

A cheat sheet for newbies who want to begin their London adventure in full swing

Joining our Kingdom in London?



King

For those that go the extra mile

We know moving to another country is a life changing decision. That's why we've gathered everything essential in this easy-to-read guide for you, so you don't have to. This way you can enjoy your time fully when you get there – like digging into a proper fish & chips at the local pub after a game of football, watching EastEnders or hunting for that blue door in Notting Hill.

Yes, there are lots of things to do in London, and we want to be there for you! Whether you'd like help finding the right visa or need inspiration for places to eat, live and sleep – King is at hand.

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A place for everyone and anyone

The Big Smoke, the Swinging City or just London. Whatever you choose to call it, you most certainly already know a great deal about this city, made famous by romcoms like Notting Hill, Love Actually or Bridget Jones' Diary and songs like the Kink's Waterloo Sunset and The Clash's London Calling. Or classics such as Charles Dickens' The Adventures of Oliver Twist or Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes. The list goes on forever and ever. If you've never seen, heard or read, well, then you are in for a treat. Like a basket full of magic beans!

Finding your sanctuary in a global hub

London, the capital of England and the UK, is a leading global and financial city with strengths in the arts, commerce, research and development as well as tourism and transport. More than 100 of Europe's 500 largest companies have their HQ here. But London is not only the home of great companies like King and eight million people, the hub also attracts over 14 million visitors a year, being one of the world's most visited cities. And with its 43 universities, it forms the largest concentration of higher education in Europe.

Being a truly multi-cultural and a generally exciting place, people move to the UK's capital from all over the world. So, as a newbie in the city you are definitely not alone and you won't be a newbie for long. Neither will it be too long until you find your own sanctuary in this bustling city because, despite its size, London has remained quite a pleasant place to live thanks to its many green spaces. You'll also be able to find your own crowd here as London's vibrant arts and entertainment scene caters to all tastes: classical and popular, mainstream and fringe, retro and avant-garde. Needless to say, London is every shopper's paradise and a party animal's dream.

The city of many greats

As a city, London has been around forever. Some findings go back to the Bronze Age, but the first major settlement was founded by the Romans in 43 AD. From then on London has been held by many different powers up until the 11th century, when, firstly, the population grew rapidly and, secondly, William the Duke of Normandy was crowned King of England following his victory at the Battle of Hastings in 1066. Westminster Abbey dates back to this era and over the next coming hundred years many institutions of central government were built close by to it, like 10 Downing Street and Palace of Westminster with Houses of Parliament and the iconic landmark Elizabeth Tower or more famously known as Big Ben.

The growth in population – 18.000 in 1100 and nearly 100.000 in 1300 – influenced the city a great deal but would also call for disaster as the Black Death hit London in the 14th century, taking nearly a third of the population. Even though London continued to grow, the city encountered several other crises, with the most famous disasters being cholera epidemics, the Second World War and the terrible year of 1666 with both the Great Plague and the Great Fire. But still, London rose again and again. The city was even the world's largest city between 1831 and 1925.

Another 'great' event – from which London has received its nickname – was the Great Smog in 1952, which left the city covered in a thick layer of smog for four days due to no wind and collected airborne pollutants. It was crazy smoggy, like after a Pepper Panic explosion!

While Greater London's population actually decreased between 1939 and the 80's, this period has left a huge impression on the world – especially youth culture with movements like Swinging London and the punk era. And today, well today London is one of the global cities, influencing the world greatly.





Quintessential London?

London and England has truly influenced the world to the point that you can find English pubs worldwide – almost to the extent that you sometimes wonder what actually is quintessentially British. Although a tired cliché, football and pubs is an important part of the British culture along with some other things you'll find in the list below.

Football

This is undoubtedly one of the most important parts of the British culture and one of the best conversation starters... if you desire a conversation that never ends. Traditionally, you would support the team from the borough where you grew up, but as the city is in a constant flux, with people moving around, this is not true these days. You could easily find a supporter of one team in the 'wrong' borough. With that said, the London teams currently in Premier League – the number one league in England – and their respective areas are Arsenal (Holloway), Chelsea (Chelsea), Crystal Palace (South Norwood), Tottenham Hotspur (Tottenham) and West Ham United (Upton Park).

We highly recommend going for a Saturday afternoon game, whether you do or don't enjoy football, just to experience this cornerstone of British culture. And if you want to take it to the next level, then you should go to the local pub just before, and after, the game. It goes hand in hand. Cheers!

Pubs

Apart from double-decker buses and black cabs, London is known for its numerous pubs (short for public house). These drinking establishments serve as a third living room and are often the meeting place for communities such as villages or even a borough. If you are lucky, your local pub will not only have real ales, but a real barfly (someone who has spent most of their life on the same old chair in the pub) as well.

Like anything you'll be able to find pubs of varying quality throughout London – including everything from a traditional pub, with beer-soaked carpets, serving alcohol and snacks to a gastro pub serving fine reinventions of the classic pub grub. If you go to one, you should try any of these dishes: shepherd's pie, fish & chips, bangers & mash, steak & ale pie, Sunday roast and of course one of the many variations of pasties. Yummy!

While exploring the pub scene you are sure to encounter many pub names that appear somewhat meaningless. These names may actually come from

alterations of old slogans or phrases, such as 'The Bag o'Nails' (Bacchanals), 'The Goat and Compasses' (God Encompasseth Us), 'The Cat and the Fiddle' (Caton Fidèle) and 'The Bull and Bush', which supposedly celebrates the victory of Henry VIII at "Boulogne Bouche" or Boulogne-sur-Mer Harbour.

Here's some other classic British things

- Afternoon tea – a break in the afternoon accompanied by tea and scones with clotted cream and jam. The tea can also be served with tiny sandwiches stuffed with ingredients, such as cucumber, egg and cress, fish paste, ham and smoked salmon. Good to remember is that you have your tea with milk in England. If you want to become an expert, read ISO 3103, which describes a standardized brewing method.
- Beefeaters – the Yeomen Warders (guardians) of Her Majesty's Royal Palace and Fortress The Tower of London. The origin of the nickname has been debated, but the favourite is that it could have something to do with beef consumption.
- Borough Market – this famous food market in Southwark, one of the largest and oldest markets in London, glimpses by in Lock Stock and Two Smoking Barrels and Bridget Jones' Diary.
- Cockney – most famous as a type of accent/dialect but also used to describe the people living around East End, or all working-class Londoners. These days the dialect is merging with other dialects, such as the Jamaican Creole influenced variety.
- EastEnders – the long-running soap opera that aired its first episode in 1985. It's so popular that it can be noticed in the national electricity grid as power demand rises drastically when all viewers leave their TV sofas to do other things, like boiling tea water.
- Grenadier Guard – the soldier with the funny high – and furry – hat that you see around public places such as the Buckingham Palace.
- Fish & Chips – battered cod or haddock served with deep-fried chips.
- Pimm's – liquor used to mix cocktails of fruits, soda and lemonade. Perfect for a garden party on a hot summer afternoon.

Portobello Road – the infamous road in Notting Hill housing the outdoors market Portobello Road Market. The blue door is there somewhere, although not so blue these days to keep selfie-taking tourists away.

Out and about

As a global city London offers a lot of entertainment, whether it's just going to Hampstead Heath for a picnic, catching a concert or going out clubbing.

Parks

With 31% of London's area covered in green space, chances are you won't be living or working very far from one of the many public parks. Some have been beautifully designed by landscape architects, some captivate by their sheer vastness and natural beauty, and others offer large outdoor sports facilities which are either free or can be used for a small fee. Ideally, they combine all three elements, like Regent's Park in central London, Hampstead Heath in the north and Richmond Park in the west. Despite the high entrance fee, London's famous Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew near Richmond are definitely worth a visit.

Arts and entertainment

London has a rich and varied cultural life and with its free museums the city has a strong tradition of publicly funding the arts. One of the many museums, The Tate Modern, is the most visited modern and contemporary art museum in the world and is worth a visit merely for the building itself. There are also the countless culture festivals taking place across the city each year, a lot of which are free to attend.

While London's West End is most famous for its many commercial theatres, the countless smaller, independent venues spread all across town are worth exploring for their innovative stage productions. The two major public arts centres, the Barbican and the South Bank Centre, both house concert halls, cinemas, theatres, and exhibition spaces.

London is also, without a doubt, a city for music lovers. There's much to discover, in every genre – from classical to popular music. With abounding music venues and performances, several world-class classical music orchestras and ensembles as well as countless new bands, DJs and urban music styles appearing every year, you will almost certainly never be bored during your time in London. The best way to stay tuned of





Benefits, vacation and learning how to say stuff in Cockney

Vacation

You'll be given a total of 29 days' holiday. This includes 25 days throughout the year plus four days to be used during Christmas. Of course there'll be the usual eight bank holidays as well.

London is perfectly located so that you can go on vacation in the rest of Europe. You can easily reach France, by train or car, via the Channel Tunnel. Then there's Heathrow as well, a hub airport connecting you to the rest of the world. But, you shouldn't forget about the rest of the UK, which offers numerous beautiful and exciting places to visit in Wales, Ireland and Scotland. Why not go hiking over some wiley, windy moors, singing Kate Bush's Wuthering Heights at the top of your lungs. Of course it's okay to just check in at a cosy B&B (Bed & Breakfast) and read the book by Emily Brontë.

Community Day

To show our love to the community, we also offer one paid day a year to be used for community or charity purposes, such as volunteer work on a city farm – like true farm heroes! This is organised by the local studios together with HR.

Where the little monsters go

Day nurseries and children's centres

Day nurseries and children's centres provide care for children from birth, or from two years of age, up to five years old. They are usually open during regular working hours and offer both full and half-day care.

Playgroups and pre-schools

Playgroups and pre-schools offer care for two to five year olds. They don't offer full-time care, but organise play and education sessions that last about three hours.

Nursery schools

Nursery schools and classes provide care for children from three to five years of age. They are open during school hours and offer morning or afternoon care. Some also provide full school day care.

Childminders

Childminders (a.k.a. nannies and babysitters) look after children of all ages at the minder's home. Depending on the children's age, they can have a maximum of six children at their care simultaneously. Childminders can be more flexible with their working hours than nurseries and their fees are usually cheaper. The lucky ones find someone as magical as Mary Poppins!

Schools

After leaving the Early Years Foundation Stage of nurseries and pre-schools, children go on to compulsory education, which is divided into primary education (ages 4–11) and secondary education (ages 11–18). For these, the school year generally runs from the first part of September to the end of July, with several breaks during the year.

There are many school options for non-native residents. The first is to enrol in local British state schools, which any resident is entitled to attend. This is where your children will get to wear the classic uniforms. If you are considering the state schools, you should spend some time understanding the system, as it is very different from that of many other countries. For example, local education authorities fund schools, but the curriculum is based on national standards and testing.

Schools with strong reputations have spots first and foremost for the local children. So you should decide on a school before choosing a place to live if you are considering the British schools. But you need to have a signed tenancy agreement (proof of address) before you can secure a place at the school of your choice.

The other option is independent schools, which are privately run fee-paying schools also known as prep schools (age 7-13) and public schools (age 13-18). These schools do not follow the National Curriculum, and their teachers are not required or regulated by the law to have official teaching qualifications.

How to keep your health bar full

Accidents & Emergency

We really hope that you won't have any accidents, but if you do we want you to know where to go. So if it's an ambulance kind of emergency you call 999. If there's less of an emergency you can visit one of the Accidents & Emergency centres, which offer 24-hour services and can be found at most hospitals. Lastly, if it's not an emergency but you're in need of urgent medical advice, you should call 111.

Healthcare

Healthcare in England is mainly provided by England's public health service, the National Health Service (NHS), which provides all permanent UK residents free healthcare. However, there are charges associated with eye tests, dental care, prescriptions, and many aspects of personal care. There are also several private institutions offering alternative and complementary treatments.

National Insurance

As soon as you start working in London, you will get a National Insurance Number. This is your personal number that keeps track of your tax and National Insurance contributions. Your contributions entitle you to certain state benefits, including state pension. If you pay income tax through Pay As You Earn (PAYE), which you can read about further on, they'll be deducted at the same time.

Full state pension is only paid to those who have an adequate National Insurance contributions record. You'll need 35 qualifying years to get the new full State Pension if you don't have a National Insurance record before 6 April 2016. As an employee, you pay Class 1 contributions on your salary or wage; commission, bonuses and overtime; sick pay as well as maternity, paternity and adoption pay from an employer.

Where you hang your hat

It's a well-known fact that London is a very expensive city to live in. This is mostly due to the high housing costs, but the prices of food, petrol, utilities, and other necessities have also been increasing in recent years.

Housing costs

There's a pretty good chance that the largest part of your salary will go towards paying for your apartment or house. Due to London's high population density, land is at a premium, and rental prices have been increasing

rapidly over the past few years. Naturally, properties further outside the city centre cost less to rent or buy, but you will then be faced with higher transportation costs and a longer commute. Below you find some examples of popular areas of living. Follow the link at the end of the document for a list of average rental prices in London.

Utility costs

Utilities in London include gas, water, electricity, telephone, internet, TV, and council tax. The cost of these can add another 40-50% onto the rental price you see advertised. Be aware that getting internet installed may take up to four weeks. Yikes!

Due to the poorly insulated older buildings, which don't match the climate in London, you may find that gas and/or electricity bills (depending on what you use for heating) are higher than you were expecting. As always, it's best to shop around to find the cheapest gas and electricity provider. The cheapest deals often come as a bundle of telephone, internet and cable TV; starting at GBP 20 per month and increasing. Council tax covers rubbish collection, local fire and police services as well as street maintenance and lighting. The cost varies by borough and on the size of your property. If you live alone, you will receive a 25% discount. Follow the link at the end of the document to find out what your council tax is.

In addition, you need to pay for a TV license if you watch any programmes as they're being shown on TV, computer or mobile. This costs about GBP 150 and needs to be renewed annually. However, you do not need to pay this fee if you use your TV only to watch DVDs or play video games.

In the boroughs

Hammersmith

Looking at the west and south side of the city, close to the River Thames, the popular areas to reside are Hammersmith, Fulham and Clapham. Hammersmith offers great transport connections, many green areas as well as a busy commercial and retail centre. It is also the home of Lyric Theatre, built in 1895, famous for staging groundbreaking productions.

Fulham

Fulham, bordering Hammersmith and Chelsea, is one of London's most attractive residential areas and therefore also more expensive than others. It attracts many young professionals looking for the area's sheer variety of shops and restaurants as well as everything from shopping centres to farmers' markets, design boutiques and handmade furniture stores.





	Cost of living	Green areas	Creativity	Clubbing	Family oriented	Safe	Good transport	Good food
Highbury & Islington	🍷🍷🍷	🌳🌳🌳🌳	🎨🎨🎨🎨		👨👩👧👦			
Hammersmith	🍷🍷🍷🍷	🌳🌳🌳🌳🌳	🎨🎨🎨	🍷🍷🍷🍷	🍷🍷🍷🍷			
Fulham & Putney	🍷🍷🍷		🎨🎨	🍷🍷				
Camden	🍷🍷🍷🍷	🌳	🎨🎨🎨🎨🎨	🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷	🌳			
Ealing	🍷🍷🍷	🍷🍷🍷🍷	🍷🍷	🍷🍷	🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷			
Clapham & Battersea	🍷🍷	🍷🍷	🍷🍷🍷	🍷🍷🍷🍷	🍷🍷🍷			
Stratford	🍷🍷	🍷🍷🍷	🍷🍷	🍷🍷🍷	🍷🍷🍷			

Clapham and Battersea

Crossing the river from Fulham to Clapham and Battersea, you will find another popular area. It is home to the iconic Battersea Power Station and the open space of Battersea Park. With its historical area, high streets mixing shops as well as restaurants and bars, these two areas offer something for everyone. Like Hammersmith and Fulham, Clapham attracts many young professionals thanks to excellent transport links. It is also popular with families wanting to send their children to the area's high quality schools.

Camden

Ranging from north to east of the city there are several other areas to reside, such as Camden, Highbury & Islington and Stratford. Camden, as many know, is the classic suburb famous for its vibrant and eccentric atmosphere, cheap restaurants and awesome live music scene. With the Camden Lock and Stables Markets having been smarted up, this whole area is now a buzzy series of indoor and outdoor stalls as well as shops selling more or less everything, including food, vintage clothes, jewellery and bags.

Highbury & Islington

Next over from Camden is Highbury & Islington, which offers close walking distance to the City and the West End. The area famously provides its residents with a variety of culture and sports with the Almeida, King's Head, Sadler's Wells Theatres, Kings Place and the futuristic Emirates Stadium – home of the Premier League football team Arsenal FC. Highbury & Islington is also one of central London's leafiest areas with a series of parks, greens and garden squares.

Stratford

At the far east of the city lies Stratford, a revamped area now bustling with activity following the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Stratford, with its many newly built restaurants and bars and one of Europe's biggest shopping centres – Westfield Stratford City – is quickly becoming a new go-to destination in London.

Ealing

If you are looking for a suburb that ticks almost all the boxes for middle-class suburban families while still having the advantages of London living, then you should look towards the other side of the city and the popular area of Ealing. With its countryside charm in solid, detached Victorian houses with big gardens, Ealing is the perfect place. The area offers plenty of transport links, high quality schools, varied green spaces and bistros overlooking Ealing Green and, of course, the historic Pitshanger Manor for an evening out. Once people move here, they stay loyal.

Ready to play?

Visa/Work permit

Generally the visa application process is fairly quick and has the purpose of ensuring that you have the required skills and experience for the role. Your friendly local HR team will help you with getting this sorted out.

Taxes

The UK has a progressive tax system, and income tax will automatically be deducted from your salary. People in full-time employment pay tax through the 'Pay As You Earn' (PAYE) system (see below). The money owed to the taxman is deducted at source, so when you get your pay slip it will record how much tax has already been withdrawn.

Your pay slip will also detail how much National Insurance you have paid. National Insurance contributions are used to fund parts of the welfare state, including pensions and the NHS. During your first day, you have to fill in the P46 tax form, which notifies the taxman that you have begun working. The taxman will then provide you with a tax code that shows how much income you should receive before tax is charged and explains at what point you start paying.

The UK tax year is April 6 to April 5 of the next year.

PAYE (Pay As You Earn)

Income tax is calculated as a percentage of your annual gross income; that is, the total income before any previous deductions. For employees, tax is usually collected under PAYE and sent directly to Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC). The amount deducted depends on the tax code issued by HMRC and will be sent to your employer.

Five tips before you go

There's a lot going on when moving to a new city – planning, preparation and anticipation. But when you are ready to embark on your new journey, here's a few tips to get you started and help you settle in:

1. Walk and explore

The best way to explore your new city is on foot. Set a whole day aside to have a wander – a day when it's okay to get lost and have your own personal adventure!

2. Take time to enjoy new experiences

While it's important to stay in touch with loved ones back home, nothing dulls a sense of adventure more than homesickness and over reliance on messaging those you've only just left behind. Give yourself some time to settle in on the ground before going online.

3. Be a tourist

Don't play it cool – go up in the London Eye, admire Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament or take a cruise on the River Thames. And try the local cuisine while you're at it.

4. Don't forget to have some 'me time' too

Take some time to enjoy something which you've always loved back home – this might be reading a book, going for a run or even some arts and crafts projects.

5. Last, but not least, make an emergency plan

It seems like common sense but make sure you research and learn emergency telephone number(s) in your new country. Know where to go in case of illness and always try to keep some extra cash separate in case of emergencies.

London – the bullets

Capital: London.

Founded: As Londinium in 42 AD by Romans.

Population, London: 8.8 million.

Population, England: 53 million.

Population, UK: 65 million.

Area, London: 607 sq. mi. (1,572 km²).

Languages: English, Welsh, Gaelic, Scots.

Currency: Pound sterling (£).

Time zone: It will be easy to keep track of time when having global conference calls! London is the starting point for time and you can go visit Greenwich, which has given its name to Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), just southwest of the city. However, that's just half of the year, during the summer months (last Sunday of March to the last Sunday of October) UK time goes by the name of BST (British Summer Time). Fancy!

Form of government: It is a constitutional monarchy and a parliamentary democracy. The Queen administers the government of the UK with the Prime Minister and Cabinet acting as the executives. The primary role of Parliament is to legislate. Parliament is made up of the House of Lords and the House of Commons.

Religion: Christians constitute about 71% of the population, but Britain is a multi-faith society and all other religions, including, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam and Sikhism are freely practised. About 23% of Britain follows no particular religion.

Climate: The climate in the UK is temperate. It generally doesn't get extremely hot or extremely cold; however, because England is an island, the weather is quite changeable and is greatly affected by the currents and temperatures of the Atlantic Ocean and English Channel.

Main industries:

Industry: Machine tools, electric power equipment, automation equipment, railroad equipment, shipbuilding.

Agriculture: Cereals, oilseed, potatoes, vegetables, cattle and fish.

Exports: Manufactured goods, fuels, chemicals, food, beverages, tobacco.

Public holidays:

- January 1: New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- First Monday in May: May Day
- Last Monday in May: Spring Bank Holiday
- Last Monday in August: Summer Bank Holiday
- December 25: Christmas Day
- December 26: Boxing Day





Wanna know more?

Government

The best place to find government services and information.
www.gov.uk

Transport for London

Plan your journeys.
www.tfl.gov.uk

National Health Service (NHS)

Healthcare services.
www.nhs.uk

Home Office

Visa and immigration.
www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk

Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs

Information on taxes and social security.
www.hmrc.gov.uk

City of London

Information on council tax.
www.cityoflondon.gov.uk

London Property Watch

Average rental prices in London.
www.londonpropertywatch.co.uk

Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills

Check ratings for schools in a certain area.
www.gov.uk/find-ofsted-inspection-report

News:

BBC – www.bbc.co.uk
The Guardian – www.theguardian.co.uk
The Times – www.thetimes.co.uk

Tourist Guides:

Britain – www.visitbritain.com
London – www.visitlondon.com

The Weekenders

Ideas for short breaks in the UK.
theweekenders.co.uk

Apps:

City Mapper

Up-to-the-minute information on public transport taxis, cycling and walking.
citymapper.com

Hailo

Helps you get you a taxi or licensed car.
www.hailoapp.com

Addison Lee

Private taxi service.
www.addisonlee.com

Tube Exits

Lets you know exactly which carriage to board to get to the right platform exit for 'Way Out' or interchange.
www.tubeexits.co.uk

Santander Cycles

London's self-service, bike-sharing scheme for short journeys.
<https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/cycling/santander-cycles>

The Trainline

Plan, search times and buy tickets for train journeys.
www.trainline.com

Time Out London

Get the most out of London with this guide to museums, attractions, restaurants bars, entertainment and nightlife.
www.timeout.com/london

Movebubble

The app to find, view and rent your next home.
<http://www.movebubble.com/>



Where the magic happens

The London studio is the home of our hit Farm Heroes Saga and Pepper Panic Saga. Based in bustling Soho, the cultural heart of the West End, our London office occupies all four floors of the landmark Ampersand Building.

Spend your lunchtimes relaxing on the roof terrace or shopping on Oxford Street, a short walk away. Regents Park, Carnaby Street and every kind of cuisine are all close by. And it's no urban myth; there really is a pub on every corner.



Seriously Playful