

Tax-Free Childcare is a government scheme to support working parents with childcare costs.

If eligible, you set up an online childcare account which you can use to pay your childcare provider directly. For every £8 you pay in, the government will pay in an extra £2.

You can get up to £2,000 per child per year, or £4,000 for disabled children.

You can use Tax-Free Childcare to pay for:

- Registered childminders, nurseries and nannies
- Registered after-school clubs and play schemes
- Home care workers working for a registered home care agency.

Working parents of 3 and 4 year olds in England may be entitled to up to 30 hours of free childcare, for 38 weeks of the year (or fewer hours over more weeks). This is an additional 15 hours of free childcare on top of the 15 hours universal entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds in England.

The online service launched in April 2017 and is now fully rolled out to all eligible parents, with children aged 3 and 4 in England.

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- On paid sick leave.
- On paid ordinary or additional maternity, paternity or adoption leave, or getting Maternity Allowance, for another child.
- On paid shared parental leave.
- On paid annual leave.

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working but expect to start a new job in the next 31 days.

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You can apply for 30 hours up to 16 weeks before your child turns three. We recommend you apply for 30 hours of childcare before your child turns three, you must have applied by the end of the previous term.

You can apply for Tax-Free Childcare and 30 hours via Childcare Choices.

You, and your partner if you have one, will need your:

- National Insurance number(s)
- A recent payslip.

If you need assistance or do not have access to the internet, you can call the childcare service helpline on 0300 123 4097 and apply over the phone.

All 3 and 4 year olds are eligible for the universal 15 hours a week of free early learning. Childcare Choices has a Childcare Calculator where you can learn more about which government offers might be best for you, whether you are likely to be eligible and how to apply.



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Like the existing 15 hours, eligible parents are entitled to 30 hours a week in each of the 38 weeks of the academic year. However, you can stretch this offer over up to 52 weeks of the year, for instance, you can take 22 hours a week for 52 weeks, or just under 24 hours for 48 weeks. You should speak to your provider about how they are offering 30 hours.

Your local authority will be able to provide details of providers in areas that are offering 30 hours places.

Yes, you can get Tax-Free Childcare and 30 hours free childcare at the same time. You can also get 30 hours free childcare alongside these schemes or Universal Credit. You can also get 30 hours free childcare alongside these schemes.

Your provider needs to sign up before you can pay them using Tax-Free Childcare. They can go to childcarechoices.gov.uk/providers through your childcare account, and can also set up a regular payment on a chosen day each month.

When you pay money in, it will take 24 hours to clear before you can pay your provider. Payments to childcare providers will take a further three days to arrive in their account. You need to give this number to your childcare provider so that they can

three months, using your childcare service account, even if you have not yet taken up
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