

Freshers' Guide

Before you arrive

- Budget – it's always a good idea to budget. Planning ahead will help you in the long run because the last thing you want to do is blow all of your money in the first few weeks and then have to live off baked beans for the remainder of the term. Things you need to budget for are:
 - Course materials
 - Food
 - Entertainment
 - Clothes
 - Phone bill
 - Toiletries
 - Travel

The [Money Charity Budget Builder](#) is a really useful tool to help you with budgeting.

- Always keep a spare £20 hidden away for absolute emergencies.
- If you can, try to get a job over the summer before you start university that way you'll have a little extra to spend especially in the first few weeks. Your student loan might not come in straight away so it's worth being prepared to have to pay for a few things before it arrives.
- Set up a student bank account. There are many student bank deals but make sure you do your research and choose the one that's right for you. [Money Saving Expert](#) is a great website as it compares the best deals for you.

Moving in and meeting new people tips

- It might be a good idea to arrive fairly early on move in day so that you can start unpacking and settling in as soon as possible.
- If your parents are dropping you off they'll likely want to help you to get unpacked but we suggest you leave a few boxes to do by yourself in case you start to feel a bit homesick later. It will keep you occupied and allow you time to acquaint yourself with your new home.
- Keep tea bags, coffee, milk, biscuits and sweets handy so you can offer your fellow flat mates a cup of tea or a snack while you're all unpacking. This is a great way to start meeting people.
- If you are isolating for any reason (due to the pandemic), virtual hangouts, pub quizzes and zoom calls are a fun, safe way to socialize with friends!

Your first week

Your first week, also known as freshers' week, is likely to be hectic. You'll be meeting lots of new people, registering for university, visiting freshers' fair, possibly having taster sessions to meet people on your course, going to events and generally getting to know your way around.

- **Here are a few tips:**
- Registration – Be sure to find out when you need to register at University and make sure you take all of your paperwork and identification with you. You should be able to find out key dates from your department or you may have received a letter outlining all the key dates and registration details so be sure to read through everything carefully so you know what exactly you'll need and where you have to go.
- Find out about what's happening at your SU so you can plan your nights out and get your tickets early for the popular events to avoid being disappointed.
- Freshers' fair – this is where you'll be able to join clubs and societies, pick up a few freebies and meet new people. This is an excellent opportunity for you to continue with something you love whether that's sport, theatre, music or even a chance to have a go at something new. Remember you don't have to sign up to everything! Have a look around and think carefully about what you would like to get involved with. University is the perfect time to try something new but you can show an interest before fully committing. Also, remember, you may have to pay to join so be realistic in your choices and try not to oversubscribe yourself.
- Look after yourself - this is really important. If you're going on night's out make sure you've planned in advance – how are you getting there, who are you going with, when are you meeting. If you're getting a taxi, make sure you've pre-booked with a reputable firm. Have fun but keep your wits about you.
- Freshers' flu – you're in a new environment, meeting lots of new people and experiencing new things so it's inevitable that you will get this at some point and as the name suggest it's likely to be in your first few weeks. Don't worry, it's less of a flu and more of a bad cold but it can make you feel a bit rubbish for a few days. The best way to deal with it is to get some rest, drink lots of water, eat healthily and try having hot honey and lemon to help soothe. You can also take medication like paracetamol but make sure you always read the label.
- Register with a local GP. Some universities will have their own campus GP, however, if yours doesn't then you can always find a local [NHS doctor](#).
- Being a student has many perks and one of those is all the discounts! Remember to sign up for your [NUS extra card](#). It will cost you £10 but you will save loads on clothes, food, entertainment, technology and travel.

Other things to think about

- Unless you're very lucky, you may find that your student loan won't cover everything that you need to pay for so you may need to get a job to help subsidise your time at University. Your university will have a jobshop which will list all the latest jobs so this is a good place to start. Universities recommend that you work no more than 15 hours per week to avoid affecting your studies. A job will help you financially but it will also look good on your CV for future employers so it's worth looking in to early.
- Get to know the local area. When you're a fresher it can be very tempting to stick to campus for everything but get to know the local area so that you can make the most of your whole university experience.
- Food. If you have flat mates, why not club together to buy staple ingredients such as pasta, rice, noodles, tea bags, coffee, herbs, salt, pepper, oil etc. so that you can buy in bulk. It can also be really good to eat as a group so you could arrange to take it in turns to cook dinner one night a week.

Try to keep staple items in so that you can also knock something together if you need to. Things like tinned tomatoes, bean, soup etc are great items to keep a stock of.

When cooking, why not try to make a little extra so that you can freeze it and have it another day.

- Talk to people. Don't be afraid to start up conversations with people, you may find that you 'click'. Equally though don't worry if you don't get on with absolutely everybody – that's life, but there will be plenty of people that you will get on with.

We hope we've eased some of worries and that you'll find our tips useful. Overall, remember to be yourself, work hard, have fun and make the most of every opportunity!