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Other help with paying for childcare

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Who can apply for Tax-Free Childcare

If you and your partner (if you have one) work full or part-time hours, you could get Tax-Free Childcare. You can claim for children up to 12 years old, or up to 17 if they have a disability.

If you don't work, you could still be eligible if you get either one of these:

- Employment and support allowance (ESA): this used to be called Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA)
- Carer's Allowance

Maternity, paternity or adoption leave

You can't apply for a child you're on maternity, paternity or adoption leave for, unless you're starting or re-starting work within the next 31 days. If you have other eligible children, you could apply or continue to claim for them while you're on parental leave for another child.

Tax-Free Childcare is replacing [Childcare Vouchers](#) which is no longer available for new applicants.

You can get Tax-Free Childcare at the same time as 30 hours funded childcare if you're eligible for both.

Check your eligibility on the [GOV.UK Tax-Free Childcare page](#).

What you will get with Tax-Free Childcare

When you apply for Tax-Free Childcare you'll set up an online childcare account. For every £8 you pay into the account, the government will add £2, or £4 for children with a disability. The government will pay up to £2,000 per child per year, or £4,000 per year for children with a disability.

You will use this account to pay your childcare provider.

How and when to apply for Tax-Free Childcare

You can apply for Tax-Free Childcare any time you think you could be eligible.

You can also apply if you're not eligible because you're not working, but are due to start work within the next 31 days.

Reconfirm your eligibility for Tax-Free Childcare

You must [reconfirm your eligibility](#) every 3 months if you're claiming Tax-Free Childcare. You must do this 3 months from the date you applied, even if you haven't started using your account.

When your Tax-Free Childcare starts

You start receiving Tax-Free Childcare once you:

- Meet the eligibility criteria
- Have children under 12 years old, or under 17 years old if they have a disability
- Have set up your account.

You can still set up an account to start saving, even if you haven't started using childcare yet.

What types of childcare you can use with Tax-Free Childcare funding

You can only use the Tax-Free Childcare to pay for [registered or approved childcare providers](#). This includes:

- Registered childminders, nurseries and pre-schools
- Registered after-school clubs and playschemes
- Registered schools
- Home care workers working for a registered home care agency
- Nannies who join the voluntary register

Using Tax-Free Childcare when a relative looks after your child

You can only pay a relative who provides your childcare from your Tax-Free Childcare account if they're:

- A registered or approved childcare provider
- Caring for your child away from your home

A relative means the child's:

- Grandparent
- Aunt or uncle
- Brother or sister

Find out which funding schemes work best for your family with the [online childcare calculator](#).

Search for providers who accept tax free childcare

Search our FYI Directory to find childcare providers and ask them if they are signed up to accept Tax-Free Childcare payments

Can you claim other funding at the same time?

You can claim other funding schemes at the same time as claiming Tax-Free Childcare if you're eligible, including:

- [15 hours funded childcare for 2 year olds](#)
- 15 hours funded childcare for 3 and 4 year olds
- 30 hours funded childcare for 3 and 4 year olds

You can't use Tax-Free Childcare with:

- [Universal Credit](#)
- [Tax credits](#)
- [Childcare vouchers](#)

Find out which funding schemes work best for your family with the [online childcare calculator](#).

Universal credit for childcare

You may be able to claim back up to 85% of your childcare costs if you're eligible for [Universal Credit](#).

Tax credits for childcare

If you already claim tax credits, you can add [an extra amount of Working Tax Credit](#) to help cover the cost of childcare.

Both of the following must apply:

- Your child is in [approved childcare](#)
- The childcare is provided in-person, not online

Childcare whilst you study

[Help with childcare while you study](#)

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