit, as you can get free food/drink or discounts if you are a good customer.

**Tip 2:** Some places give you a small discount if you bring your reusable cup. That is good for your wallet and the planet!

**Tip 3:** Some places have 2 sets of prices: one for eating in and one for taking away. The takeaway prices are cheaper, so why not take your food to the nearest park and enjoy it in the fresh air (weather permitting!).

- Hot Drinks (Coffee / Hot chocolate / Tea) £2.50 – £4.00
- Soft Drinks £1.50 – £3.00
- Sandwiches £2.50 – £6.00
- Hot Sandwiches £4.00 – £7.50
- Soup £3.50 – £6.00
- Pizza £7.00 – £15.00
- Salad £3.00 – £8.00
- Hamburger & Chips £7.00 – £15.00

- A Big Mac meal £4.69

## SUPERMARKETS / LUNCH

Here are prices for lunch bought at a supermarket.

- Sandwich £1.50 – £3.00
- Can of coke £0.65 – £0.80
- Fruit £0.50 – £0.80
- Pack of Crisps £0.60 – £1.00
- Salad £2.50 – £3.50

## RESTAURANT PRICES / EVENING MEALS

There is a wide range of restaurants in London and a lot of them offer international cuisine.

**Tip 1:** Best value are often Indian or Chinese. Some do 'all-you-can-eat' deals.

**Tip 2:** Don't forget to try English food, go to a pub, and try some traditional English meals like Shepherd's Pie.

**Tip 3:** In restaurants if a 'service charge' has been added to the bill you don't have to leave a tip. If service is not included, it is normal to leave a tip of 10 – 15%. Do not tip in pubs.

- Budget restaurant meal £6.00 – £12.00
- Standard restaurant meal £15.00 – £30.00
- Exclusive restaurant meal £40.00 – £60.00

(All prices are per person, not including wine or beer)

## FOOD MARKETS/FARMERS' MARKETS

**Tip 1:** You can sometimes get discounted prices from street markets if you go when they are getting ready to close.

**Tip 2:** For good quality fresh food try a farmers' market early on a Saturday or Sunday morning (See [www.lfm.org.uk](http://www.lfm.org.uk) to find one).

## PERSONAL CARE

**Tip 1:** Chain shops such as Boots or Superdrug sell all your personal care products plus make up etc. They always have special offers on shampoos, shower gels etc, so look for ones with "buy one get one free", "buy one get one half price" as well as just reduced prices.

**Tip 2:** Antihistamines for allergy relief are often on special offer at the start of "hay fever season". If you know that you are going to need them at some point in the summer because you get grass/pollen/tree allergies, it's worth buying them when they are on offer and using them later when you need them.

Check out prices here

[www.boots.com/shop-online](http://www.boots.com/shop-online)

## ENTERTAINMENT

Frances King offers an Activity Programme to help you make the most out of your time in the UK. Some activities, such as walking tours or museum visits, will be free. Others will have a small charge, such as bowling/ice-skating or a ticket entry such as Houses of Parliament Tour. We also go for dinner or afternoon tea or to pubs. In these cases, you will have to pay for what you eat/drink. You can also go on weekend excursions with another company (see the bottom of the list below).

**Tip 1:** There are many free things to do in London. See the link below. You'll find free museums, galleries, walks, historic attractions, views, festivals and more.

<https://www.visitlondon.com/things-to-do/budget-london/101-free-things-to-do-in-london>

**Tip 2:** Discounts may be available with a student card.

**Tip 3:** Cinemas/musicals/ballets are cheaper in the afternoons (matinée) and outside of the West End.

**Tip 4:** A lot of pubs offer free Live Music.

**Tip 5:** Night Clubs normally offer discounted entry ticket if you arrive before 11pm.

- Swimming pool entry ticket £5.00 – £15.00
- Fitness Club, Monthly Fee for 1 Adult £25.00 – £80.00
- Ice-skating £10.00 – £15.00
- Bowling £5.00 – £15.00
- Cinema £8.00 – £20.00
- West End Theatre £25.00 – £55.00
- Ballet £10.00 – £60.00
- Concert £10.00 – £60.00
- Major concert £50.00 – £180.00
- Entry into a nightclub £10.00 – £25.00
- London Attractions (Houses of Parliament, London Eye, Madame Tussauds etc.) £15 – £30.00

There are Guided Day trips for Students, arranged by Anderson Tours:

<https://andersontours.co.uk/>

There are many different trips including:

- Bath & Stonehenge from £66
- Oxford & Cambridge from £67
- Windsor from £55

## SHOPPING

Below are some common items you may need to buy during your stay.

- 4 x AA batteries £2.00 – £6.00
- UK plug adaptor £4.00 – 8.00
- 1 pair of well-known brand jeans – £40.00 – £80.00
- 1 summer dress in a high street store - £30.00 – £50.00
- 1 pair of sport shoes (Nike, Adidas, or equivalent brands) £40.00 – £120.00

## TRANSPORT

### PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Public transport is the easiest and cheapest way to go around the city. Here are some guide prices for travelling in and around London.

The London Underground network is commonly called 'the Tube' and it is divided into zones. Zones 1-2 are the centre of London. Most people in London live in zones 3 and 4. All of Frances King accommodation are in zones 1-3.

Please note that you cannot use cash to pay for your bus fare.

You can use an "Oyster card" (a plastic card which you can load with pay-as-you-go prepayment, or with a Travelcard, which gives you unlimited travel in specific zones for 1 day, 7 days or 1 month) or a contactless payment card to pay as you go. You can also get a one-day travelcard (paper ticket) from most Tube stations.

You will find fares here:

<https://tfl.gov.uk/fares/find-fares>

Expect to pay about £35 - £45 a week.

**Tip 1:** You have to pay a deposit for an "Oyster card" once you are in London, and this can save you money on your tube journeys. Be sure to return the Oyster card when you leave London, and you will get your deposit and any pay-as-you-go credit back!

**Tip 2:** If you are studying for at least 14 weeks you can get a student oyster card and get a 30% discount on the above fares. You will need: a credit/debit card and a digital photo. There is a £20 charge per card. Get a form from Student Services to help you apply.

The Transport for London website can help you plan your journey in London:

<https://tfl.gov.uk/plan-a-journey/>

You can also check train times and ticket prices for trains to places outside of London on the National Rail website: <http://www.nationalrail.co.uk>

### TAXIS

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#### FROM/TO AIRPORTS:

You can use our airport transfer service to make sure that a professional driver is waiting for you at the airport. We work with a reliable company and all drivers are licenced, insured and have had a criminal records check.

Public transport is much cheaper,

You can get information about both options on our website:

<https://francesking.com/school-of-english-london/more-information/airport-transfer/>

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## AROUND LONDON:

If you decide to take a taxi, on the street only take a black cab (traditional London taxis with an orange light on top), both driver and cab are licensed. A licenced taxi should have its license number displayed on the back of the vehicle. All taxis should use a meter unless a fixed price has been agreed. They are expensive, even for short journeys.

Mini cabs are private cars that are used as a taxi, but they cannot be stopped on the street, they must be booked in an office, by phone or using an app.

The advantage of using a phone app is that the company will know your location and you can connect the app to your credit card, so you don't need to worry about having enough cash on you.

Mini cabs are cheaper than black cabs, but the cars are regular cars, which are not as spacious inside, and the drivers may not know their way around London as well as a black cab driver, who has had years of very demanding training and exams to qualify as a London Taxi Driver.

Some mini cab and car ride companies operating in London:

- Addison Lee
- Swiss Cottage
- Uber
- Greentomato

When there is a lot of demand for cars in the area you are in (for example, if it is raining), some care ride companies (such as Uber) increase their prices. It is worth waiting for the "Price Surge" to pass so you don't have to pay extra money.

## HIRE BIYCLCLES

The are several companies. Santander are popular and cost £1.50 for 30 minutes.

## STUDIES

### COURSE BOOKS

Materials are included in the price of your course apart from the IELTS Exam Preparation courses for which you will have to buy a textbook: £35-45.

### EXAMINATION FEES FOR EXAM BOOKED VIA FRANCES KING

If you would like to take an examination during your stay with us, you will need to pay extra for the examination. Frances King is not an exam centre. You can register yourself independently, or we will register you and take care of all the paperwork. Our prices are:

- IELTS £210 (UKVI IELTS is extra, please ask for details)

## INSURANCE:

Before you arrive in the UK, you should take out insurance for your own financial and personal security.

You can take out your own insurance or you can get the International Student Policy offered by Guard.Me Insurance: Medical, travel and course insurance: £6.65 / week. Book at: <https://www.guard.me/francesking>

If your home country does not have a special agreement with the UK and you require medical treatment, this can become expensive. We strongly recommend you take out insurance to cover you during your time here.

EU nationals should bring their European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) which allows you access to health care services.