

Cost of Living for Students

Planning your budget for your
trip to London

Before coming to London, it is important you plan for your budget for the duration of your stay. The cost of living in London may be much more than in your home country. It might be less, it might be more expensive for some things and cheaper for others. It is important to plan ahead and ensure that you will have enough money for the duration of your stay.

Please note that the below is only an estimate of costs. Prices can vary a lot depending where you buy things and which level of quality you choose.

FOOD:

THE CAFÉ @ 77

We have a nice and affordable café on the Student Common Area on the first floor of the school at 77 Gloucester Road. The cafe is run by Colibri Coffee, an independent coffee business that roasts and processes all the coffee that is served. The prices are about 20% cheaper than coffee shops outside the school!

Tip 1: Use the café loyalty card to get a free hot drink once you have purchased 10.

Tip 2: Chat with our friendly barista Hugo who will make sure your coffee is made exactly to your liking.

- Hot drinks (espresso, latte, cappuccino, hot chocolate, tea etc.) £1.50 – £3.00
- Paninis £4.20
- Wraps £8.80
- Biscuits £0.50
- Crisps £0.50
- Chocolate crepes £0.50
- Brownies £0.80
- Mini doughnuts £0.80
- Chocolate snacks £1.00
- Soft drinks, juice £1.00
- Still water £1.00

CAFÉS IN LONDON

Please be advised that the following prices may vary significantly depending on the café. It's also important to know that not all branches of a chain such as Starbucks will have the same prices. The ones in the centre of London may be more expensive than the ones further out.

Tip 1: Ask for a loyalty card or download an app from any café you regularly visit, as you can get free food/drink or discounts if you are a good customer. Don't forget to collect a stamp for each purchase.

Tip 2: Some places give you a small discount if you bring your reusable cup. That is good for your wallet and the planet! Starbucks give you a 25p discount, Prêt-a-Manger give you a 50p discount.

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

Tip 4: Some franchises allow their staff members to give away few items per day to reward good customers. So why not take the opportunity to practise your English and be super friendly with the staff?

- Hot Drinks (Coffee / Hot chocolate / Tea) £2.50 – £4.00
- Soft Drinks £1.50 – £3.00

- Sandwiches £2.50 – £6.00
- Hot Sandwiches £3.50 – £7.00
- Soup £3.00 – £6.00
- Pizza £5.00 – £11.00
- Jacket Potato £5.00 – £9.00
- Salad £3.00 – £8.00
- Hamburger & Chips £4.00 – £10.00
- A Big Mac meal £4.00 – £7.00

SUPERMARKETS / GROCERY SHOPS

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

Lunch:

- 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

Cooking at home:

- Milk (regular, 1 litre) £1.20 – £2.00
- Loaf of Fresh White Bread (500g) £0.70 – £2.00
- Rice (white), (1 kg) £0.50 – £1.30
- Eggs (regular) (12) £1.37 – £3.30
- Cheese (300g) £3.00 – £4.00
- Chicken Breasts (Boneless, Skinless, 300g) £2.50 – £6.00
- Beef (400g) £5.00 – £8.00
- Apples (x 6) £1.00 – £2.00
- Banana (1 kg) £0.90 – £2.00
- Oranges (x 1) £0.30 – £0.50
- Tomatoes (1 kg) £2.40 - £6.00
- Potatoes (1 kg) £0.18 – £1.70
- Onions (1 kg) £0.99 – £2.00
- Lettuce (1 head) £0.75 – £1.00
- Water (2 litre bottle) £0.50 – £1.30
- Bottle of wine (mid-range) £5.00 – £10.00
- Domestic beer (0.5 litter bottle) £1.10 – £2.30
- Imported beer (0.33 litter bottle) £1.20 – £3.00
- Cigarettes 20 Pack (Marlboro) £13.00 – £15.00

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 £10.00 – £15.00 (all prices are per person)
- Standard restaurant meal £18.00 – £35.00
- Exclusive restaurant meal £45.00 – £70.00
- Budget restaurant meal + wine £15.00 – £25.00
- Standard restaurant meal + wine £25.00 – £50.00
- Exclusive restaurant meal + wine £60.00 – £100.00
- Super expensive restaurant meal + wine £150.00 – £300.00!

FOOD MARKETS/FARMERS' MARKETS

Tip 1: You can get discounted price from food 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 to find one).

- A basket of goods £6.50 - £15.00
- A cooked portion to eat on site £6.00 – £10.00

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 "hayfever 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.

- Cold medicine for 6 days £3.00 – £6.00
- 1 box of antibiotics (on prescription from a Doctor only – 12 doses) £9.65
- Short visit to private Doctor (15 minutes) £78.00
- 1 box of 32 tampons £3.00 – £5.00
- Deodorant £2.00 – £4.00
- 4 rolls of toilet paper £2.00 – £3.00
- Toothbrush £1.00 – £6.00
- Toothpaste £1.50 – £4.00
- Shower gel £1.00 – £3.50
- Shampoo £1.00 – £7.00
- 2-in-1 (shampoo & conditioner) £3.00 – £5.00
- Standard men's haircut £16.00 – £25.00
- Standard woman's haircut £25.00 – £80.00
- Washing powder £3.00 – £6.00
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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: Discounts may be available with a student card.

Tip 2: Cinemas/musicals/ballets are cheaper in the afternoons (matinée) and outside of the West End.

Tip 3: A lot of pubs offer free Live Music.

Tip 4: Nearly all major museums are free in London, but special exhibitions usually have to be paid for.

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

- Swimming pool entry ticket £5.00 – £15.00
- Gym, monthly fee for 1 adult £25.00 – £80.00
- Tennis court rental (1 hour at weekend) £6.00 – £20.00
- Ice-skating £10.00 – £15.00
- Bowling £5.00 – £15.00
- Cinema £8.00 – £20.00
- West End Theatre £25.00 – £35.00
- Ballet £10.00 – £60.00
- Temporary museum exhibition £10.00 – £20.00
- 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) £9.00 – £35.00

Guided Day trips for Students (arranged by [Anderson Tours](#)):

- Bath & Stonehenge from £95
- Oxford, Stratford & The Cotswolds from £119
- Windsor £79
- Cambridge from £79
- Cardiff & Wales from £99

SHOPPING

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

- First class stamp (UK) £1.25
- Second class stamp (UK) £0.75
- Stamp for Europe (letter under 10g) £2.20
- 4 x AA batteries £2.00 – £6.00
- UK plug adaptor £4.00 – £8.00
- Pair of jeans £40.00 – £80.00
- Summer dress in a high street store £30.00 – £50.00
- Pair of sport shoes (Nike, Adidas, or equivalent brands) £40.00 - £120.00

- Pair of men's leather business shoes £92.00

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 - a credit card or via your phone.

Fares:

Single bus "pay-as-you-go" fare £1.75 (you can change bus once within 1 hour).

Tube, DLR and London Overground single (pay as you go) fares (adult rate, peak time, 2024):

| | |
|------------------|-------|
| Zones 1-2 | £3.40 |
| Zones 1-3 | £3.70 |
| Zones 1-4 | £4.40 |
| Zones 1-5 | £5.10 |

Buses, tube, DLR, London Overground and TfL Rail services and National Rail services pay as you go caps (adult rate, peak time, 2024):

| | Daily | Weekly |
|-----------|--------------|---------------|
| Zones 1-2 | £8.10 | £40.70 |
| Zones 1-3 | £9.60 | £47.90 |
| Zones 1-4 | £11.70 | £58.50 |
| Zones 1-5 | £13.90 | £69.60 |

Travelcard: bus, tube, DLR, London Overground, trams, TfL Rail services and National Rail (adult rate, any time, 2024)

| | Monthly |
|-----------|----------------|
| Zones 1-4 | £156.30 |
| Zones 1-6 | £267.30 |

You can check all fares on: <https://tfl.gov.uk/fares/find-fares>

Tip 1: 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 £25 charge per card. Ask Student Services for information on how to 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

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.

| Transfers (from/to) | Price / Single Transfer (these prices are subject to change) | |
|------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| | 1-3 people travelling to same address | 4-5 people travelling to same address |
| Heathrow | £151 | £166 |
| Gatwick | £187 | £216 |
| Stansted | £201 | £230 |
| Luton | £216 | £237 |
| London City | £151 | £167 |
| St Pancras | £130 | £151 |

TRANSFER NOTES

Waiting time

Half an hour from arrival time included.
Extra time: 0-15 mins £20; 15-30 mins £30; 30-45 mins £35; 45-60 mins £40; 60-90 mins £50.

Arrival time

It is not always possible to arrive at accommodation before 7.00 or after 22.00. Please check with us before making travel arrangements.

These prices are subject to change. There is an extra charge on Christmas Day, December 25. Price on request.

For information about using public transport to get from airports to London please go to: <https://francesking.com/school-of-english-london/more-information/airport-transfer/>

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.

General Fees Guidance for black cabs (subject to change):

| | | (Tariff 1) | (Tariff 2) | (Tariff 3) |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Distance | Approximate journey time | Monday to Friday 05:00 - 20:00 | Monday to Friday 20:00 – 22:00 Saturday and Sunday 05:00 – 22:00 | Every night 22:00 – 05:00 Public holidays |
| 1 mile / 1.6km | 6 – 13 mins | £7.00 – £10.80 | £7.00 – £11.00 | £8.40 – £12.00 |
| 2 miles / 3.2km | 10 – 20 mins | £10.60 – £17.00 | £11.20 – £17.20 | £12.40 – £18.20 |
| 4 miles / 6.4km | 16 – 30 mins | £18.00 – £27.00 | £20.00 – £27.00 | £21.00 – £31.00 |
| 6 miles / 9.7km | 28 – 40 mins | £28.00 – £36.00 | £35.00 – £39.00 | £36.00 – £40.00 |
| Between Heathrow and Central London | 30 – 60 mins | £56.00 – £105.00 | £56.00 – £105.00 | £56.00 – £105.00 |

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
- Green Tomato

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.

STUDIES

COURSE BOOKS

Material is included in the price of your course apart from Exam preparation and Business English for which you will have to buy a textbook: £35 – £40 every 4 weeks.

SELF-STUDY MATERIALS

Grammar / Vocabulary book £15 – £35. Please ask in Reception.

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 £215 (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 very 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.