



TAX-FREE CHILDCARE AND 30 HOURS FREE CHILDCARE

Tax-Free Childcare and 30 hours free childcare are two separate government schemes, to help parents with the cost of childcare. You can apply for both schemes through one online application to HM Revenue and Customs through [the Childcare Service](#)

You can use Tax-Free Childcare alongside the 15 and 30 hours free childcare schemes but you can't use Tax-Free Childcare at the same time as you receive childcare vouchers, Universal Credit or tax credits.

However, 30 hours free childcare can be received alongside childcare vouchers, Universal Credit or tax credits.

When you apply, you'll be considered for both these schemes through the same application. You'll only be asked to decide which support you want if you're on tax credits or using a childcare voucher or salary sacrifice scheme. You should check what help you could get with childcare costs on www.childcarechoices.gov.uk. This will help you decide which support is best for you.

Tax-Free Childcare

You can get up to £500 every 3 months (up to £2,000 a year) for each of your children to help with the costs of childcare. This goes up to £1,000 every 3 months if a child is disabled (up to £4,000 a year).

If you get Tax-Free Childcare, you'll set up an online childcare account for your child. For every £8 you pay into this account, the government will pay in £2 to use to pay your provider.

You can get Tax-Free Childcare at the same time as 15 or 30 hours free childcare if you're eligible for both.

Your eligibility depends on:

- whether you're working (employed, self-employed, or a director)
- your income (and your partner's income, if you have one)
- your child's age and circumstances
- your immigration status

The eligibility criteria can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare>

30 hours free childcare

All 3 and 4 year-olds in England already get universal 15 hours a week, or 570 hours a year of free early education. If their parents are living and working in England, 3 and 4-year-olds may be entitled to 30 hours free childcare, an extra 570 hours of free childcare a year, so 1140 hours in total.

The eligibility criteria are the same as the ones for Tax-Free Childcare, except you can continue to get these types of support at the same time as 30 hours free childcare:

- tax credits
- Universal Credit
- childcare vouchers or salary sacrifice schemes
- childcare grants and bursaries

When you apply, you'll be confirming that you need childcare so that you and your partner, if you have one, can work. If your child's already in a full-time reception class in a state funded school, you won't be eligible.

If you're eligible for 30 hours free childcare, you'll receive a 30 hours eligibility code, your unique 11-digit reference number. This code is important as you'll need it to claim your free childcare. You should take the code to your childcare provider along with your National Insurance number and your child's date of birth to secure your free childcare place. Your childcare provider will check the code and confirm your eligibility. You and your childcare provider will then be able to discuss when provision can begin. Please note that you must have an eligible code before the beginning of the term that you wish to claim from.

Every three months, you'll need to reconfirm that you're still eligible for 30 hours free childcare. You'll be reminded to reconfirm you're still eligible 4 weeks before the deadline. If you also receive Tax-Free Childcare, you'll be able to reconfirm your eligibility for both schemes at the same time. You don't need to take your code to your provider every time you reconfirm however, you should notify your provider if you fall out of eligibility. You can apply for 30 hours free childcare for another child at any time. The point at which you'll need to reconfirm will be aligned for all children. This means that you won't need to go online to reconfirm at different points in the month for each child. If you don't reconfirm, your childcare provider and local authority will be told that you no longer meet the requirements for a free childcare place.

If you miss your deadline you will receive a message telling you that your eligibility has lapsed but you may retain the childcare place you have for a short grace period. These grace periods are generally to the end of a term depending on when the validity end date is.

The eligibility criteria can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/check-eligible-free-childcare-if-youre-working>