

Getting Settled

Your new life in the TASIS England area



THE AMERICAN SCHOOL IN ENGLAND

CONTENTS

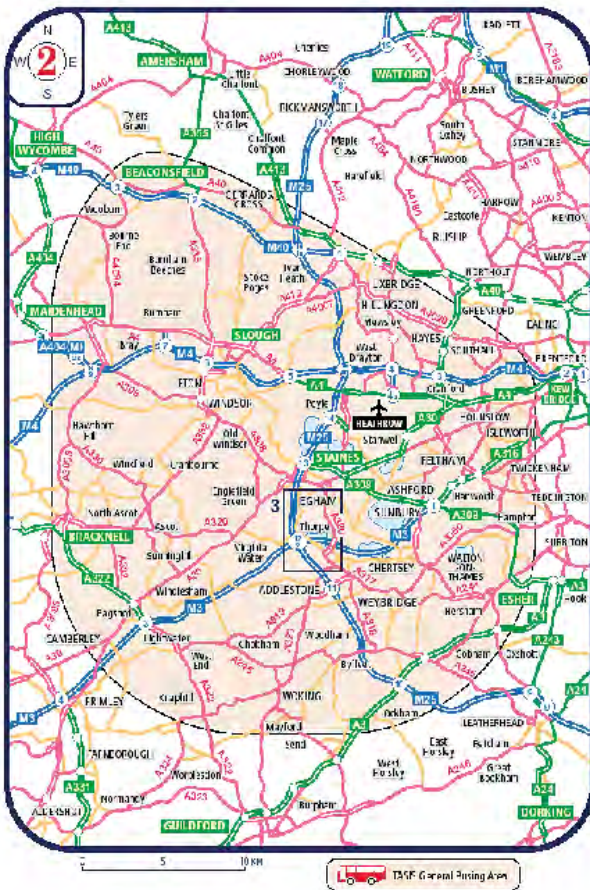
Your New Life in the TASIS England Area	3
I. Finding A Home	4
II. Interim Living	7
III. Getting Around	9
IV. Assistance with Settling: The Emotional and Practical Sides to Relocation	11
Top TASIS Towns	12
Parents' Information and Resource Committee	32
PIRC: Helping TASIS Families Transition	32
Summer Opportunities	34
Banking	35
Telephone, Mobile Phone, Television & Internet Service	36
Medical Care	39
U.K. Driving	40
Faith Communities	41
Before You Arrive in the U.K.	44
LIVING IN ENGLAND	
Special Section from AWBS International Women's Club	46

YOUR NEW LIFE IN THE TASIS ENGLAND AREA

All information and links contained here were current at the time the document was compiled. TASIS The American School in England cannot endorse specific businesses or individuals.

The options are listed to augment and facilitate your own investigations. Please consider all options carefully, before making important decisions based on this limited information. If you find that any information listed here is in error, please contact

communications@tasisengland.org.



TOP TASIS TOWNS

- Virginia Water
- Weybridge
- Ascot
- Sunningdale
- Walton-on-Thames
- Egham
- Englefield Green
- Woking
- Windsor
- Richmond
- Windslesham
- Sunninghill

These are the most popular towns, because of their locations, amongst TASIS families. Information about each town can be found in the Top TASIS Towns section, beginning on page 12.

I. FINDING A HOME

The following websites provide listings of properties, including descriptions and prices, available within a particular town or postcode. Typically, you can narrow your search by number of bedrooms, price range, etc. These websites are not affiliated with a particular estate agency:

www.primelocation.com
www.rightmove.co.uk
www.zoopla.co.uk

ESTATE AGENTS

Rental properties are referred to as “lets,” and agents with rentals are “letting agents.” There is no multi-listing of available properties in England. The websites noted above do show listings for several agencies, but the information is not always the most current. Each estate agent shows its own properties and negotiates the highest possible rent to benefit the landlords or owners. You will need to contact each agency individually to learn about its properties. Lettings agencies may also list properties in nearby towns (e.g. Weybridge and Walton-on-Thames, or Ascot, Sunningdale, and Sunninghill).

LETTINGS AGENTS IN THE TOP TISIS TOWNS

Virginia Water

Alastair Hodge	01344 434343	www.alastairhodge.co.uk
Barton Wyatt	01344 843000	www.bartonwyatt.co.uk
Buckingham	01344 845050	www.buckingham.com
Carr's Lettings	01344 842876	www.carrslettings.co.uk
Chancellors	01344 876487	www.chancellors.co.uk
LBPM	01276 855222	www.lbpm.co.uk

Weybridge

APW Exclusively Lettings	01932 857300	www.apwproperty.com
Curchods	01932 823625	www.curchods.com
Grants Independent	01932 841020	www.grantshomes.co.uk
Hamptons International	01932 645388	www.hamptons.co.uk
Jackson-Stops & Staff	01932 859355	www.jackson-stops.co.uk
John D Wood	01932 645240	www.johndwood.co.uk
Leaders	01932 850030	www.leaders.co.uk
Martin Flashman & Co	01932 857711	www.martinflashman.co.uk
Savills	01932 838020	www.savills.co.uk
Winkworth	01932 854400	www.winkworth.co.uk

Ascot

Chancellors	01344 872909	www.chancellors.co.uk
Fine & Country	01344 624624	www.fineandcountry.com

Knight Frank	01344 299390	www.knightfrank.co.uk
Strutt & Parker	01344 371555	www.struttandparker.com
Sunningdale		
Chancellors	01344 876487	www.chancellors.co.uk
Hamptons International	01344 568150	www.hamptons.co.uk
Romans	01344 404718	www.romans.co.uk
Savills	01344 295359	www.savills.co.uk
Walton-on-Thames		
Curchods	01932 221122	www.curchods.com
Fine & Country	01932 310321	www.fineandcountry.com
Gascoigne-Pees (Esher)	01372 390442	www.gpees.co.uk
Leaders	01932 242442	www.leaders.co.uk
Egham		
Hodders	01784 770461	www.hodders.net
Nevin & Wells	01784 437437	www.nevinandwells.co.uk
Townends	01784 477277	www.townends.co.uk
Englefield Green		
Aspen Estate Agents	01784 438990	www.aspenestateagents.co.uk
Browns Estate Agents	01784 439242	www.browns-sales-lettings.com
Fine & Country	01784 438951	www.fineandcountry.com
Foxley & Finch	01784 433440	www.foxleyandfinch.co.uk
Townends	01784 434304	www.townends.co.uk
Woking		
Chancellors	01483 770701	www.chancellors.co.uk
Foxtons	01483 434445	www.foxtons.co.uk
Grosvenor Billinghamurst	01483 725500	www.grosvenorb.co.uk
Leaders	01483 762626	www.leaders.co.uk
Grants Independent	01483 776977	www.grantshomes.co.uk
Townends	01483 761943	www.townends.co.uk
Windsor		
Fine & Country	01752 255555	www.fineandcountry.com
Hamptons International	01753 415266	www.hamptons.co.uk
Marshalls Property Services	01753 794606	www.marshallsproperty.co.uk
Romans	01753 847222	www.romans.co.uk
Savills	01753 834600	www.savills.co.uk
Richmond		
Chancellors	0208 9402255	www.chancellors.co.uk
Gascoigne-Pees	0203 3694310	www.gpees.co.uk
Hamptons International	0203 3694516	www.hamptons.co.uk
Jackson-Stops & Staff	0208 9400066	www.jackson-stops.co.uk

John D Wood	0203 1515856	www.johndwood.co.uk
Knight Frank	0208 9392811	www.knightfrank.co.uk
Richmond (Cont.)		
Savills	0203 4306921	www.savills.co.uk
Winkworth	0208 9409986	www.winkworth.co.uk

Windlesham

Strutt & Parker	01276 489500	www.struttandparker.com
-----------------	--------------	--

Sunninghill

Beverley Williams & Associates	01344 874300	www.beverleywilliams.co.uk
Sapphire Estates	01344 870100	www.sapphire-estates.com

Some letting agents offer corporate home search services and support. The following agents cover the Greater London area, including Berkshire and Surrey:

Hamptons International	020 7305 5784	www.hamptons.co.uk
Knight Frank	020 7861 5329	www.knightfrank.co.uk
Savills	020 7016 3751	www.savills.co.uk
Onyx Real Estate Management	020 8450 4187	www.onyxrem.com
Winkworth	020 3764 1464	www.winkworth.co.uk

RELOCATION COMPANIES

If your company does not provide the services of a relocation agent, you might consider hiring one yourself. Local relocation firms are more familiar with the area and may provide more personalized service. If you choose a larger, London-based company that can offer a broader range of services, ask for an agent who can provide Surrey/Berkshire specific knowledge.

The Association of Relocation Professionals (ARP) is the professional body for the relocation industry in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Lists of relocation providers, as well as firms offering specialist relocation services, can be found on their website: www.arp-relocation.com. Some of the agencies that TESIS families and their companies have used include:

LOCAL COMPANIES

BH Relocation (Fleet/Ascot)	01252 620704/01344 622295	www.bhrelocation.com
Clearview Relocation (Newbury)	01635 239040	www.clearviewrelocation.com
The Relocation Consultancy	01189 470029	www.therelocationconsultancy.com
The Relocation Bureau (High Wycombe)	01494 816650	www.reloburo.com
TTA Relocation Management Consulting (Ascot)	01344 627247	www.relocation-uk.com
TTH-Curzon Relocation (Reading)	01491 874322	www.tthcurzonrelo.co.uk

LONDON-BASED COMPANIES

AKA Relocations Ltd	020 7751 0666	www.akarelocations.com
Brookfield Global Relocation Services	020 7920 3700	www.brookfieldgrs.com
Crown Relocations Limited	02088 398000	www.crownrelo.com
Sterling Corporate Relocations	02088 417000	www.sterling.com
TEAM Relocations	020 8784 0100	www.teamrelocations.com

COMPANIES BASED IN OTHER AREAS

360 Relocations Limited	01895 201595	www.360relo.com
CARTUS	01793 756000	www.cartus.com
The MI Group	01892 522319	www.themigroup.com
SIRVA Relocation	01793 619555	www.sirva.com
Spencer How Relocation	01494 867500	www.spencerhow.co.uk
Weichert Workforce Mobility	01293 813838	www.weichertworkforcemobility.com

II. INTERIM LIVING

LOCAL HOTELS:

Anchor Hotel Shepperton	01932 242748	www.anchorhotel.co.uk
The Bridge Hotel Chertsey	01932 565644	www.bridgehotelchertsey.com
Brooklands Hotel Weybridge	01932 335710	www.brooklandshotelsurrey.com
Coworth Park Ascot	01344 876600	www.coworthpark.com
The Crown Hotel Chertsey	01932 564657	www.crownchertsey.co.uk
De Vere Beaumont Estate Old Windsor	01753 640000	www.beaumonthousewindsor.co.uk
Foxhills Club and Resort (Ottershaw)	01932 704500	www.foxhills.co.uk
Great Fosters Egham	01784 433822	www.greatfosters.co.uk
Doubletree by Hilton Woking	01483 221000	www.doubletree3.hilton.com
Macdonald Berystede Hotel & Spa Ascot	01344 623311	www.macdonaldhotels.co.uk
Macdonald Windsor Hotel Windsor	01753 483100	www.macdonaldhotels.co.uk
Mercure Thames Lodge Hotel Staines	01784 334800	www.mercure.com
Oatlands Park Hotel Weybridge	01932 847242	www.oatlandsparkhotel.com
Royal Berkshire Sunninghill	01344 623322	www.exclusive.co.uk
The Runnymede Hotel Egham	01784 220600	www.runnymedehotel.com
Savill Court Hotel & Spa (Englefield Green)	01784 472000	www.savillcourt.com
Ship Hotel Weybridge	01932 848364	www.shiphotel.co.uk
The Swan Hotel Staines	01784 452494	www.swanstaines.co.uk
Warren Lodge Shepperton	01932 242972	www.warrenlodgehotel.co.uk
Wentworth Suites Virginia Water	01344 842201	www.wentworthclub.com

LOCAL BED AND BREAKFASTS

Bulkeley House (Englefield Green)	01784 431287	www.bedandbreakfastdirect.co.uk
Coltscroft (Thorpe)	01932 568084	coltscroftthorpe@gmail.com
The Oatlands Chaser (Weybridge)	01932 253277	www.theoatlandschaser.co.uk
The Old Manor House (Shepperton)	01932 976254	www.oldmanorhouse.eu
The Old Parsonage (Englefield Green)	01784 436706	www.bed-breakfast-uk.com
The Royal Standard Guest House (Virginia Water)	01344 841837	www.theroyalstandard.co.uk

LOCAL SHORT TERM APARTMENT RENTALS

Clarendon Serviced Apartments (Staines)	01784 489200	www.clarendonuk.com
Deep Blue Apartments Ltd. (Egham/Staines/Windsor)	0203 7437336	www.deepblue-apartments.com
Egham Apartments	01784 473939	www.eghamapartments.co.uk
Finchlea Estates Limited (Ascot/Windsor)	01753 591559	www.finchleaestates.com
Foxhills Club and Resort (Ottershaw)	01483 883939	www.foxhills.co.uk
Other apartments in Berkshire and Surrey	0208 9443662	www.roomspace.com

FURNITURE RENTAL

Furniture rental companies provide a convenient solution, while you wait for your furniture and housewares to arrive or take your time shopping for new pieces. Many companies offer short and long-term rental options.

Fully Furnished Group (Ascot)	01784 449988	www.fullyfurnished.com
Roomservice by CORT (Chessington)	020 8397 9344	www.roomservicebycort.com

CONCIERGE SERVICE

Ardagh Consulting	0800 994 9027	www.ardaghuk.com
Greycoat Lumleys	0207 233 9950	www.greycoatlumleys.co.uk
The Homemover Specialists Ltd	01344 723292	www.thehomemover.co.uk

III. GETTING AROUND

1. TAXIS

Some train stations have taxis available when you arrive. If not, you can book a taxi from one of these local companies.

TIP: If you need to accommodate more than three of four passengers and/or large pieces of luggage, inform the taxi company at the time of booking.

Egham:

Airport Taxi Service	01784 461444	www.knightanddaytaxis.com
Egham Cars	01784 434484	www.eghamcarslimited.com
Egham Taxis	01784 433933	www.egham-taxis.com
Gemini Cars	01784 471111	www.gemini-cars.co.uk

Sunningdale/Ascot:

Ascot Airport Taxis	01344 206373	www.ascottaxi.co.uk
Ascot Cars	01344 872472	www.ascot-cars.com
Atlas Cars	01344 874874	www.atlascarsltd.com
Sunningdale Airport Taxis	01344 206373	www.sunningdale-taxis.co.uk
Sunningdale Taxis	01344 534734	www.sunnigdaletaxis.co.uk

Virginia Water:

Virginia Water Taxis	01344 534154	www.virginiawatertaxis.co.uk
Wentworth Cars	01344 874888	www.wentworthcars.com

Walton-on-Thames:

A1 Walton Taxis	01932 222212	www.waltontaxi.org
Swan Cars	01932 230830	www.swan-cars.com
Walton Taxi Service	01932 222224	www.taxiwaltononthames.co.uk

Weybridge:

AGM Cars, Weybridge station	01932 858585	www.agmcars.co.uk
A1 Cars	01932 830830	www.a1andedencars.co.uk
Airport Taxis Weybridge	01932 848484	www.taxiweybridge.co.uk

2. CHAUFFEUR/DRIVER

DriveChauffeur	01483 725155	www.drivechauffeur.co.uk
Surrey Chauffeur Travel	01483 600443	www.surreychauffeurtravel.co.uk
XInc Cars	01483 310310	www.xlncars.com

3. CAR RENTAL (HIRE)

TIPS:

- You must specifically ask for an automatic car, otherwise you may be given one with a manual transmission.
- You may be able to rent a car with GPS, which will tell you exactly where to turn and drive while you become accustomed to the area and driving on the left-hand side of the road.

Rental Agencies National:

www.avis.co.uk
www.budget.co.uk
www.enterprise.co.uk
www.europcar.co.uk

www.hertz.co.uk
www.holidayautos.co.uk
www.nationalcar.co.uk
www.thrifty.co.uk

Local:

Epsom (deliver and collect within 15 mile radius)
Chertsey/Woking
Virginia Water
Weybridge/Walton-on-Thames

www.allhourcars.co.uk
www.kendallcars.com
www.pennycarhire.co.uk
www.kingfishercarrental.co.uk

4. CAR PURCHASE/LEASE

If your company does not provide a car for your family's use, carefully consider your options for acquiring a car in England. Large cars, which we are quite accustomed to driving in the U.S., can have many drawbacks in the U.K. These include higher insurance rates, significant fuel costs, and difficulty in parking, as most car parks (parking lots) have small spaces and narrow lanes for maneuvering.

Since most expat assignments are only a few years in duration, if you are interested in a new car, you might consider leasing as opposed to purchasing outright. This has a number of benefits, including the ability to turn the vehicle in at the end of your assignment, without having the hassle of selling it yourself.

Many other families find used cars to be viable options:

A. Used Car Listings

Auto Trader Magazine available at newsagents

Join as a member to access classified ads for car sales, furnishings, electrics, etc.:

AWBS International Women's Club
American Women of Surrey

www.awbs.org.uk
www.awsurrey.org

B. Used Car Dealers:

Alexander David Motor Co Ltd (Ascot) 01344 627800
Carcraft (Chertsey) 08009 239502
MJA Car Sales (Walton-on-Thames) 01932 509949

www.alexanderdavid.co.uk
www.carcraft.co.uk/Chertsey
www.mja-cars.co.uk

C. Used Car Brokers:

Jerry Wagstaff

01276 855552

www.yourexpatcar.com

IV. ASSISTANCE WITH SETTLING: THE EMOTIONAL AND PRACTICAL SIDES OF RELOCATION

The TESIS community of staff and families is very supportive and understanding of the transitions that students and their families are making. Many have appreciated the support and “soft landing” provided to families who are joining our community.

TESIS PARENTS ASSOCIATION (TPA)

The TPA is a group of parent volunteers established to promote the goals and objectives of TESIS; help maintain close relationships within the TESIS community; and facilitate communications among the parents, students, faculty, and staff of TESIS. Every parent of a current TESIS student is automatically a member of TPA.

Once your children are enrolled, you will be assigned a “Buddy Family” by our TPA Buddy Family Coordinators. Your Buddy Family will assist you in many ways to ease your adjustment to life in England and school life at TESIS.

The TPA coordinates several key programs and events throughout the year such as the Family Picnic, seasonal celebrations, and parent socials.

PARENTS’ INFORMATION AND RESOURCE COMMITTEE (PIRC)

Throughout the year, PIRC hosts seminars, coffees, and walks to support families as they cope with the emotional, social, and practical issues inherent in the transition to expatriate life. PIRC hosts a three-part settling-in series during the first few weeks of school. The seminars are:

- New Parents’ Orientation
- Networking and Resources
- Holidays, Houseguests, and Home Leave

You will find a selection of PIRC resources, with essential information that you need prior to your arrival and during your first weeks, on pages 31-45 of this booklet. At the seminar you will receive additional information that will address common questions regarding daily life. For further inquiries, please contact pirc@tasisengland.org.

TOP TASIS TOWNS

In this section, there is general information on a number of the small towns and villages in the TASIS area. The towns are arranged in order of “popularity,” with the first having the largest contingent of current TASIS families. The order may vary slightly from year to year.

Virginia Water
Weybridge
Ascot
Sunningdale
Walton-on-Thames
Egham
Englefield Green
Woking
Windsor
Richmond
Windlesham
Sunninghill

Please Note:

On the following Top TASIS Towns pages, all TASIS England bus services run door-to-door. Afternoon departures: 3:15 daily and 5:15 Monday – Thursday. Time depends on traffic and whether you are the first, middle, or last pick-up on the route.

In addition, train times within the Top TASIS Towns section are as published by Southwest Trains (southwesttrains.co.uk).

VIRGINIA WATER

www.virginiawater.co.uk

COUNTY: SURREY

Approximate Travel Times:

Bus to TASIS	10-25 minutes
Train to London Waterloo	45-50 minutes
Drive time to TASIS	5-8 minutes

BEST FEATURES:

Closest town to TASIS

Large international community with TASIS friends

Large parks nearby: Virginia Water Park, Windsor Great Park Secure, gated communities with leisure facilities

Close to golf and tennis clubs

SMALL MARKETS:

Budgens

SUPERMARKETS:

Sainsbury's (Staines)

Waitrose (Egham and Sunningdale)

DOCTORS' OFFICES (SURGERIES):

Packers Surgery 01344 842951

DENTAL OFFICES:

Langley's Dental Centre 01344 842953

Glebe House Dental Care 01344 844507

Harewood Dental 01344 842476

SPORTS FACILITIES:

Wentworth Club

www.wentworthclub.com

Golf, Tennis, Fitness, Swimming, Dining

NEARBY:

Egham Leisure Centre

www.achievelifestyle.co.uk

Fitness, Tennis, Squash, Kids Zone

Foxhills (Ottershaw) [TASIS England Partner](#)

www.foxhills.co.uk

Golf, Tennis, Fitness, Swimming, Squash, Dining, Spa, Hotel, Youth Club

The Runnymede on Thames (Egham)

www.runnymedehotel.com

Fitness, Tennis, Swimming, Spa, Dining, Hotel

WEYBRIDGE

www.allaboutweybridge.co.uk

COUNTY: SURREY

Approximate Travel Times:

Bus to TESIS	35-55 minutes
Train to London Waterloo	29-41 minutes
Drive time to TESIS	15-25 minutes

BEST FEATURES:

Fast train commute to London

Large international community with TESIS friends

Close to A3/M25 – easy access to many places, bigger shopping towns Close to supermarkets

SMALL MARKETS:

Crockford Bridge Farm Shop

SUPERMARKETS:

Waitrose

Tesco Superstore (Brooklands)

Marks & Spencer (Brooklands)

Sainsbury's (Walton and Cobham)

DOCTORS' OFFICES (SURGERIES):

Rowan Tree Practice	01932 828200
Weybridge NHS Walk-In Centre	01932 826013

DENTAL OFFICES:

Portmore Dental Practice	01932 855011
G.W.T. Bryant	01932 857585
Weybridge Dental Practice	01932 853556
Laurence J. Lando	01932 858686
The White Dental Company	01932 846115

SPORTS FACILITIES:

David Lloyd (Brooklands) www.davidlloyd.co.uk/clubs/weybridge-brooklands
Fitness, Squash, Swimming, Spa

St. George's Hill Golf Club www.stgeorghillgolfclub.co.uk
Golf, Pro Shop, Dining

St. George's Hill Lawn Tennis Club www.stghltc.co.uk
Tennis (lawn, indoor, and outdoor), Squash, Fitness, Swimming, Spa, Dining

Weybridge Lawn Tennis Club www.weybridgeltc.com
*Small, friendly tennis club for players of all standards and ages;
coaching for adults and juniors*

The Weybridge Health Club & Spa www.theweybridgeclub.com
Fitness, Swimming, Tennis, Spa, Café

NEARBY:

Foxhills (Ottershaw) www.foxhills.co.uk
Golf, Tennis, Fitness, Swimming, Squash, Dining, Spa, Hotel, Youth Club

River Bourne Health Club (Chertsey) www.rbhealthclub.co.uk
Fitness, Swimming, Spa, Café

Hersham Golf Club (Walton-on-Thames) www.hershamgolf.com
Golf, Academy, Pro Shop, Dining

The Wisley (Woking) www.thewisley.com
Private, shareholder-member golf club

ASCOT

www.ascotvillage.org.uk

COUNTY: BERKSHIRE

Approximate Travel Times:

Bus to TESIS	30-35 minutes
Train to London Waterloo	54-60 minutes
Drive time to TESIS	15-25 minutes

BEST FEATURES:

Small town with many amenities on the High Street

Nearby cinema (Bracknell)

Close to Windsor Great Park

Excitement of famous Ascot horse racing

Odeon cinema

Easy walk into town

SMALL MARKETS:

Budgens

Tesco Express

SUPERMARKETS:

Tesco (Martin's Heron)

Waitrose (Sunningdale)

Sainsbury's (Bracknell)

DOCTORS' OFFICES (SURGERIES)

Ascot Medical Centre & Radnor House Surgery	01344 874011
Green Meadows Surgery	01344 621628
Kings Corner (Sunninghill)	01344 623181

DENTAL OFFICES

Frankel Dental Care	01344 297001
Ascot Dental Surgery	01344 885797

SPORTS FACILITIES:

Ascot United Football Club www.ascotunited.net
Players of all ages (from age five) and all levels of ability welcome

Lavender Park Golf Centre www.lavenderparkgolf.co.uk
Golf (nine hole, informal), Bar, Snooker

Mill Ride Golf & Country www.mill-ride.com
Golf, Pro Shop, Dining

Royal Ascot Golf Club www.royalascotgolfclub.co.uk
Golf, Academy, Pro Shop, Dining

The Fitness Space www.thefitnessspace.com
Fitness, Sports Therapy, Rehabilitation

NEARBY:

Berystede Hotel and Spa Health Club (Sunninghill) www.macdonaldhotels.co.uk
Fitness, Swimming, Spa

Egham Leisure Centre www.achievelifestyle.co.uk
Fitness, Tennis, Squash, Kids Zone

Foxhills (Ottershaw) www.foxhills.co.uk
Golf, Tennis, Fitness, Swimming, Squash, Dining, Spa, Hotel, Youth Club

Royal Berkshire Health & Racquets Club (Bracknell) www.virginactive.co.uk
Tennis, Squash, Fitness, Swimming, Spa

Wentworth Club (Virginia Water) www.wentworthclub.com
Golf, Tennis, Fitness, Swimming, Dining

SUNNINGDALE

www.sunningdale.org.uk

COUNTY: BERKSHIRE

Approximate Travel Times:

Bus to TESIS	20-35 minutes
Train to London Waterloo	51-58 minutes
Drive time to TESIS	15-20 minutes

BEST FEATURES:

Close to TESIS

Large international community with TESIS friends

Virginia Water Park/Windsor Great Park nearby

A30, wide roads for easy driving and access to shopping

SUPERMARKETS:

Waitrose (Sunningdale & Bagshot)

Sainsbury's (Bracknell)

Tesco (Martin's Heron, Camberley, Ascot)

Marks & Spencer (Camberley)

DOCTORS' OFFICES (SURGERIES):

Magnolia House 01344 637800

Kings Corner (Sunninghill) 01344 623181

Ascot Medical Centre 01344 874011

DENTAL OFFICES:

Sunningdale Dental Practice 01344 620526

Sunninghill Dental 01344 291744

SPORTS FACILITIES:

Sunningdale Golf Club www.sunningdale-golfclub.co.uk

Golf, Pro Shop, Dining

Sunningdale Ladies Golf Club www.sunningdaleladies.co.uk

Golf, Pro Shop, Dining, Gentlemen accepted as associate members

NEARBY:

Berystede Hotel and Spa Health Club (Sunninghill) www.macdonaldhotels.co.uk

Fitness, Swimming, Spa

Egham Leisure Centre www.achievelifestyle.co.uk

Fitness, Tennis, Squash, Kids Zone

Foxhills (Ottershaw) **TASIS England Partner** www.foxhills.co.uk

Golf, Tennis, Fitness, Swimming, Squash, Dining, Spa, Hotel, Youth Club

Royal Berkshire Health & Racquets Club (Bracknell) <i>Tennis, Squash, Fitness, Swimming, Spa</i>	www.virginactive.co.uk
The Runnymede on Thames (Egham) <i>Fitness, Tennis, Swimming, Spa, Dining, Hotel</i>	www.runnymedehotel.com
The Fitness Space (Ascot) <i>Fitness, Sports Therapy, Rehabilitation</i>	www.thefitnessspace.com
Wentworth Club (Virginia Water) <i>Golf, Tennis, Fitness, Swimming, Dining</i>	www.wentworthclub.com
Windlesham Golf Club (Bagshot) Golf, Academy, Pro Shop, Dining	www.windleshamgolf.com

WALTON-ON-THAMES

www.walton-on-thames.org

COUNTY: SURREY

Approximate Travel Times:

Bus to TESIS	35-55 minutes
Train to London Waterloo	29-37 minutes
Drive time to TESIS	15-30 minutes

BEST FEATURES:

Centrally located between London, Leatherhead, and TESIS with fast, direct trains to Waterloo
Newly developed shopping area with a good selection of restaurants for families; beautiful
riverside walks and tow path trail Many neighborhoods with TESIS families
Easy access to large shopping towns (Woking, Guildford, Kingston)
Cinema

SUPERMARKETS:

Sainsbury's
Aldi
Waitrose
Tesco Superstore (Brooklands)
Marks & Spencer (Brooklands)

DOCTORS' OFFICES (SURGERIES):

Ashley Medical Practice	01932 252425
Fort House Surgery	01932 253055
Walton Health Centre	01932 228999

DENTAL OFFICES:

Ashley Road Dental Surgery	01932 220111
Meads Dental Practice (Esher)	01372 464929
Walton Dental Surgery	01932 225748
Walton Park Dental Practice	01932 220449

SPORTS FACILITIES:

Burhill Golf Club www.burhillgolf-club.co.uk
Golf, Academy, Pro Shop, Dining

Elmbridge Xcel Leisure Complex www.placesforpeopleleisure.org
Fitness, Swimming

Hersham Golf Club (Walton-on-Thames) www.hershamgolfclub.com
Golf, Academy, Pro Shop, Dining

Walton on Thames Lawn Tennis Club www.waltontennis.org.uk
Volunteer run club with indoor and outdoor courts and LTA endorsed programs;

children and adults welcome

Walton & Hersham Football Club www.waltonandhershamfc.org.uk
Home of semi-professional football team; also offers youth programs

NEARBY:

Foxhills (Ottershaw) [TASIS England Partner](http://www.foxhills.co.uk) www.foxhills.co.uk
Golf, Tennis, Fitness, Swimming, Squash, Dining, Spa, Hotel, Youth Club

St. George's Hill Golf Club (Weybridge) www.stgeorghillgolfclub.co.uk
Golf, Pro Shop, Dining

St. George's Hill Lawn Tennis Club (Weybridge) www.stghlhc.co.uk
Tennis (lawn, indoor, and outdoor), Squash, Fitness, Swimming, Spa, Dining

The Weybridge Health Club & Spa www.theweybridgeclub.com
Fitness, Swimming, Tennis, Spa, Café

David Lloyd (Brooklands) www.davidlloyd.co.uk/clubs/weybridge-brooklands
Fitness, Squash, Swimming, Spa

The Wisley (Woking): www.thewisley.com
Private, shareholder-member golf club

ENGLEFIELD GREEN & EGHAM

www.inglefieldgreen.org.uk

www.egham.org.uk

COUNTY: SURREY

Approximate Travel Times:

Bus to TESIS	25-40 minutes
Train to London Waterloo (via Virginia Water)	45-50 minutes, (via Egham) 41-59 minutes
Drive time to TESIS	5-15 minutes

BEST FEATURES:

Close to TESIS

Close to Windsor Great Park and the town of Windsor Located just off the A30 and easy access to the M25

SMALL MARKETS:

Spar

Budgens (Egham)

SUPERMARKETS:

Tesco (Egham)

Sainsbury's (Staines)

Waitrose (Staines and Egham)

DOCTORS' OFFICES (SURGERIES):

The Health Centre 01784 437671

Dr. Seyedi (popular with Americans) 01784 433380

Grove Medical Center 01784 432191

DENTAL OFFICES:

See Virginia Water for closest dental offices

SPORTS FACILITIES:

Egham Leisure Centre www.achievelifestyle.co.uk
Fitness, Tennis, Squash, Kids Zone

Leisure Club and Spa at Savill Court Hotel www.savillcourt.com
Fitness, Swimming, Tennis, Spa

Royal Holloway Sports Centre www.royalholloway.ac.uk/sports

NEARBY:

The Runnymede on Thames (Egham) www.runnymedehotel.com
Fitness, Tennis, Swimming, Spa, Dining, Hotel

Foxhills (Ottershaw) [TASIS England Partner](#) www.foxhills.co.uk
Golf, Tennis, Fitness, Swimming, Squash, Dining, Spa, Hotel, Youth Club

Wentworth Club (Virginia Water) www.wentworthclub.com
Golf, Tennis, Fitness, Swimming, Dining

Windsor Leisure Centre (Windsor) www.leisurecentre.com/windsor-leisure-centre
Fitness, Swimming, Indoor Water Park, Youth Sports

WOKING

www.woking.gov.uk

COUNTY: SURREY

Approximate Travel Times:

Bus to TESIS	40-55 minutes
Train to London Waterloo	24-35 minutes
Drive time to TESIS	20-30 minutes

BEST FEATURES:

Regular non-stop trains to and from London

Large shopping areas with indoor mall

Newly renovated town center

Performing arts theatre featuring major productions, including many West End performances; arts and heritage center; multiplex cinema; largest public library in Surrey—newly renovated and updated; Royal Horticultural Society world-class gardens at Wisley

SMALL MARKETS:

Sainsbury's mini-store in town center mall Open market in town center for fresh produce

SUPERMARKETS:

Morrisons

Sainsbury's (Knaphill)

Waitrose (Goldsworth Park)

DOCTORS' OFFICES (SURGERIES):

Walk-in Centre at Woking Community Hospital	01483 846209
York House Medical Centre	01483 760014
Hillview Medical Centre	01483 766333
Sunny Meed Surgery	01483 766699
Southview Surgery	01483 766609
Greenfields Surgery	01483 771171

DENTAL OFFICES:

The Retreat	01483 761777
Mrs. Mackie, Orthodontist	01483 726488

SPORTS FACILITIES:

David Lloyd www.davidlloyd.co.uk/clubs/woking
Largest indoor tennis club in Surrey, Fitness, Swimming

Hoebridge Golf Centre www.hoebridgegc.co.uk
Golf (public), Fitness, Dining

Woking Football Club www.wokingfc.co.uk

Local football team and sports stadium with children's soccer schools

Woking Leisure Centre www.freedom-leisure.co.uk
Fitness, Squash, Spa, Café

The Wisley www.thewisley.com
Private, shareholder-member golf club

NEARBY:

Foxhills (Ottershaw) [TASIS England Partner](http://www.foxhills.co.uk) www.foxhills.co.uk
Golf, Tennis, Fitness, Swimming, Squash, Dining, Spa, Hotel, Youth Club

WINDSOR

www.windsor.gov.uk

COUNTY: BERKSHIRE

Approximate Travel Times:

Bus to TESIS	30-45 minutes
Train to London Paddington	35 minutes
Train to Waterloo	1 hour
Drive time to TESIS	20-30 minutes

BEST FEATURES:

Rich in history

Close to Windsor Castle and Windsor Great Park

Pedestrian area with many shops and restaurants; close to the Thames, Eton, and Legoland

Several gardens and parks, ideal for family activities

Easy commute to Waterloo, Paddington, Reading, and Slough

SMALL MARKETS:

Windsor Farm Shop

Multiple corner markets

SUPERMARKETS:

Sainsbury's (Maidenhead, Slough)

Tesco (Windsor and Slough)

Waitrose (Windsor)

DOCTORS' OFFICES (SURGERIES):

Clarence Medical Centre 01753 865773

Sheet Street Practice 01753 860334

DENTAL OFFICES:

Dr. Kneebone (Orthodontist) 01753 868754

Windsor Road Dental Practice 01753 536619

SPORTS FACILITIES:

Windsor Leisure Centre www.leisurecentre.com/windsor-leisure-centre

Fitness, Swimming, Indoor Water Park, Youth Sports

Windsor Lawn Tennis Club www.wltc.co.uk

Tennis, Lounge, Physiotherapy

The Windsor Club www.thewindsorclub.co.uk

Health, Fitness, Squash

RICHMOND

www.richmond.gov.uk

COUNTY: A LONDON BOROUGH

Approximate Travel Times:

Bus to TESIS	55-60 minutes
Train to London Waterloo	20-30 minutes
Drive time to TESIS	30 minutes

BEST FEATURES:

Close to the center of London, Hampton Court, Kew Gardens

Large number of parks and open spaces, including Richmond park, the largest of London's Royal parks Many up-market shops, restaurants, cinemas, museums, galleries, and theatres

Attractive, small-scale, city-feel

SMALL MARKETS:

Richmond Farmers' Market, Saturdays in Heron's Square

Tesco Metro

Marks & Spencer Simply Food (train station)

Waitrose Mini

SUPERMARKETS

Sainsbury's

Waitrose

Asda

Marks & Spencer

Whole Foods

MEDICAL CARE:

Teddington NHS Walk-in Centre 02087 144004

Fulham NHS Urgent Care Walk-in Centre 02033 133833

The Vineyard Surgery 02089 480404

Seymour House Surgery 02089 403228

DENTAL OFFICES

Perfect Smile 02089 405006

The Park Dental Clinic (East Sheen) 02088 765088

SPORTS FACILITIES

Richmond Hill Health Club www.richmondhillhealthclub.co.uk

Fitness, Squash

NEARBY:

Lensbury Club (Teddington) www.lensbury.com/leisure

Fitness, Swimming, Racquet Sports, Watersports Centre

(offering a variety of craft: culling boats, kayaks, canoes, and a choice of sailing dinghies, Clubhouse, Gardens, and Entertainment)

Twickenham Fitness & Wellbeing Centre –
Nuffield Health (Twickenham)
Fitness, Swimming, Café

www.nuffieldhealth.com/gyms/twickenham

Virgin Active (Twickenham)
Fitness, Climbing Wall, Swimming, Lounge

www.virginactive.co.uk/clubs/twickenham

WINDLESHAM

COUNTY: SURREY

Approximate Travel Times:

Bus to TASIS	25-35 minutes
Train to London Waterloo (via Sunningdale)	51-55 minutes
Drive time to TASIS	12-15 minutes

BEST FEATURES:

Easy drive to TASIS
Small village with an active community
Easy access to the A30, M3

SUPERMARKETS:

Waitrose (Sunningdale, Bagshot)

DOCTORS' OFFICES (SURGERIES):

King's Corner	01344 623181
Magnolia House (Sunningdale)	01344 673800
Radnor House (Ascot)	01344 874011

DENTAL OFFICES:

Orchard Cottage Dental Surgery (Lightwater)	01276 474702
Sunninghill Dental	01344 291744
Sunningdale Dental Practice	01344 620526

SPORTS FACILITIES:

Windle Valley Runners <i>Welcomes members of all abilities to join in training runs and social events</i>	www.windlevalley.com
Windlesham Golf Club <i>Golf, Academy, Pro Shop, Dining</i>	www.windleshamgolf.com

NEARBY:

Berystede Hotel and Spa Health Club (Sunninghill) <i>Fitness, Swimming, Spa</i>	www.macdonaldhotels.co.uk
Foxhills (Ottershaw) TASIS England Partner <i>Golf, Tennis, Fitness, Swimming, Squash, Dining, Spa, Youth Club, Hotel</i>	www.foxhills.co.uk
Lightwater Leisure Centre (Lightwater) <i>Fitness, Tennis, Football</i>	www.lifestylefitness.co.uk
Pennyhill Park <i>Spa, Fitness, Tennis, Hotel, Dining</i>	www.exclusive.co.uk/pennyhill-park
Wentworth Club (Virginia Water) <i>Golf, Tennis, Fitness, Swimming, Dining</i>	www.wentworthclub.com

SUNNINGHILL

www.sunninghill.org.uk

COUNTY: BERKSHIRE

Approximate Travel Times:

Bus to TASIS	25-35 minutes
Train to London Waterloo	51-58 minutes (from Sunningdale)
Drive time to TASIS	15-25 minutes

BEST FEATURES:

Close to Ascot and Windsor
Small village with shops, restaurants, and pubs
Local theatre with amateur drama company The Quince Players
Walking distance to Windsor Great Park

SMALL MARKETS:

Londis
Budgens (Ascot)
Tesco Express (Ascot)

SUPERMARKETS:

Waitrose (Sunningdale, Bagshot)
Sainsbury's (Bracknell)
Tesco (Camberley)
Marks & Spencer (Camberley)

DOCTORS' OFFICES (SURGERIES):

King's Corner	01344 623181
Magnolia House (Sunningdale)	01344 673800
Radnor House (Ascot)	01344 874011

DENTAL OFFICES:

Sunninghill Dental	01344 291744
Sunningdale Dental Practice	01344 620526

SPORTS FACILITIES:

Berystede Hotel and Spa www.macdonaldhotels.co.uk
Health Club Fitness, Swimming, Spa

NEARBY:

Ascot United Football Club (Ascot) www.ascotunited.net
Players of all ages (from age five) and all levels of ability welcome

Foxhills (Ottershaw) TASIS England Partner foxhills.co.uk
Golf, Tennis, Fitness, Swimming, Squash, Dining, Spa, Hotel, Youth Club

Royal Ascot Golf Club www.royalascotgolfclub.co.uk
Golf, Academy, Pro Shop, Dining

Sunningdale Golf Club (Sunningdale) www.sunningdale-golfclub.co.uk
Golf, Pro Shop, Dining

Sunningdale Ladies Golf Club (Sunningdale) www.sunningdaleladies.co.uk
Golf, Pro Shop, Dining, Gentlemen accepted as associate members

The Fitness Space (Ascot) www.thefitnessspace.com
Fitness, Sports Therapy, Rehabilitation

Wentworth Club (Virginia Water) www.wentworthclub.com
Golf, Tennis, Fitness, Swimming, Dining

Windlesham Golf Club www.windleshamgolf.com
Golf, Academy, Pro Shop, Dining

PARENTS' INFORMATION & RESOURCE COMMITTEE (PIRC)

The following information has been compiled by PIRC parents. All information and links are subject to change. Please investigate the options yourself before making any important decisions. Read on for a listing of PIRC seminars and activities, and feel free to contact PIRC with questions, comments, or suggestions at pirc@tasisengland.org.

PIRC: HELPING TISIS FAMILIES TRANSITION

The Parents' Information and Resource Committee (PIRC) is a group of volunteer parents, from each of the School's three divisions, who provide support to TISIS England parents, faculty, and administration as we manage the emotional, social, and practical issues inherent in the transitions of expatriate life.

Each year we provide families with the following PIRC Seminars:

Welcome to TISIS for New Parents addresses the transition stages of an international move, effects of culture shock, stress responses, and suggestions to help every family member make a successful adjustment.

Refreshed and Recharged - Welcome Back: A Seminar for Returning Parents celebrates the accomplishments and explores the challenges that returning families face each school year.

Survive and Thrive Seminar provides practical information and recommendations regarding life in England and at TISIS England. Participants will receive a valuable take-home reference booklet for later use.

Holidays, Houseguests, and Home Leave Seminar offers support, information, and tips for celebrating holidays in traditional and new ways in England; hosting houseguests on extended visits from your home country; and planning home leave and gatherings with families and friends.

Winter Warmer Coffee and Travel Tip Exchange gives parents a chance to get out of the house, reconnect with parents from previous PIRC seminars, collect and share ideas for travel adventures from other TISIS England families.

Mid-year Orientation for New Families offers parents joining the TISIS England community mid-year the same resources provided in our fall Orientation, Survive and Thrive, and Holidays, Houseguests, and Home Leave seminars.

Navigating the University Application Process - Parents of all Juniors are invited to a session with the School's university counselors to learn more about the college application process. A panel of Senior parents will share their experiences regarding university visits, application strategies, and GPA calculation.

Moving to 9th Grade is an excellent opportunity for parents of 8th grade students to discuss the many aspects of the transition to Upper School, including: the uniform, homework, parental involvement, after-school activities, and socializing. Upper School representatives will address specific administrative issues, and experienced parents will be present to answer practical questions.

Moving to 6th Grade is for parents of 5th grade students who have questions about the transition to the more traditional Middle School setting, where students change classes. Representatives from the Middle School will share administrative details, and seasoned parents will share their thoughts and experiences of guiding their own children through this social and academic transition.

Moving On! Staying Here! offers helpful advice for guiding families through difficult situations such as coping with your fast-approaching next move, or helping you or your child deal with the departure of a best friend.

Parent Peer Group Coffees are grade-level discussions of parenting issues relating to your child's adjustment to England and TASIS England, as well as developmental issues. This is an opportunity to meet parents of children who are the same age as yours, share problems, and discuss successes and solutions.

PIRC Library

This library of more than 300 books and resources address a wide variety of parenting and transition issues. Parents and teachers are invited to visit the PIRC Library. The Library is run on the honor checkout system and is located in the PIRC room, on the Fitness Center hallway. Contact any member of PIRC to arrange a time to visit the PIRC Library.

PIRC Walks

Join PIRC for a walk in a nearby park. PIRC Walks are a great opportunity to get out, exercise, and meet new friends.

SUMMER OPPORTUNITIES

For families arriving during the summer, camps and summer programs can be a good way for your children to meet others their age while participating in fun activities. TASIS England offers the following:

TASIS England Summer Programs - www.tasisengland.org/Summer

- Summer Day Camp Ages 5-9 July through August
- Enrichment and academic courses Ages 10-17 3 or 6 weeks, June through August

Les Tapies Art & Architecture Program (South of France)

Ages 13-18 2 weeks, July through August

TASIS Spanish Language Summer Program (Dorado, Puerto Rico)

Ages 12-18 3 weeks, July

TASIS Marine Life & Environmental Studies Summer Program (Dorado, Puerto Rico)

Ages 12-18 3 weeks, July

BANKING

Try to open bank accounts on your initial visit as it takes time to establish accounts and credit cards, order checks, arrange to transfer money, and set up payroll deposits.

If your company provides assistance opening a bank account, it is possible to have it open before you move into your new home.

If you are opening an account on your own, you will need a passport, proof of local address (such as a utility bill in your name), and recent bank statements or other proof of solvency. It is often easier to open an account with the same bank your employer uses. A letter from your employer to the bank will facilitate opening the account.

Once you have a home and proof of local address, choose a bank with a branch in your town.

Major banks with multiple local branches are:

Barclays	www.barclays.co.uk
HSBC	www.hsbc.co.uk
Lloyds	www.lloydsbank.com
Nat West	www.natwest.com

Banks with specific expatriate support for individuals:

Barclays International Banking	01624 684444	www.internationalbanking.barclays.com
Citibank International	02075 001992	www.citibank.co.uk
Metro Bank	03450 808500	www.metrobankonline.co.uk
NatWest Expatriate Banking	01245 355628	www.natwestinternational.com

TIPS:

- When setting up the account, you can specify that the non-working spouse should also have access to account information and the ability to authorize transactions. This facilitates banking when the working spouse is out of town or unavailable at work.
- Most families keep a bank account in their home country. For quick access to money on arrival, you can withdraw money from your home account using your ATM/debit/cashpoint card from that account. Exchange rates and bank fees are often lower than at other currency exchange locations. However, there is a limit to how much you may withdraw on one day.
- Obtain U.K. or United States credit cards in your own name to establish your own credit rating. American Express does issue cards to existing account holders in good standing in pounds or euros. These cards may be tied to rewards programs like Nectar. Call American Express customer services to ask about specific programs.
- Call your United States credit card companies and inform them where you are now living and also when you travel to other countries. They may deny you credit if they think your card has been stolen.

Further information will be discussed at the PIRC Networking and Resources seminar.

TELEPHONE, MOBILE PHONE, TELEVISION, & INTERNET SERVICE

Selecting a phone, mobile, television, and Internet service provider can be a daunting activity since information and rate plans change frequently.

Upon arrival, you may wish to buy a calling card (available widely) to make international phone calls.

Before or once you are in your home, you will need to arrange to activate your phone line, broadband, and television connection. When you establish service, you can sign up for long distance packages with cheap international rates. Skype, Vonage, and other such services offer the least expensive long distance communication options.

There are a number of websites that review the best plans for phone, mobile, broadband, and television services, if purchased separately or as a package:

broadbandchoices.co.uk Compares broadband, TV, and mobile phone providers.
simplifydigital.co.uk Compares broadband, digital TV, and home phone deals.

THE MOST COMMON SERVICE PROVIDERS

BT	0800 100 400	www.bt.co.uk
Sky Talk	0800 151 2427	www.sky.com/shop
Virgin Media	0800 052 0422	www.virginmedia.com
TalkTalk	0800 049 1375	www.talktalk.co.uk
Vonage	0800 608 5590	www.vonage.com

To make a call within the U.K. (to TASH, for example) dial: 0 + 1932 565 252

To make an international call from the U.K., dial: 00 + Country Code+ number

For example:

USA 00 + 1 + area code + 7-digit number

France 00 + 33 + 9-digit number

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

999	Emergency
112	International Emergency in Europe and England
100	U.K. Operator (free unless they connect your call)
155	International Directory Assistance
118 500	BT Directory Enquiries
123	Time (BT only)

TIP

Consider opening utility accounts under the non-working spouse's name. The person listed on utility bills will be the only one who can call to enquire or make changes to services. Additionally, the non-working spouse will need his/her name on at least one utility bill to sign up at many locations such as the library or Costco warehouse store.

Further information will be discussed at the PIRC Networking and Resources seminar.

MOBILE PHONE

To get a new mobile phone, there are two things to consider: the handset (i.e., would you like a smart phone or a more basic model?) and the tariff (the payment plan).

There are two types of mobile phone tariffs:

Contract (Pay Monthly) – allows you to make one monthly payment (most easily made by direct debit) and usually includes a set amount of minutes, texts, and data. You are invoiced for any usage overages. Most Pay Monthly plans require you to use a U.K. credit card and to show proof of a U.K. address where you have lived for a period of time. Such plans can be hard to establish when you first arrive.

Pay-As-You-Go – allows you to “top up” your phone with credit in advance and then use your phone until that prepaid credit runs out. You can top up with a credit card, debit card, or voucher purchased at a store or post office. Many people will start with a pay-as-you-go tariff, when they first arrive in the U.K. This option is also good for mobiles for children and visiting guests.

Mobile Service Providers (requires a U.K. credit card)

O2	www.o2.co.uk
Orange	www.orange.co.uk
T-mobile	www.t-mobile.co.uk
Vodafone	www.vodafone.co.uk
TalkTalk	www.talktalk.co.uk

Tri- or quad-band GSM phones (which most current ones are) from the United States will work in the U.K. but you will need a new SIM card. U.K. tri-band phones do not work in Central and South America.

TELEVISION

It is not advised to bring a non-U.K. television without first ensuring that it meets the voltage and wattage requirements in the U.K. The standard electrical current in the U.K. is 220/240V. American televisions will not work without electrical transformers. Without a multi-system or universal television, foreign televisions will not pick up British stations because of the difference in English television broadcasting standards.

As of 2012, television services in the U.K. are completely digital. If you purchase a television, be sure it is digital. Curry's and John Lewis all offer a wide range of electronics and appliances. Amazon.co.uk will deliver the electronics to your door.

AWBS International Women's Club (AWBS) members can access classified ads for second-hand electronics through the AWBS classified ads at awbs.org.uk. Becoming a member

will give you online to access this section of the website. Many TESIS families sell electronics when they are moving through the TESIS TPA Facebook page.

DVD players from countries not on 220/240V (such as the U.S.) must run through a transformer. Also, DVDs are encrypted differently in the U.K. than in some other countries. The U.K. format is PAL (not NTSC) and the DVD region is Region 2. Players from your country will only be able to play DVDs from your region/format. Universal players will play your DVDs as well as those you rent or buy in the U.K. If you buy a British DVD player, choose multi-region DVD to play media from both countries.

Many families enjoy the flexibility of Apple TV and Netflix.

U.K. Television License

If there is a television in your home that receives British stations, you must purchase a yearly television license. The Post Office has the necessary form and will issue the license to you. Be aware that inspectors do travel neighborhoods and impose heavy fines if a license cannot be produced. Ignorance of the law will not be accepted as an excuse.

COMPUTERS

Most computers and monitors are dual voltage, meaning there is a switch for either 220/240V or 120V, and they can easily be used in the U.K. using only a plug adapter.

Be sure to change the switch to the proper voltage! Printers often require the use of a transformer. You will also need a U.K. surge protector.

MEDICAL CARE

Most expats sign up with NHS as well as keeping private insurance as a back-up option. The following websites may help you find a practice and doctors and dentists:

National Health Service	www.nhs.uk
Directory of Consultants and GPs	www.specialistinfo.com
British Dental Association	www.bda-findadentist.org.uk

PHARMACIES/CHEMIST

- Generally, most towns or larger villages have a pharmacy. Check your local parade of shops. Many large supermarkets also have pharmacies located within their stores.
- You may want to consider bringing over-the-counter medicines that you are familiar with from home (e.g., Tylenol, Advil, children's medicines). The following brand equivalents are often available over the counter, or even at the supermarkets, but sometimes you may need to ask the pharmacist:

Ibuprofen = Nurofen, Cuprofen, Brofen,
Acetaminophen /Paracetamol = Panadol, Disprol, Ticymol, Calpol.

DENTAL CARE

- Water is not fluoridated like in the U.S. Fluoride tablets are available at any chemist.
- You are automatically entitled to free dental care from an NHS dentist if you are under 18, expecting a baby, or pregnant when the dentist accepted you for treatment.
- Dental cleanings, fluoride treatments, fillings, crowns, etc. are not free under the NHS.
- When you make an appointment with a dentist, he or she will only examine your teeth. Further services, such as dental cleanings, will require a separate appointment.

FOR MEDICAL EMERGENCIES:

- Dial 999 for emergency assistance, in cases of major trauma, accidents, or life-threatening situations.
- Use this number in the same way 911 and other emergency numbers are used.
- Emergency departments at hospitals are referred to as A&E (Accident & Emergency). Not all hospitals have A&E departments.

Local hospitals with 24-hour A&E departments:
St. Peter's Hospital, Guildford Road, Chertsey (on the A320)
Frimley Park Hospital, on Portsmouth Road, Frimley
Wexham Park Hospital, Wexham, Slough

Further information will be discussed at the PIRC Networking and Resources seminar.

U.K. DRIVING

- You have one year from your arrival to drive legally on your non-U.K./E.U. driver's license.
- If you do not have a U.K. license after one year, insurance on your car may not be valid if you are in an accident (check with your insurance carrier).
- It is not necessary to purchase an International Driver's License.
- Insurance: Begin by asking your car dealer or broker for recommendations. It can be worth scouting around. If you carry insurance through USAA, you are still eligible for coverage in the U.K.

TIPS FOR NEW U.K. DRIVERS:

- Begin the process of obtaining a U.K. driver's license as soon as possible. You should consider taking driving lessons upon arrival in the U.K., and possibly a few more closer to your test date. Your test should be booked 8 to 12 weeks in advance. Please note that many people do not pass the test on the first go (even British drivers!)
- Purchase a SAT NAV (GPS) system and a good local map book (such as Surrey A to Z) and keep both in the car.
- Plan your route before setting out in the car; note the road NUMBERS and the TOWNS you will go through. Use your SAT NAV or write them down and tape them inside the car.
- Follow road signs – most roads are well-marked by road number and/or town.
- Allow more than enough time to get where you are going.
- On roundabouts, YOU MUST YIELD to cars approaching from your RIGHT.
- You can keep going around a roundabout, if you miss your turn the first time.
- Don't be afraid of becoming lost. Follow signs to somewhere familiar, or stop to consult your map.
- For good driving practice, just get out on the road and pick a car to follow.

Information on how to apply for a U.K. Driver's License will be discussed at the PIRC Networking and Resources seminar.

FAITH COMMUNITIES

This is a short list of places of worship in the general TASIS area that many TASIS families attend. Check your Yellow Pages (under“PLACES OF WORSHIP”) for your local faith community.

CATHOLIC

Assumption of our Lady Church (Parish of Egham)

91 Harvest Road

Englefield Green, Surrey TW20 0QR

Tel: 01784 434280

Father Hugh Flower

Offers preparation for First Communion and Confirmation.

Christ the Prince of Peace

Portmore Way

Weybridge, Surrey KT13 8JD

Tel: 01932 842643

Father Con Foley

Offers children’s education for First Communion and Confirmation. Located off Portmore Park Road, parallel to High Street in Weybridge.

Sacred Heart Church

25 Between Streets

Cobham, Surrey KT11 1AA

Tel: 01932 862518

Father Jonathan How

Offers children’s education for ages 4-13 years including First Communion and Confirmation. Located opposite Waitrose, on the corner of Between Streets and Downside Bridge Road.

St. Francis of Assisi

Coronation Road

South Ascot, Berkshire SL5 9HG

Tel: 01344 620591

Father Kevin Bidgood

Offers preparation for First Communion and Confirmation, as well as Sunday morning children’s liturgy for age groups 4-5, 6-8, and 9-11.

CHRISTIAN SCIENTIST

First Church of Christ, Scientist

70 Oatlands Drive
Weybridge, Surrey KT13 9JA
Tel: 01932 225097

First Church of Christ Scientist

11 Heathside Road
Woking, Surrey GU22 7EY
Tel: 01483 760731

Offers Sunday School for people up to age 20. Located at corner of White Rose Lane in Woking.

JEWISH

North West Surrey Synagogue (Reform/Conservative Judaism)

Horvath Close
Rosslyn Park, Oatlands Drive
Weybridge, Surrey KT13 9QZ
Tel: 01932 855400
Rabbi David J. Zucker, PhD
Services: Friday night and Saturday mornings

Maidenhead Synagogue (Reform/Conservative Judaism)

Grenfell Lodge
Ray Park Road
Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 8QX
Tel: 01628 673012
Rabbi Dr. Jonathan Romain, MBE

MUSLIM

Camberley Mosque

282 London Road
Camberley, Surrey GU15 3JP
Tel: 01276 670717

Shah Jahan Mosque

149 Oriental Road
Woking, Surrey GU22 7BA
Tel: 01483 760679

PROTESTANT

Please note: The Church of England is Anglican (Episcopalian)

Christ Church of Virginia Water (Anglican)

Christ Church Road

Virginia Water, Surrey GU25 4PT

Tel: 01344 844946

Vicar: Stephen Sizer

Offers children's Sunday School and crèche.

International Community Church (Interdenominational)

13 London Street

Chertsey, Surrey, KT16 8AP

Tel: 01932 571820

Sunday Services: 10:30 a.m. at Chertsey Hall on Heriot Road. 6 p.m. service at St. Mary's Church Hall, Stoke Road, Stoke D'Abernon, Cobham.

ICC activities include a youth program and Bible studies. Crèche available.

St. Mary's of Thorpe (Anglican)

Church Approach

Thorpe, Surrey TW20 8TE

Tel: 01932 565986

Father Damian Miles

BEFORE YOU ARRIVE IN THE U.K.

1. WHICH NORTH AMERICAN APPLIANCES WORK IN THE U.K.?

Most North American appliances can be used in England, although they will probably require a transformer. Transformers can be expensive so you should consider buying some U.K. appliances upon arrival. Electricity in the U.K. is based on different voltage and frequency. Therefore, appliances with synchronized motors such as hair dryers, and curling/flat irons should not be used because of the difference in frequency.

Generally, if a device has been designed to create heat, it will require an expensive transformer (e.g., toasters, griddles). Stereo and television electronics do not require particularly expensive transformers. Other light electronics such as power tools and electric mixers are usually not a problem either.

To determine the correct size transformer needed, check the power rating of an appliance. Power ratings on electric appliances are indicated in “watts” or kilowatts: 1 kilowatt is equal to 1,000 watts. On some appliances, amperes are used instead of watts. To find the power rating in watts, multiply the number of amperes by the voltage of the appliance. For instance, an appliance marked 3 amperes, 110 volts, has a power rating of 330 watts. Use a transformer rated at least 10% higher than the wattage of your appliance. For example, a 1,000-watt transformer powers a 750-watt appliance.

Transformers are available at tlc-direct.co.uk and at many local electrical shops. AWBS members can purchase used transformers, as well as many small British appliances, in the classified ads at awbs.org.uk.

Lamps need a plug adapter and will require U.K. light bulbs. Gas grills can be used with adapters that are available from local garden center shops, like Longacres or Wyevale.

2. WHAT SHOULD I STOCK UP ON BEFORE I LEAVE HOME?

Shops in England now carry many products familiar to other nationalities. There are some things you might want to bring that will make your transition smoother and surroundings more familiar. Home leaves, business trips back home, and visitors from home are good sources for products, but it is nice to have a supply for the start.

FOOD

Bring some of your family’s favorite non-perishable food items, spices and seasonings. Foods that taste familiar can help reassure everyone while you acquire new tastes and favorites. Local shops that carry American products are: Longacres (Bagshot); Budgens (Ascot); Costco (Reading or Farnborough).

BEDDING

If you bring your beds, you need to bring all your bedding and linens. Bed sizes and linens are different in the U.K. and do not fit most beds from other countries.

TIP: Houses, staircases, and bedrooms can be much smaller in English homes. When choosing your new home in the U.K., be sure to confirm that your queen-sized or king-sized

bed, will fit up the staircase and/or in the room. Headboards and frames may also not fit in secondary bedrooms.

MEDICINES

Medicines you use frequently may not be available in England. Bring a supply of prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines that are often needed by your family (e.g., Tylenol, Advil, children's medicines, cold and flu medicines).

CLOTHING

Clothing is more expensive in the U.K. and may fit differently from what you are accustomed to. School uniform items are available from the TESIS Student Centre (www.tasisuniforms.co.uk). Consult your Divisional Handbook and consider stocking up on basics, especially underwear, socks, pajamas, shoes, backpacks, etc.

SCOUT UNIFORMS

If your child plans on joining Girl, Boy, or Cub Scouts, try to purchase uniforms before arriving in England. Uniforms can be difficult to order from the U.K. Further information on transatlantic Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, and uniforms can be found at: www.tac-bsa.org/districts/mayflower-district/

Girl Scout uniforms vary by each girl's preferences, but the following items are typical: Daisies (Kindergarten): apron, leggings; Brownies (1st-3rd grade): vest or sash; Juniors (4th-6th grade): vest or sash.

3. WHAT SHOULD I NOT BRING?

School supplies! Because paper size is different in the U.K., papers, notebooks, and binders from other countries may not be compatible.

The Lower School distributes all necessary school supplies to students.

The Middle and Upper Schools will notify students of supplies needed. Plan to buy these materials once you arrive in the U.K.

4. HOW DO I ARRANGE TO BRING MY PETS TO THE U.K.?

Pet travel rules changed on 1 January 2012 when the U.K. brought its procedures into line with the European Union. The rules vary depending on the type of animal and the country or territory where the pet originates. Many pets will need to be micro-chipped, which must be done before your pet is vaccinated. Please consult the following website for detailed

The AWBS International Women's Club

Sponsor of the LIVING IN ENGLAND Section



KEEP
CALM
AND
CARRY ON
WITH AWBS

We are an international club of over two hundred members offering amazing opportunities to travel, do charity work, attend lectures and join over 25 activities all organized by our wonderful AWBS members. Above all it is a club where you will make friends and get support from other ladies who have been through the move to the UK. Have a look at our Website to see what we can offer you. Every month we hold a General Meeting which is often held at really remarkable places, like Shepperton Studios or the famous Wentworth Golf Club.

We look forward to welcoming you soon to our thriving club.

www.awbs.org



Settling In

Relocating to a new country can be overwhelming and stressful. AWBS members know exactly what you're going through – sometimes you laugh, sometimes you cry and sometimes you just shake your head. We certainly hope that the following pages will make the days and weeks ahead easier for you and your family.

Members' Tips For Newcomers

“If you are coming here from the States, accept that they have different ways of doing things here. Maybe some of the ways are less efficient and sometimes frustrating, but maybe some of their ways are better. Look

for the good in the place you are in.”

“Just know that the terror of learning how to drive on the opposite side of the road does subside, and that the children will be able to talk once again in the back seat while you are driving.”

“You will always find what you need, although not necessarily what you want.”

“My top tip would be to treat the entire experience as an adventure and try not to compare this to other places where you may have lived. This is a unique place with a unique culture and it's fun to explore.”

Member Referrals

www.awbs.org.uk/referrals

Member Referrals is a listing of services and individuals used and recommended by AWBS members. Constantly updated, more than 400 suggestions are on file for medical, dental, legal, cleaning, home repair, auto, leisure activities and other miscellaneous services.

If you have any questions, you can contact Rita Bantz at rita.bantz@sky.com.

Banking

Contributors: *Lisa Tanger, Karen Wells, and Delaina Westwood-Booth*

Getting Started At A Bank

The procedures and regulations of UK banks are different from those in the USA and it is important to note that establishing accounts will most likely take longer than you expect or are used to.

If you are moving from the USA, or another country, it is very helpful to have a letter from your current bank stating that you are a good customer, with a good credit rating. If you can obtain a copy of your current credit rating that would also be of help in establishing some credit in the UK.

To open an account, you will need to provide proof of your identity. Two pieces of ID may be required; please check with your bank to confirm what they accept as official proof of identity.

You will also need proof of your UK address, so you will not be able to open an account until you have found a home. Tenancy agreements, a letter from your employer in the UK confirming your UK address, a utility bill or a UK pay slip (if you have already been paid here and your address is included on the form) are all acceptable documents for this.

Create any joint accounts as joint accounts from the start; adding

another person to an existing account can take a considerable amount of time.

You will notice when traveling about, that the UK has both banks and something called building societies. Although historically building societies were known more for savings accounts and mortgage lending, today they have branched out and offer all of the services which you would normally associate with a bank.

Current (Checking) Accounts

In the UK, checking accounts are referred to as Current Accounts. Once you open an account, you will receive a checkbook and an ATM/debit card (with a chip and pin). Writing a sterling check differs slightly from writing a US dollar check. When writing a check in England, there are two things to remember.

First, the date is written with the day, then the month and finally the year, so that May 8, 2011 becomes 08/05/11. Secondly, when writing the amount, you must write “pounds” and “pence” or “p”. So, £12.95 is written “Twelve pounds and 95p” or “Twelve pounds and 95 pence”.

There are two lines on your check on

which to write this.

Cancelled checks are only returned if requested, and you may have to pay a fee. Check with your potential bank if you must have them returned.

Most checks are pre-printed with crossed lines and “Account Payee” on them. This indicates that the checks must be deposited in the payee’s

account and cannot be exchanged at the bank branch for cash.

If you need to deposit a check into your account, you will need a deposit slip, which is called a paying-in slip. You will find a supply of these at the back of each checkbook. The time it takes to clear a check varies, but, in general, allow for five working days.



Automatic Payments

A Standing Order is written approval for regular debits from your account for a defined amount. Your rental payment or car payment, where the amount doesn't vary from month to month, can be set up as a Standing Order.

ATMs

Your bank will not charge you to use their own ATMs. Better yet, it is common for banks to work in cooperation with each other, so you can use other banks' machines without charge as well. They should tell you at

the start of your transaction if they do or do not charge a handling fee.

Foreign Exchange

Banks stock limited amounts of the most popular foreign currencies for immediate exchange. To avoid disappointment before a big trip, it is wise to place an order for the required amount a few days in advance. If you deposit a foreign currency check or wire money in another currency into your UK bank account, you will have to pay a commission fee, typically a percentage of the total amount.



Bed and Bath

Contributors: Carlene Kemmerer, Sandhya Koppikar, and Lisa Pizzi

Mattresses and Bed Linens

Some guide books for expatriates say that if you are bringing your American mattress with you, you should also bring a good supply of bed linens, too. This is only partially true. If you have standard length twins, doubles, or

queen beds, you should have no problem using sheets sold in the UK.

Note, UK duvet covers will not fit American duvets. UK duvets are narrower and shorter.

Mattress Size (width × length)

(Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bed_size)

	US & Canada	Australia	Ireland & UK	Continental Europe	Japan	Thailand	Singapore
Single, Twin, or Bunk	39 in × 75 in 99 cm × 191 cm	92 cm × 188 cm 36 in × 74 in	90 cm × 190 cm 35 in × 75 in	90 cm × 200 cm 35 in × 79 in	97 cm × 195 cm 38 in × 77 in	107 cm × 198 cm 42 in × 78 in	91 cm × 191 cm 36 in × 75 in
Double or Full	54 in × 75 in 137 cm × 191 cm	138 cm × 188 cm 54 in × 74 in	135 cm × 190 cm 53 in × 75 in	140 cm × 200 cm 55 in × 79 in	140 cm × 195 cm 55 in × 77 in	122 cm × 198 cm 48 in × 78 in	
Queen	60 in × 80 in 152 cm × 203 cm	153 cm × 203 cm 60 in × 80 in		160 cm × 200 cm 63 in × 79 in	154 cm × 195 cm 61 in × 77 in	152 cm × 198 cm 60 in × 78 in	152 cm × 191 cm 60 in × 75 in
King	76 in × 80 in 193 cm × 203 cm or 78 in 198 cm square	183 cm × 203 cm 72 in × 80 in	150 cm × 200 cm 59 in × 79 in	180 cm × 200 cm 71 in × 79 in	170 cm × 195 cm 67 in × 77 in	183 cm × 198 cm 72 in × 78 in	183 cm × 191 cm 72 in × 75 in
Grand king, Super king, Athletic King or Texas king	80 in × 98 in 203 cm × 249 cm	203 cm × 203 cm 80 in × 80 in	180 cm × 200 cm 71 in × 79 in		194 cm × 205 cm 76 in × 81 in		

Bathroom Scales

The British weigh themselves in stones and pounds or in kilos. A stone is equal to 14 pounds. A kilogram is equal to about 2.2 pounds. A person weighing 10.5 stone would convert to about 147 pounds.

Height is often measured in meters and centimeters. One meter is about 3.3 feet. One centimeter is about 0.4 inches. A six foot tall person would be about 1.83 meters tall.

Children

Contributors: Tracey Barker, Carlene Kemmerer, Allison Poltorak and Lisa Tanger



Pregnancy

Whether you arrived in the UK expecting a little one, or you get pregnant while you are here, you may find yourself a bit overwhelmed at the prospect of being pregnant in a foreign country.

Let the internet become your best friend, as there are so many great resources online. Here are a few sites to get you started:

Baby Center:	www.babycentre.co.uk
The Bump:	www.thebump.com
National Childbirth Trust:	www.nct.org.uk
What to Expect:	www.whattoexpect.com

Confirming Your Pregnancy

You can buy a home pregnancy test to use at home from a supermarket or pharmacy.

You can also ask for a pregnancy test at:

- your GP surgery
- contraception clinics
- sexual health clinics, which are also called genitourinary medicine (GUM) clinics
- a pharmacy (there may be a charge)
- most NHS walk-in centres (England only)

Except for some pharmacies and in supermarkets, these pregnancy tests are usually free. It will be confidential, even if you're under 16.



Maternity Clothes

Mamas and Papas is a baby-furnishings specialty store that carries maternity and baby clothes, as well as strollers (“buggies”), car seats and furniture. Both H&M and Next carry maternity clothes, but not in every store. Call ahead to a specific store to avoid a wasted trip.

Registration of Births

United Kingdom Registration

All UK births must be registered. The hospital where the birth occurs will notify the local Registrar of Births of the details. The parents must then register the child’s birth within 42 days. Either a short or a long form is available. You will need the long form to register the birth at the Embassy for your home country, as applicable.

United States Registration

Babies born to US citizens must be registered at the United States Embassy within five years of their birth date if you desire to obtain US citizenship for them.

Parents should refer to the US Embassy London’s website (<http://london.usembassy.gov>) for the documentation necessary to register the child as a US citizen. You can book an appointment on the Embassy website as well.

Babysitter List

www.awbs.org.uk/document/babysitting-list

Note: Babysitter List is currently out of date and in the process of being updated.

The Babysitter List is a listing of area babysitters is provided on our website as a service to registered AWBS members.

Sitters are listed by their preferred area, including the individual sitter’s skills and qualifications. Rate information is included. It is the responsibility of the person using the babysitter to screen and check references of the sitter.

Helping Children Meet the Challenges of Change

Moving abroad can be exciting and enriching for every member of your family. After the initial exhilaration, however, many people experience a dip in enthusiasm as they face the realities of adjustment.

For families, helping children to cope with the transition is often a priority. Changing schools under any circumstances entails challenges, and parents are often anxious to see that their children are settled and forming new friendships.

Navigating the sea of change can be especially daunting for expatriate families. There are several reliable strategies to mitigate the challenge and help your children get off to a good start in the midst of change.

Really listen

Your child will more readily confide in you if you try not to react until you have really heard what they are saying. Although it is tempting to try to provide quick fixes, or list all the “good things” you are experiencing, this sometimes sends the message that you just don’t understand.

Acknowledge their emotions

All children, but particularly adolescents, want to be heard and have their feelings acknowledged. Accept the strong emotions that accompany the difficulty of leaving friends, school, teams, and activities.

Empathize and find ways to discuss that you share their concern and miss your friends too, and that you understand that change can be hard.

Don’t get stuck in the past

While technology provides many ways to stay in contact with the people you miss, it is essential to look forward as well as back.

If your child is young and natural friendships are not developing at school, ask the class teacher to recommend a child who might be a good fit with yours. While you can’t make “play dates” for adolescents, you can research new opportunities for them to pursue a sport or activity they enjoy, so that they can meet other teens with similar interests.

Look for support

If you feel you need it, schools often have counselors who can assist your family. Don’t be afraid to take the initiative—you are your child’s best advocate. Asking for support does not mean that you cannot deal with the situation yourself. It is the recognition that you don’t have to.

Children will often follow their parents’ example. If you are patient, maintain a sense of humor, and make discovering your new home an adventure, they too are more likely to become open and enthusiastic about the new life that awaits them.

Contributed by Mary Mitchell, Associate Director of Marketing and Communications at TASIS The American School in England



Family Fun

England offers vast opportunities for family fun. In Berkshire and Surrey, there is an incredible variety of child-friendly activities and learning opportunities. Google any of the below for more information.

Amusement Parks

There are three large amusement parks in our area: Chessington World of Adventures, Legoland and Thorpe Park. Purchase a Merlin Pass which gives you access to these and other attractions for a whole year.

Windsor Great Park

With more than 5,000 acres of parkland, Windsor Great Park has limitless opportunities for exploration. Your family can enjoy the deer park, playground, polo ground, many miles of biking and walking trails, lakes, gardens and a cafe-style restaurant at Savill Garden.

Leisure Centers

Leisure Centres offer health and fitness facilities, children's play areas (sometimes called "soft-play"), after-school enrichment classes, and often have squash courts and a pool. There are large centers in Woking, Windsor and Bracknell, and smaller ones in Egham and Sunningdale (Charters).

Guildford Spectrum: Indoor water park, olympic-sized ice skating rink, bowling alley, 25 meter swimming pool, fitness center and spa. Several kid-friendly dining options as well.

Bracknell Forest: The Look-Out Science Discovery Center, Coral Reef indoor water park, and Bracknell Ski Slope (really!) and ice skating rink.

Bowling Alleys: Bowlplex Camberley, Hollywood Bowl Bracknell, Big Apple Woking and Guildford Spectrum

Movie Theatres: Vue Staines, Vue Camberley, Odeon Esher, Odeon Bracknell, Ambassador Cinemas Woking

Driving

Contributors: Sandhya Koppikar (updates)

UK Drivers License

The United Kingdom is looking at changing driving laws for teenagers. No laws have yet been passed, but the proposal is to make 17 year olds provisional drivers (learners) drive for 12 months before they can take the test for their full driver's license. At present, however, as long as you are 17 years of age, have UK car insurance, and your vehicle is registered in the UK, you may drive a vehicle on British roads.

Expats and UK residents fall under the same driving regulations.

In some countries, the driving age is lower than it is in the UK; for example, in the US, a person can get a learner's permit at 15 and start driving at 16. If a teenager moves into the UK they will not be allowed to drive until they reach the appropriate age under UK law.

For any adult expat, the typical rule is:

1. If you currently hold a valid driver's license that is at least 12 months old and is not going to expire during your stay in the UK, then you may drive on UK roads. You can drive using the license

from your home country for up to 12 months before you are required to change to a UK driver's license.

2. You may also want to apply for an international driver's license rather than keeping the driver's license from your specific country. US expats can use the US license for up to 12 months before needing to take a local driving test.

Exchanging your Driver's License for a UK Version:

Depending on where you move from, you may or may not be subject to a driving test. This is usually dependent on whether your driver's license is an international or national one. If you have taken the international driver's test and obtained a license, you can generally exchange this license for the UK version without taking a test.

Exchange of a driver's license it is based on your country's driving situation. US expats drive on the right side of the road rather than the left, which is usually why a driving test is required. If your license was obtained in a country that also drives on the left, you will generally not be required to take a driving test,



though there may be some exceptions. The best way to find out whether you need to take a test is to contact the Driving Standards Agency (DSA).

Obtaining or Renewing a License

The DSA offers information for changes to driving standards. You can also book your driving test, both practical and written, through this agency. The DVLA issues the license once your test is completed.

Rules have changed slightly with regard to expats and taking the driving test in order to obtain a UK license. The test is no longer provided in a voiceover and interpretation in the person's language of origin, but instead now requires you to speak enough English to be able to pass.

You do not have to visit the DVLA to renew your personal license as long as it has not expired. There is an online form that can be filled in instead. This form requires you to complete all questions and ensure that all relevant documentation has been included. You will receive notice through the postal system when you are in need of renewing your license.

Depending on your age and the type of license you have, there may be further steps to take before you can drive in the UK. Anyone who is over 45 years of age, or driving a lorry or bus, may be subject to different regulations. When a person

turns 70 a doctor's permission is required before a renewal is provided.

Penalty Point System:

There is a penalty point system for driving in the UK. The system will deduct points from your license if you violate a regulation. Violations include a number of situations including speeding, running lights/stop signs, vehicle safety issues, and accidents.

Resources:

DSA

www.gov.uk

DVLA (covers Wales, England, and Scotland)

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/driver-and-vehicle-licensing-agency

DVA

Northern Ireland uses the DVA for licensing drivers.

www.dvani.gov.uk

Buying a Car

You will recognize most of the makes, but the models may be a bit different.

For the best advice on fair prices, it is recommended that you buy a copy of *What Car?*, a monthly magazine available at many newsagents. Each month, they give the "blue book" values for new and used cars.

Also, be aware that you must show proof of car insurance before a dealer will hand the car over to you.

Auto Insurance

Obtaining reasonably priced car insurance as a foreign national can be a difficult experience. Not all insurance companies will take you on as a customer, and, even if they do, they may charge you a premium for not being a British national.

The easiest way to insure your automobile in England would be to check with your insurance company back home to see if they underwrite policies in the UK. USAA (www.usaa.com) and GEICO (www.geico.com) are two companies that have in the past.

AWBS members have had success in obtaining insurance upon arrival through organizations/companies such as the Automobile Association (www.theaa.com), AVIVA (www.aviva.co.uk), Direct Line (www.directline.com) and Tesco (www.tesco.com). You will need to provide details about your American state driving license.

UK insurance companies often offer “no claims bonuses.” If you have not made a claim on your insurance policy back home in the past five years (or more), have your insurance company

back home write a letter that states you have a clean record [for a specific amount of time]. Your new insurance company should offer you a significant discount.

You should be aware that car insurance in the UK is more limited than it is in the US. It links a specific driver to a specific car. You cannot buy car insurance until you have purchased a car, as you will be asked to provide the car make, model and registration number to the insurance company.

Once you have insurance, it will then cover you and any nominated drivers (such as a spouse or a licensed child aged 17 or over). You must inform your insurer of any nominated drivers when you take out the policy. These individuals will then be listed on your Certificate of Insurance. Only those drivers will be covered by your insurance; you can't lend your car to anyone else. If you do, and they have an accident, your insurance company will not pay.

In many cases, your insurance policy will not cover you if you rent a car either in the UK or in any other country (such as the USA), and it will not cover you driving a friend's car in the UK, either. If you take your own car to the continent, you may need to take out an additional short-term policy for the period while you are away.

Breakdown Assistance

There are two UK equivalents to what Americans know as AAA:

The Automobile Association
www.theaa.com

Royal Automobile Club
www.rac.co.uk

Car Tax

A road tax is levied on automobiles each year. Since 1 October 2014, there is no longer a requirement to display a tax disc, as the records are now stored in a centralised database and accessible using the vehicle registration plate details.

If you buy a new car from a dealer, they will usually make sure that it is paid for the first year. If you buy a used car, you can negotiate to have them pay at least 6 months of the tax. Otherwise, application forms are available from the post office, and renewal forms will be sent by mail approximately 2-4 weeks before the old tax disc expires.

To renew your car tax online, just follow the instructions on the renewal letter you received in the mail. Or, take your tax form, current proof of insurance and your payment for either six or 12 months to the post office. Records are updated immediately

after payment is received. Your MOT must be current or you can not renew.

MOT

Once your car is three years old, it must pass a road worthiness test. This examination certificate will be required when you go to renew your tax disc. Most garages will carry out the inspection for you.

Maps

It will be rare for you to meet an AWBS member who does not own a satellite navigation system (“Sat-Nav”). Ask around for a recommendation. Garmin and TomTom are two commonly used brands.

If you don’t have a satellite navigation system – and even if you do – you should buy an A-Z Guide (pronounced “aye to zed”). Map apps on iPads and smartphones are generally quite reliable. Google Maps, Bing and Mapquest are just a few of the many online map options.

Parking

Carry a coin purse at all times! And make sure to have a combination of coins in your possession, as many machines do not give change. You will have to pay for parking almost everywhere you go (or so it seems), and many parking lots are not

attended. Some may accept bank cards and credit cards.

In a “Pay and Display” lot, you must buy a ticket from a machine and then stick the ticket on the inside of your car window before leaving your car.

Other car parks operate on a “Pay as You Leave” system. You receive a ticket upon entering, and when you are done shopping, you make payment at a machine before you get back in your car. This (paid) ticket is then inserted into a machine upon your exit from the parking lot.

Occasionally, credit cards will be accepted at the exit barrier, but don’t count on it unless you are familiar with the lot.

General Driving Tips

Don’t be intimidated by driving on the “wrong” side of the road. With a

little practice it will become second nature. You may even learn to love roundabouts.

1. Driving on the left can be a bit daunting at first. Just remember to keep the steering wheel (or your body in the car) next to the center line at all times. Most people trip up when making a right-hand turn.
2. Streets are not as wide as in the United States, there are no shoulders, and there are a lot more parked cars on both sides. And cars will be parked facing in both directions on the same side of the street.
3. You have the right of way if your side of the road is clear, but be prepared for drivers coming in



the opposite direction to cross the center line as they avoid parked cars and cyclists in their lane. Keep as near to the left-hand side as you safely can.

4. Street signs are usually difficult to spot. They are can be low to the ground on walls or signs, or high up on walls of buildings. They may be obstructed by trees or bushes
5. Zebra Crossings are marked by black-and-white striped crosswalks and black-and-white striped posts with lights on top. Pedestrians (and horses) always have the right of way. Other pedestrian crossings are regulated by traffic lights that are not always at an obvious intersection.
6. Look out for the speed cameras. These gray and/or yellow boxes are mounted on high posts and placed on the sides of roads throughout the country. If you get caught speeding, you will receive a fine and have three or more points added to your driving license. You will not be stopped; your ticket will just come in the mail.
7. Do not exceed the speed limit in residential areas (usually 30 mph), even by a few miles per hour, or you may be caught on camera and ticketed. It is very easy to accumulate points, and you will lose your license once you have 12. Watch for fixed and mobile speed cameras.
8. You can never turn left on a red light.
9. While driving, you will see large white square stickers on the backs of some cars. There are two types. The first and most common has a red "L" which stands for Learner Driver. The second sticker has a green "P" which denotes that this driver has just passed their driving test. Please be patient with these drivers.
10. Get into the habit of looking to your right. As an American driver/pedestrian, you are accustomed to looking left.
11. Be prepared to stop and yield to cars to your right as you approach a roundabout. You are allowed to simply slow down and keep going if there is no oncoming traffic.
12. Learn to love those roundabouts!

London Congestion Charge

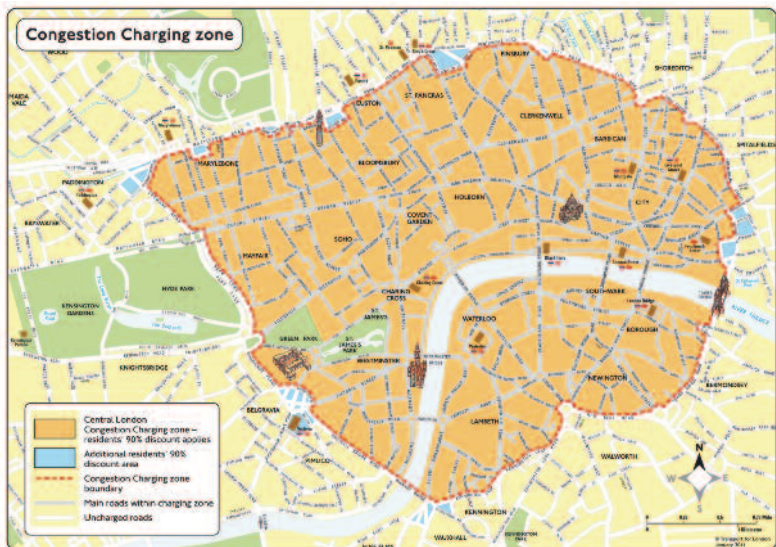
The London Congestion Charge scheme requires drivers to pay a fee per day driving in central London during the scheme's hours of operation. You will be charged if you enter the zone between 07:00 – 18:00, Monday through Friday, excluding public holidays.

You can pay the congestion charge either in advance or on the day of travel; before, during or after your journey. The charge is £11.50 if you pay in advance or on the day of travel. If you pay on the first day after travel, you pay £14.

After that, you face a penalty of £130. You have 28 days from the date of service to pay or challenge the penalty charge (50% discount if paid within 14 days). The Congestion Charge cameras are vigilant and the system is efficient.

You can register your details with your mobile phone number and pay by text message, on the internet or at designated shops.

If you sign up for Congestion Charging Auto Pay, the charge is £10.50. An annual £10 registration charge per vehicle applies to sign up for Auto Pay.



For more information on where the congestion charge operates and on how to pay, visit www.tfl.gov.uk/roadusers/congestioncharging.

Getting Out

Contributors: Julie Charrison, Carlene Kemmerer and Lisa Tanger



Reservations

Always make reservations (“book a table”), even if it is just to go to the local restaurant on a weekday night. And plan ahead. If you want to have a weekend away, plan on organizing it at least a month or two in advance. Vacation bookings within Great Britain are best made many months in advance.

Restaurants

Every autumn, look out for the new edition of Time Out London Eating Out Guide at www.timeout.com/london. Alternatively, you can find great

restaurants by visiting Open Table at www.opentable.com.

Pubs

In England, you will never be far from a pub. However there are some significant distinctions to look for. Some are family-friendly, local restaurants with outdoor seating, children’s menus, and sometimes even a little play area. Gastropubs serve higher-quality fare, are more expensive, and may not be appropriate for kids. And then some are really bars that serve food, and younger children may not even be allowed in.

Tipping

While there are varying opinions on this, you may find that tipping in the UK falls somewhere between tipping in the United States and tipping in continental Europe.

In a restaurant, review your bill closely to determine if a gratuity has been included. It often will be included, and would be listed as “Service Charge.” This charge may or may not be given directly to your server.

At some establishments, no service charge will be included, and if you add a gratuity at the end, it still will not be given to your server. Indeed, in some restaurants, waitstaff can be fired for accepting cash tips from customers. It is best to ask your server what the policy is before you make an attempt to leave them money.

Typical Tipping Rates

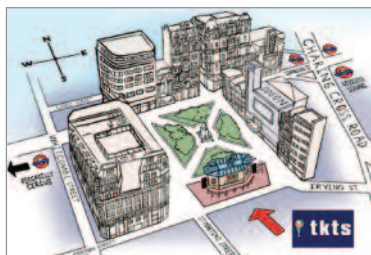
Hair Salon:	10%
Hotel Staff:	Same as in the US
Restaurants:	10%
Taxi:	10%



Traditionally, on Boxing Day (the day after Christmas) the British tip some of the people who provide them with home services during the year, such as the garbagemen, house cleaner, newspaper deliverer, milkman and postal carrier, if you have a regular one. It is not obligatory, but, obviously, a gracious gesture; a token amount, such as £10, is just fine. It is particularly helpful to the recipient if you give it just prior to Christmas.

London Theaters

If you are looking for discounted or half price theater tickets, the TKTS ticket booths (www.tkts.co.uk) are the best way to snap up theatre tickets on the day of the performance or up to a



week in advance for many of the West End's top shows.

TKTS opens at 10:00, Monday to Saturday, so many people try and get in the queue early. However, they receive new tickets throughout the day, so you will always have a wide choice of shows right up until they close at 19:00 (when there will be less of a line).

Visiting Historic Sites

If you love history and fancy poking around Georgian mansions filled with priceless antiques and paintings, consider joining the National Trust (www.nationaltrust.org.uk). You pay an annual fee to this charitable organization, and you receive unlimited free entry to all of their sites.

English Heritage (www.english-heritage.org.uk) is a similar organization, but focused more on ancient sites and castle ruins.

Windsor and Maidenhead Advantage Card

www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/advantage_index.htm

The Advantage Card is available free of charge to residents of the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead. It entitles the holder to a range of discounts at leisure centres, libraries, retailers, services and a range of visitor attractions. Cards are issued at the Charter Leisure Centre in Sunningdale. You will need to bring proof of identity and address (such as your Council Tax bill, phone bill or driving license). Children require official letters which show the child's name and address (such as vaccination reminders).

Getting About



Rail Travel

Train services into London and throughout the UK are convenient from this area.

Your local train station can provide you with a copy of the timetable or you can contact National Rail at www.nationalrail.co.uk. The train schedules change more than once a year, and rail maintenance is often conducted, so it is best to double check the website before your trip.

Fares are dependent on the class of travel and the time of the day. There is 1st and 2nd class travel. Generally, there are no discounts for first-class travel, but substantial savings can be made on 2nd class travel. If you are able to travel outside the hours of commuter rush, you can save a lot of money. The train ticket sales office should ask you what your travel plans

are in order to help you find the cheapest ticket.

You ask for a “single” if you want a one-way ticket, and a “return” if you would like a round-trip ticket. If you are staying overnight in the city, you will have to buy a single ticket, and then another single the day of your return.

If you are traveling into London, the person at the ticket counter may ask you if you want a Travelcard, which means you want your train ticket to also include bus and tube travel while in the city. This allows you unlimited travel for the whole day, after 9:30 a.m. weekdays and anytime over weekends.

If the ticket window is closed, don't panic. Tickets may also be bought at machines at most stations.

You can also save money when

traveling with your family by purchasing an annual Family Railcard. With this card, adults save 1/3 off most train fares and children under 16 travel for less than half price.

To use your Family Railcard (www.family-railcard.co.uk), your group must contain at least one named cardholder and at least one child aged between 5 - 15 years. If there is only one named cardholder, the maximum size of the group is the named cardholder, two other adults and four children. If there are two named cardholders, the maximum size of the group is the two named cardholders, two other adults and four children. Children under five travel free and each adult may take up to two 'under fives' with them.

London Underground

The London Underground, or the Tube, is served by 12 lines. Each line



is color-coded, so you can easily follow them on maps and signs throughout the system.

Trains and platforms are described as Eastbound, Westbound, Northbound or Southbound, depending on the direction of the line. The front of the train and the platform indicator will show the ultimate destination of the train – which is usually, but not always, the last stop on the line.

You can pay in several different ways. If you are traveling into London by rail, you can get a Travelcard with your train ticket. An “Oyster Card” (<https://oyster.tfl.gov.uk/oyster/entry.do>) is another option for reducing your bus and underground fares in London.

Alternatively, once in London, you can purchase a one-day Travelcard from any Tube ticket counter. Finally, you can purchase individual tickets from the self-service machines or from the ticket booths.

There is escalator etiquette in the Underground. You should always stand single file on the right-hand side of the escalator. This will allow those in more of a hurry to walk past you up the left-hand side of the escalator.

Healthcare

The National Health Service

Many British people are very proud of the country's fully-funded medical system, known as the National Health Service (NHS). As a resident of the UK, you are entitled to use its services, which are provided to you at little or no cost.

NHS services include doctor care, hospital care, family planning, childcare clinics for children under five years of age, immunization, children's dentistry and eye care and subsidized prescriptions.

Terms

Before you get started, you should be familiar with a few basic terms that are different here than they are back home.

- General practitioners (GP) use the title "Dr."
- Surgeons, medical specialists (gynecologists, ophthalmologists, etc.) and dentists use the title "Mr.", "Mrs." or "Miss"
- Medical specialists are referred to as "consultants"
- Your local GP's office is referred to as a "surgery"
- An operating room is referred to as a "theatre"

**For Emergency Services
(police/fire/ambulance) dial 999**

Registering With A Doctor

The first thing you should do is register with a GP in your area. You may find this to be a difficult experience, but be persistent. You do NOT have to be in the UK for six months or a year before you are eligible to register with a doctor.

Visit www.nhs.uk and type in your post code to view medical practices, listed by distance from your home. Start with the closest and call until you find a practice with an opening. If you are unable to find a practice, contact your local Primary Care Trust (PCT) for assistance. For Berkshire East call 01753 860 441. For Surrey, call 01372 201 700.

Some AWBS members have been told by certain doctors that they could register with them, but would need to 'pay privately' for the first six months. If you are told this, leave the clinic and go somewhere else! You are free to register with any doctor, provided that you live in their [geographic] "catchment" area and the practice's quota of patients isn't already full. After filling out a form for yourself and each of your family members at

your local doctor's office, you will receive an NHS number. (The NHS number is not the same as the NI – or National Insurance number.)

To book an appointment, call the surgery, just as you would the doctor's office back home. In multi-practice surgeries, if the doctor you are registered with is booked up, you will be given an appointment with another doctor in the practice. The normal wait time is 24 to 48 hours. Your appointment will last approximately 10 minutes, so be prepared to concisely describe what the problem is and what remedy you may be seeking.

Surgeries always reserve a certain number of time slots for emergency appointments. If you wish to see a doctor the same day, call as soon as the surgery opens in the morning. This is usually 08:30.

Your local GP will always be your first port of call. Pediatricians, gynecologists and other consultants are only called in special circumstances, and you will need to obtain a referral from your GP before going to see one of them. This is where things may really slow down. You should receive instructions on how to book an appointment with a specialist, and it



may require the use of an online booking system (as your only option). Depending on the type of care you need, it would not be unusual to wait 4-6 weeks to see a specialist.

House Calls and Weekend Doctors

There are rare times when a member of your household may become ill outside of surgery hours. During weeknights and weekends, practices have on-call doctors (sometimes these are contracted-out) who are available to speak with you by phone. If they think it necessary, they may call on you at home. Beware this can be a charged visit.

If your regular practice is unavailable and offers no access to an on-call doctor, you may also use the Out-of-Hours GP service. For East Berkshire, call 01189 365 390; West Berkshire, call 01189 787 811; and, for Surrey, call NHS Direct at 0845 4647.

Prescriptions

The NHS in England charges the same fee for every prescription, regardless of what drug it is. Children and pregnant women get their prescriptions at no charge.



Eye Examinations

Eye examinations are free to children under age 16, or under 19 if still in full-time education. Under 16s are given a voucher toward the purchase price of a pair of eyeglasses. Most optical shops offer a limited number of styles covered in full by the voucher. If the pair your child selects is more expensive than the voucher, it can be applied toward the price of that pair.

Dental

As an NHS dental patient, you are expected to pay 75% of the cost of the work done.

Hospitals with Accident and Emergency (A&E) Units

It is important that you find the hospital nearest you and locate it on a map. All of these hospitals operate 24-hour A&E departments, except for those with an ** where only minor injuries are treated and hours may be restricted.

Community hospitals provide a range of planned treatment, care and rehabilitation. Many areas now operate community NHS drop-in centers for out-of-surgery hours. Your local GP will give you details.

Berkshire:

Heatherwood Hospital**:

London Road, Ascot SL5 8AA
01344 623 333

Runs a minor injuries unit; open from 08:00 -22:00

The Royal Berkshire Hospital:

London Road, Reading RG1 5AN
01183 225 111

Wexham Park Hospital:

Wexham Street, Slough SL2 4HL
01753 633 000

Surrey:

Frimley Park Hospital:

Portsmouth Road, Frimley, Camberley GU16 7UJ
01276 604 604

St. Peter's Hospital:

Guildford Road, Chertsey KT16 0PZ
01932 872 000

Continued...

Surrey: *(continued)***Kingston Hospital:**

Galsworthy Road, Kingston-upon-Thames KT2 7QB
0208 546 7711

Royal Surrey County Hospital:

Egerton Road, Guildford GU2 7XX
01483 571 122

Walton Community Hospital:**

Rodney Road, Walton-upon-Thames KT12 3LD
01932 220 060

Runs a Minor Injuries Unit for the treatment of minor injuries

Weybridge Community Hospital and Primary Care Centre:**

Church Street, Weybridge KT13 8DY
01932 852 931

Runs a Walk-In Centre for treatment of minor injuries and illnesses

Woking Community Hospital:**

Heathside Road, Woking GU22 7XL
01483 715 911

Runs a Walk-In Centre for treatment of minor injuries and illnesses

Nuffield Health Woking Hospital:

Shore's Road, Woking, Surrey GU21 4BY
01483 227 800

Private Health Insurance

Private health insurance may come as an employee benefit, or can be purchased individually.

Many NHS doctors have dual practices, meaning they also see patients on a private basis. If you have private insurance, you will most likely see your doctor at a private medical facility. Or, in some cases, you will see your doctor in what are designated as “private rooms” within an NHS facility.

AWBS members who have used both the NHS and private medical services report the following advantages about the private experience:

- shorter waiting times to see a doctor;
- more flexible opportunities to schedule appointments;
- increased telephone responsiveness from doctors; and,
- superior facility infrastructure and maintenance.

If you have private medical insurance, ALWAYS identify yourself as a private patient to those who are caring for you. It may feel awkward and inappropriate to have to point that out at times, but there is a long list of ways this information could help you. For example, when arriving at an emergency facility, it may affect what rooms you are placed in. Or, when you are attempting to contact a specialist after-hours, it may affect whether or not the switchboard even puts you through to your doctor.

High Street

English towns have their own distinctive High Streets. In contrast to the impersonal nature of many larger towns and cities in the US, you will find things to be much more localized here. You will most likely get to know the people at your grocery store, butcher shop, dry cleaner and pub.

Libraries

The local library can provide many services and is a source of community information. When you first arrive, this is a great place to access the internet. Most libraries have computer terminals which you can use for a small charge.

To receive a library card, you need to provide proof of residence.

Store Hours

As you can imagine, store hours vary. But, generally speaking, you will find them more limited than in the US.

Do not make the mistake of planning to go grocery shopping late at night!

Most High Street stores are open from 09:00 to 17:30, Monday through Saturday, with a few shops open 10:30 to 16:30 on Sunday. Do note, however, that many villages, smaller shops and postal sub-stations continue to observe half-day closing at 13:00,

usually on a Wednesday and sometimes on a Saturday. Check in advance to avoid disappointment.

Grocery stores remain open longer as the week progresses, with the longest opening hours on Friday and Saturday. However, a few large stores are open 24 hours a day, closing only at midnight on Saturday and re-opening on Sunday morning.

Shopping Malls and Outlet Malls

You will find there are shopping malls here, but they will be much smaller in comparison to what you are used to in the US. Woking, Camberley, and Guildford all have small indoor centers. The Bentall Centre in Kingston-upon-Thames and the Oracle Centre in Reading are medium-sized and have a good selection of stores.

For a real American-style, upscale mall, head to Westfield in London. Easily accessible by train or car, there's even valet parking and you can get your car washed! The brand-new Westfield Stratford City is Europe's largest urban shopping mall, and is located adjacent to the Olympic Village. It's a little harder to get to on the east side of London, but still worth



the trip, if just for the food court alone.

The three closest outlet malls are in Bicester, Oxfordshire; Swindon, Wiltshire; and Portsmouth, Hampshire.

Bicester Village Outlet Mall:

www.bicestervillage.com

Great Western Designer Outlet Village:

www.swindondesigneroutlet.com

Gunwharf Quays:

www.gunwharf-quays.com

Returns

Consumer rights and protections are more limited here than the US. ALWAYS keep your receipts and tags intact if you think you might make a return. Stores will generally only give you your money back with an accompanying receipt.

You will need to make your returns in a more timely fashion here than you would back home. You will find many store policies allow only 14 days for a return, with the average “generous” return policy allowing 28.

Clothing Sizes

The following tables should be used as approximate guides. Actual sizes may vary according to the manufacturer and the country of origin.

Men's Suits

US/UK	EU
34	44
36	46
38	48
40	50
42	52

Men's Shirts

US/UK	EU
15	38
15 ½	39
16	40
16 ½	41
17	42

Men's American and British sizes are the same, although some men may find British clothing is cut somewhat narrower in the shoulders.

Women's Sizes

US	UK	EU
4	6/8	36/38
6	8/10	38/40
8	10/12	40/42
10	12/14	42/44
12	14/16	44/46
14	16/18	46/48
16	18/20	50/52

Children's Sizes

US	UK	EU
3	3/4	120cm
4	4/5	125cm
5	5/6	130cm
6	6/7	135cm
7	7/8	140cm
8	8/9	145cm
9	9/10	150cm
10	11	155cm
12	12	160cm
14	13	165cm

In baby clothes, US sizes are generously cut, British sizes are fairly accurately cut, and Continental sizes are small.

Men's Shoes

US	UK	EU
8	7 ½	42 ½
8 ½	8	43
9	8 ½	43 ½
9 ½	9	44
10	9 ½	44 ½
10 ½	10	45
11	10 ½	45 ½

Women's Shoes

US	UK	EU
5	2 ½	35
5 ½	3	35.5
6	3 ½	36
6 ½	4	37
7	4 ½	37.5
7 ½	5	38
8	5 ½	38.5
8 ½	6	39
9	6 ½	40
9 ½	7	41
10	7 ½	42
10 ½	8	43

Holidays (and time keeping)

Bank and Public Holidays	
Christmas Day (Substitute Day)	December 27, 2016
Boxing Day 2016	December 26, 2016
New Year's Day (Substitute Day)	January 2, 2017
Good Friday	April 14, 2017
Easter Monday	April 17, 2017
Early May Bank Holiday	May 1, 2017
Spring Bank Holiday	May 29, 2017
Summer Bank Holiday	August 28, 2017
Christmas Day 2017	December 25, 2017
Boxing Day 2017	December 26, 2017

If a bank holiday is on a weekend, a 'substitute' weekday becomes a bank holiday, normally the following Monday.

Change your clocks	
Clocks "Fall" Backward	Sunday, October 30, 2016
Clocks "Spring" Forward	Sunday March 26, 2017

Kitchen

If you like cooking or simply love food, living in a foreign country is a wonderful opportunity to experience new tastes and ingredients.

When you first arrive in the UK, you may be overwhelmed and frustrated by your first visits to the supermarket, as this is a true and stark reminder that you are not at 'home.'

You may not be able to find half of the things on your list and assume they just don't have it here. Certainly there are some products that are only sold in America. HOWEVER, it is often a case of knowing where in the store to look, recognizing different style packaging and being aware of substitute products which will work in your recipes just as well.

If you have the opportunity, ask another AWBS member to come with you on a visit to the grocery store, and give yourself extra time to take it all in.

BEFORE Going to the Store:

- Bring coins for parking, many grocery stores do not offer free parking
- Bring a £1 coin for the shopping cart (called a "Trolley")
- Bring your own reusable grocery bags, some stores may charge you extra for bags
- Expect to bag your own groceries. If you would like assistance bagging your groceries, you will have to ask
- Expect the shopping cart to be difficult to maneuver. All four wheels will most likely swivel

The Shopping Aisles

Bakers Chocolate

There is no equivalent to unsweetened bakers chocolate in the UK, although you can obtain it from specialist food retailers. Baking chocolate is available; however, sugar has been added.

Baking Powder

American baking powder contains sodium aluminum sulphate; British powder does not. One of our members recommends using American baking powder for American recipes and British baking powder for British recipes. Other members claim they are unable to tell the difference.

Baking Soda

It is called bicarbonate of soda and is found in small canisters in the baking aisle.

Buttermilk

Buttermilk is used only as a recipe ingredient in the UK. Therefore, it comes in much smaller containers than you would normally expect to see back home. Typically, it is packaged in one pint containers or smaller. It is found in the fresh milk section.

Cheese

Cheddar: Cheddar cheese originates in England. If you want an orange cheese similar in flavor to American cheddar, keep an eye out for Red Leicester or the slightly milder Double Gloucester.

Monterey Jack: Try substituting Danish Havarti.

Chocolate Chips

These are sold in much smaller packages (typically 100 grams), and you will need to buy several packets in order to make an average American recipe. Make sure the package says “chocolate” and not “chocolate flavored.”

Cocoa Powder

It is simply called “cocoa” here. If you are unsure, read the ingredients. It should say “100% cocoa.” In the UK, hot chocolate mixes are referred to as “drinking chocolate” or “chocolate drink.”

Corn Syrup

Corn syrup is only available from vendors specializing in American grocery products. However, a product called “Golden Syrup” is a perfect substitute.

Cornmeal

Cornmeal is usually referred to as “maize flour” or “masa harina.”

Look for it in the gourmet products section at the grocery store, or, failing that, try a health food shop. Polenta is not a substitute for cornmeal. It is actually quite a close substitute for grits; in fact, the only difference is that the corn is unbleached. Corn flour is definitely not a substitute.

Cornstarch

It is called “corn flour” and is found in the baking aisle.

Cream

The British love their cream. There is a dizzying array to choose from:

Single cream: light cream (18% butterfat)

Double cream: heavy cream (48% butterfat). It can be whipped, but be careful. If you get too carried away, it will turn to butter.

Whipping cream: whipping cream

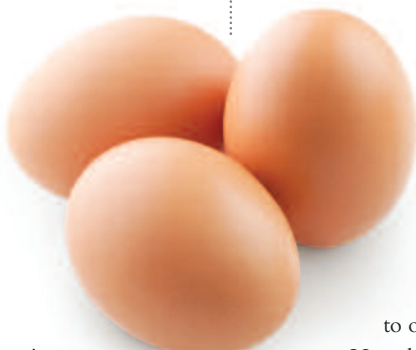
Sour cream: UK sour cream is of a thinner consistency than American. If

you prefer a thicker product, try Crème Fraiche.

Clotted cream: from the southwest of England; this thick, rich cream is spread like butter onto scones.

Eggs

Eggs are found on a shelf, not in a refrigerated section.

**Flour**

The wheat used to make flour in the UK is of a “softer” strain than that used in the US. To simulate all-purpose flour, mix two parts plain to one part bread flour.

Use a higher proportion of strong/bread flour for yeast breads. Use a lower proportion of strong/bread flour for more tender products such as muffins and layer cakes.

Plain flour: White plain flour is the most commonly used type of flour. It contains about 70% of the wheat grain, and, when it is milled, the bran and wheat germ from the grain are removed and all that remains is the white starchy part of the grain. Uses: To make pastry and to prevent rolled-

out pastry sticking to the work surface, as a coating for raw meat and fish before frying and as a thickener in sauces such as cheese sauce or white sauce.

Self-raising flour: Self-raising flour is plain flour with raising agents added. The raising agent in the flour reacts during cooking to produce carbon dioxide and the mixture expands to give a light and airy texture. Uses: Self-raising flour is used in recipes where the mixture needs to expand on cooking to give a light result, such as cakes and puddings.

Strong white plain flour: Strong white plain flour is processed to remove all the bran and wheat germ from the wheat grain; all that remains is the white starchy part of the grain. It has a higher proportion of a type of protein than white plain flour. This protein forms gluten when mixed with water, giving bread its characteristic texture. Uses: Strong white plain flour is used for bread making, to give bread its distinctive flavor and texture.

Graham Cracker Crumbs

Use crushed sweet digestive biscuit, a very popular British cookie. Digestive

biscuits have a higher fat content than graham crackers, so if making a pie crust, you will probably find you need to add less butter or margarine.

Jello

The UK equivalent of Jello is called “jelly” (jelly is never a preserve in the UK). It is a concentrated block of gel which liquefies in hot water. It is fine for making Jello salads, but is inappropriate for American baking recipes.

Lemonade

Is a drink similar to Sprite or 7-Up.

Meat

To the American palate, British and Irish beef have a much more “gamey” taste. Scottish Angus beef most closely resembles the taste of American beef.

Milk

The milkman is alive and well in the UK! If you would like home-delivered milk, go to the following website: www.milkandmore.co.uk

Skimmed milk (0.1% fat): very low fat milk.

Semi-skimmed milk (between 1.5% - 1.8% fat): has about half the fat content of whole milk.



Whole milk (about 4% fat): Also known as full fat milk.

Breakfast milk: A rich and creamy, pasteurized, homogenized milk.

Full Cream: Milkman delivery only. Thick whole cream on top, not homogenized.

Long life: Available in supermarkets, not refrigerated, with several month's shelf life.

Molasses

In some guide books, you may see black treacle syrup is recommended as a good substitute for molasses. They are similar, but treacle is thicker, and more bitter – almost metallic – in taste. If you have a recipe which calls for a small amount of molasses (say about a tablespoon), black treacle will probably be a suitable substitute. For recipes calling for larger amounts of molasses, two parts golden syrup and one part black treacle syrup (or equal parts of each) will probably be a better alternative. You can buy molasses at health food stores, but you'll need to thin it somewhat.

Shortening

The old American favorite, Crisco, is currently only available in the UK from specialist suppliers. The closest UK equivalent is “White Flora” or “Trex,” sold in blocks near margarine in the refrigerated aisles. If you whip it in a food processor or with a beater, it comes fairly close to the consistency of Crisco.

Sugar

Granulated sugar: The most popular type of sugar, with its medium-sized crystals, granulated is the one type most people will have in their cupboard.

Granulated sugar is very versatile.

It is used as a sweetener for coffee and tea and for sprinkling over breakfast cereals. In baking, it is good for rubbed-in mixtures such as crumbles.

Caster sugar: With very fine crystals, this sugar is excellent for sprinkling and is particularly good for baking. It dissolves better than granulated sugar, and many people prefer using caster sugar as their all-purpose kitchen sugar.

Light/dark brown soft sugars: Just like the light or dark brown sugar you find in grocery stores in the US.

Light brown muscovado sugar: This raw cane has a subtler flavor than dark brown muscovado due to the lower molasses content (about 6%). Can also be used as a light brown sugar substitute.

Dark brown muscovado sugar: With its distinctive dark brown color, this raw cane sugar has a rich flavor and aroma. It contains about 13% molasses and has a soft, fine-grained texture. Can be used as a dark brown sugar substitute as well.

Demerara sugar: A raw cane sugar that has a molasses content of about 2%. The molasses gives it a delicate flavor and delicious aroma. It has a moist texture with large, clear sparkling crystals. Traditionally served to sweeten after-dinner coffee, it can be used in baking and is particularly good in recipes with ginger or dried fruit.

Icing sugar: Confectioner’s sugar.

Tomato Paste

Look for “tomato puree” in tubes or



small cans close to the canned tomatoes.

Tomato Sauce

Look for “passata” in jars or boxes with the other tomato products.

Vegetables

Some common vegetables have different names here:

Eggplant:	Aubergines
Zucchini or Summer Squash:	Courgettes
Snow peas:	Mangetout
Arugula:	Rocket

Yeast

Dried active yeast is available in grocery stores close to the flours. Live yeast is often available from health food shops and by request at the bakery counter in larger grocery stores.

Online Grocery Shopping

The major grocery store chains offer online shopping.

You can order your groceries from your personal computer and choose a delivery window to suit your schedule.



Most allow you to place an order several weeks in advance.

You can order your groceries before you travel and schedule delivery for the day of or the day after your return.

Asda:	www.asda.com
Waitrose:	www.ocado.com
Sainsbury:	www.sainsbury.co.uk
Tesco:	www.tesco.com
Ocado:	www.ocado.com

Ready Made Foods

Cook: Shops in various locations (Windsor, Weybridge), home delivery, and concessions in selected local retailers (Long Acres, Garson Farms, etc.)
www.cookfood.net



American Foods

There are specialist retailers in this country who might stock that elusive ingredient which you need for an American recipe or the special treats which

your family may be missing.

America Soda:

www.americansoda.co.uk (Online only)

Budgens:

www.maloneybudgens.com
High Street, Ascot SL5 7HD
8 Station Approach, Virginia Water
GU25 4DL

Cybercandy:

www.cybercandy.co.uk
11 Shelton Street, Covent Garden,
London, WC2H 9JN

Harts Food Hall:

14 Station Approach, Virginia Water,

GU25 4DW

John Wells Butcher:

www.johnwells.co.uk
12a Bishopmead Parade, East Horsley,
Surrey, KT24 6RT

Long Acres:

www.longacres.co.uk
London Rd, Bagshot GU19 5JB

SKYCO:

Unit F10/11 The Mayford Centre
Woking, Surrey GU22 0PP
Telephone: 01483 776444
www.skyco.uk.com

Whole Foods:

www.wholefoodsmarket.com/stores/uk



Costco

If you are currently a member of Costco in the US, your membership is valid in the UK.

If you don't have a US membership, you can become a member of the UK Costco through your AWBS membership.

Take your AWBS membership badge, which serves as your AWBS membership card, to the registration desk at Costco. You can register at Costco, pay them your membership fee and shop right away. The closest Costco locations are Hayes (UB2 5XJ), Farnborough (GU14 6FE), Reading (RG2 6UE), and Sunbury (TW16 5LN).

Healthy Food Stores

Abel & Cole:

Organic fruit and vegetables (and much more) delivered to your door.

www.abelandcole.co.uk

Food for Thought:

Food, vitamins, cosmetics.

www.foodforthought.uk.com

2-6 Haydon Place,

Guildford, Surrey, GU1 4LL

01483 533 841

- or -

38 Market Place,

Kingston, Surrey KT1 1JQ

0208 546 7806

Hello Fresh

Choose from a weekly menu, get pre-measured seasonal ingredients, and prepare home cooked meals with Hello Fresh

www.hellofresh.com

Holland & Barrett:

Food and supplements at various locations including Staines and Windsor.

www.hollandandbarrett.com



Appliances

Dishwashers

This is a very hard water area. Therefore, you will need to add dishwasher salt to your machine. You will also need to add Rinse Aid. See manufacturer's instructions on how to add these to your machine. Dishwasher salt is sold in bags in the same aisle as the dishwashing liquids and tablets. There are some dishwashing tablets which say that salt is included. You will still need to buy

dishwasher salt. If you don't use it, your glassware may be ruined, and your machine may break down.

Ovens

You may have a fan oven in your new home. Some models allow the user to switch from fan oven to conventional oven. Fan ovens are recommended for baking, while conventional ovens are best for roasting meat. When using a fan oven, the temperature should be set 20 degrees lower than that indicated on the food packaging or in the cookbook.

Celsius	Fahrenheit	Gas Mark	Description
150	300	2	Slow
180	350	4	Moderate
190	375	5	Moderate/Hot
220	425	7	Hot
245	475	9	Very Hot

Cooking Conversions

The conversion tables provided are estimates. It's a good idea to invest in a kitchen scale and UK measuring implements if you use British recipes. Remember, one cup of a dry ingredient will differ in weight from one cup of another ingredient, even if they are similar. For example, one cup of sugar will weigh about 200 grams but one cup of icing sugar will weigh about 125 grams.

Liquid Measures

US	Imperial	Metric
1 teaspoon	1/6 oz	5 ml
1 tablespoon	1/2 oz	15 ml
2 tablespoons	1 oz	30 ml
1/4 cup	2 oz	60 ml
1/3 cup	2 1/2 oz	75 ml
1/2 cup	4 oz	125 ml
2/3 cup	5 oz	150 ml
3/4 cup	6 oz	175 ml
1 cup	8 oz	250 ml
2 1/2 cups	1 pint	575 ml
3 3/4 cups	1 1/2 pints	850 ml
4 1/2 cups	1 3/4 pints	1 liter

Cake Tins

Inches	Centimetres
8in	20cm
9in	23cm
10in	25cm

Weights

US	Metric
1/2 oz	14g
1oz	28g
2oz	56g
3oz	85g
4oz	115g
5oz	142g
6oz	170g
7oz	200g
8oz	225g
9oz	255g
10oz	284g
11oz	312g
12oz	340g
13oz	370g
14oz	400g
15oz	425g
16oz	455g

Laundry

Contributors: *Carlene Kemmerer and Lisa Pizzi*

Washing Machines & Dryers

UK washing machines heat their own water, so you may find that the washing cycle takes a lot longer than it did back home. If you have to purchase one, look for a model with a quick wash program.

Some AWBS members have purchased American washers and dryers in the UK. They are faster and have a larger load capacity. Just be aware that these machines do not heat their own water; they draw hot water straight from your house's hot water tank. This means that if you wash a lot of clothes, you may find that there is no hot water left to take a bath or shower.

You may rent a home that has a combination washer/dryer rather than two separate appliances (a "combi"). When your washing cycle has completed, take all of your clean, wet clothes from the machine and feed them back one at a time into the machine for drying. Separating the clothing items will help the dryer work more efficiently.

Laundry Detergents

Laundry detergents come in two formulations: "bio" and "non-bio." Biological (bio) washing detergents contain strong cleaning enzymes developed from natural sources that are very effective at removing a wide range of stains at lower temperatures.

These enzymes are biodegradable - thus the name. Non-bios don't contain these enzymes; you may find that you need to wash at higher temperatures.

However, non-bios are recommended by the manufacturers for those with sensitive skin.

Bleach

If you use bleach in your white washes, make sure that you buy "laundry bleach." Bottles that only say "bleach" are solely for household cleaning and will eat your clothes. Alternatively, there is a product called "Glo White," which is popularly used to whiten whites.



Legal Matters

Contributors: Carlene Kemmerer and Allison Poltorak

Notary

Notaries are few and far between in the UK. If you need a document notarized, go to your embassy or visit www.thenotariessociety.org.uk to find one in your area. There will be a substantial charge for the service.

Working in the UK

Many AWBS members are unsure as to whether they can obtain legal employment in the UK. Some wrongly presume they can, while others incorrectly assume that they can't.

To find out if you qualify, go to www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/workingintheuk. If that doesn't have the facts you are looking for, there are links and phone numbers to obtain further information.

Additionally, the UK tax authority offers information related to documents required for non-UK citizens working in the UK. See

www.hmrc.gov.uk/migrantworkers/documents.htm for more information.

Once you have established your right to work, you will need to obtain a National Insurance (NI) number. This is the UK equivalent of the US Social Security number. (It is not the same as your National Health Service Number. That is a completely different number which is issued once you register with a GP.

If you have the right to work in the UK, you will need to telephone Jobcentre Plus on 0845 600 0643 (from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday) to arrange to get an NI number. Contact the Department for Works and Pensions at www.dwp.gov.uk for more information. It is best that you apply for an NI number before accepting a job offer, as these numbers can take weeks to come through.



List of Foreign Embassies in London

You can refer to the London Diplomatic List at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foreign-embassies-in-the-uk>

The United States Embassy

<https://uk.usembassy.gov>

24 Grosvenor Square,
London W1A 2LQ

Main Switchboard: 0207 499 9000

Information Resource Center: 0207 894 0925

Monday to Friday, 10:00 to 12:00

In an emergency involving a United States citizen in the United Kingdom, you can reach the embassy 24 hours a day, seven days a week via the main Embassy telephone number: 0207 499 9000. A Consular Duty Officer is available 24 hours a day.

The Embassy offers the following services to American citizens:

- Passport application and renewals, including replacement of lost, damaged or stolen passports and the provision of additional passport pages. The Passport Unit is open for appointments Monday through Friday. It is closed to the public on both American and British public



holidays. Book appointments online at: http://london.usembassy.gov/cons_new/acs/passports/index.html.

If your service does not require a personal appearance, you will be instructed to apply via Royal Mail Special Delivery. There is no walk-in service for American citizens who require a service related to passports or birth registration.

- Reporting the birth of a child in the UK to US citizen parent(s);
- Information on child custody issues, arrests, deaths, voting and taxes;
- Notary Public;
- Social Security services, such as:
 - Social Security Numbers;
 - Applications for new, replacement and corrected Social Security cards;
 - Filing applications for Social Security and Veterans Administration retirement, survivor and disability benefits.

Post Office

Contributors: Carlene Kemmerer, Amy Moellering and Lisa Tanger



If you've walked down a High Street recently, you may have passed a Post Office and not even known it. Not only are they placed as stand-alone units, they are also "hidden" within your local newsagent. The best way to find your local Post Office and confirm their opening hours is to visit www.royalmail.com.

In addition to mailing services, the Post Office provides the following:

- application forms for driving licenses
- motor vehicle registration
- television licenses
- E111s
- money orders
- banking services
- payment of utility bills

Main Post Offices are excellent for obtaining small amounts of foreign currency. They charge no commission

and will buy back any excess on your return. Additionally, many newsagents have Post Offices within, although their hours may be more limited.

In the UK, you can buy 1st and 2nd class stamps. First class mail is ideal if you want your letter or packet to be delivered the next working day, including Saturday. However, millions of people use second class mail every day to send letters, packets and other small items. They aim to deliver your mail by the third working day after posting.

Plan to ship your holiday packages early. It can take a month or more unless you use priority shipping. Note that customs duties will be due (sending OR receiving packages) if the value is over a certain limit, even if they are gifts. For information on allowances, visit <http://london.usembassy.gov/ukcustom.html>.

Taxes and Other Filings

Contributors: Lisa Tanger, Karen Wells, Delaina Westwood-Booth

The information in this section is intended to be an overview and should not be relied upon for legal or tax purposes without professional advice, due to the continually changing nature of tax legislation in both the United States and the United Kingdom.

Information has been sourced from:

www.americanexpats.co.uk

www.fawco.org

Now that you are an expatriate, one of the most important, and complex, tasks you have is to keep your tax and financial filings in order. Whether you have a tax preparer or not, there are a few things for you to be aware of in order to navigate the murky waters of expatriate taxation and financial reporting.



Council Tax

Council tax is collected by local boroughs. It is a tax on domestic property based on the size of the property, and you, as a renter (or homeowner), are responsible for paying it.

Council tax bills are sent out every April and can be paid in installments. Some offer a reduction in the total bill if it is paid all at once or paid by direct debit. For more information, contact your local borough council office.

Report of Foreign Bank and Financial Accounts (FBAR)

American expats are reminded that they must fill out a Report of Foreign Bank and Financial Accounts (known as FBAR) by April 15 each year, if at any point in the previous year they had signature authority over foreign accounts exceeding \$10,000 (USD).

This FBAR form is filed online through the BSA E-Filing system website:
<http://bsaefiling.fincen.treas.gov/main.html>

- o The \$10,000 could be in a single account in one country outside the United States, or spread across many accounts in many countries.
- o This includes assets that an individual may have signature authority over as a result of a volunteer position, such as serving as the president or treasurer of AWBS. So, if you had \$1 in a personal checking account, and you can sign checks as a volunteer in a charity that has \$9,999 in its account, you must fill out the FBAR, and report all accounts.
- o No report is required if the aggregate value of all the accounts does not exceed \$10,000.

United States Tax Return

www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/u-s-citizens-and-resident-aliens-abroad

American citizens are taxed on their worldwide income, regardless of where they live or where the income is paid. As such, American expatriates must continue to file US federal tax returns, and, in many cases, owe US taxes while residing in the UK.

As an AWBS member, you have access to the resources made available through the Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas. You can contact the FAWCO U.S. Taxation Group with your questions by sending an e-mail to ustax@fawco.org. Additionally, you can register at www.fawco.org, log in and visit the U.S. Issues/U.S. Taxation section for more information.



39 Steps to Smart Living in the UK as an American

As an American living in the UK, almost nothing related to your financial affairs is easy. The consequences of seemingly simple decisions – such as how to pay for a new home or purchase a mutual fund – may create unnecessary tax charges and complexities. There are a number of key milestones that occur, from the time you arrive in the UK to the time you potentially approach and reach retirement. Many of these changes will impact the appropriate wealth management strategies for American expats. Understanding how rules will change for you over time will allow you to plan ahead and make prudent financial decisions.

As long as you live in the UK, you will be dealing with taxation in two jurisdictions and it is important to gain an understanding of how the UK and the US tax systems interact with one another. It is true that a Double Tax Treaty exists between the two countries but this does not mean that all types of income or all tax-advantaged savings methods and accounts are treated the same way. Therefore, it is important to begin to familiarise yourself with the similarities and differences. Gaining a high level understanding of the tax traps to be aware of will help you avoid making detrimental financial decisions without taking advice first.

The UK and the US also have different tax years. The US follows a calendar tax year and the UK tax year runs from April 6 to April 5 each year. Staying organised and keeping good records of all financial transactions that take place will inevitably make your life easier when tax time comes around. Typically, in your first seven tax years living in the UK, you are subject to UK income tax on your UK earnings and any offshore earnings that you bring into the UK. This is known as Remittance Basis taxation. Claiming the remittance basis means that you only pay UK tax on the income or gains you bring to the UK but you lose some potentially valuable allowances such as the income tax

allowance and capital gains tax allowance. Post seven years, it is typical to be taxed in the UK on an Arising Basis (on worldwide income). This requires additional considerations to manage the worldwide tax impact of your financial assets in both jurisdictions. Tax efficient assets in the US don't necessarily equate tax efficient assets in the UK, and vice versa. Understanding the structure of your assets becomes of utmost importance.

The next big hurdle that requires careful planning becomes how to properly prepare for becoming deemed domicile for UK inheritance tax. Currently, a non-domiciled individual becomes deemed domicile for inheritance tax purposes when they have been resident in the UK for 17 out of the last 20 years. However, this threshold will change to 15 out of the last 20 years in April 2017. When an individual is deemed domicile for UK inheritance tax purposes, the UK will generally apply its inheritance tax rules on an individual's worldwide assets. A lack of understanding about how inheritance tax works can end up costing loved ones hundreds of thousands if not millions of dollars. Proper planning can help minimise the amount of inheritance tax payable.

Additionally, careful planning is always important when one spouse is a non-US citizen. Some great planning opportunities often abound for example in choosing to own certain assets in either spouse name to optimise the tax implications for either US or UK purposes. For instance, the non-US spouse could take advantage of some of the UK tax-advantaged accounts and asset ownership structures in the UK that are generally not beneficial for a US person, whilst the US spouse could focus on utilising US tax-efficient vehicles. While being a bi-national couple can present some challenges, understanding how to take advantage of some of the valuable opportunities that often present themselves can help avoid paying unnecessary costs.

If you would like a full copy of MASECO's '39 Steps to Smart Living in the UK' please visit, www.masecopw.com.

Be sure to let the IRS know you are overseas by filling out a change of address form (Form 8822). You may find it helpful to read the “Tax Guide for US Citizens and Resident Aliens Abroad,” which is available at www.irs.gov.

There are two special tax provisions used by expatriates to reduce their federal income tax liability while on assignment. These provisions are the foreign tax credit and foreign earned income and housing exclusions. Aside from the special tax provisions that apply to American expatriates, you will remain subject to the normal US tax laws with respect to all other items of income, expenses and credits.

United Kingdom Tax Return

www.hmrc.gov.uk

The UK tax year runs from April 6 to April 5. Paper tax returns are due October 31, and online tax returns are due January 31. Filing late may result in a penalty of £100.

UK tax implications will depend on whether you are a short-term or long-term visitor. Longer-term visitors are taxed according to their residence status.

Broadly, someone coming to the UK and expecting to spend 3 years or



more here will be treated as “Resident & Ordinarily Resident.” As a result, they will be taxed on all of their employment income, wherever paid and regardless of where the individual carries on their duties.

However, an individual coming to the UK with the intention of being here for between 2-3 years will be regarded as “Resident but Not Ordinarily Resident.” The practical effect of this is that the individual will be taxed on the higher of: a) the

income paid to them in the UK, or brought into the UK, or b) the income that relates to their UK duties.

Normally an individual who was born outside the UK and intends to return permanently to a country other than the UK is regarded as not domiciled in the UK for tax purposes. This can have a number of tax advantages in the UK such as:

Overseas investment income is not taxable in the UK as long as it is not remitted here;

Overseas capital gains are not taxable in the UK as long as the proceeds are not remitted here;

Home leave trips paid for by an employer are not treated as taxable income in the UK; and,

Contributions to an American 401k plan will be deductible in the UK and contributions to such a plan by an employer will not constitute taxable income (there are conditions to be satisfied).

You will pay tax either on an arising basis (i.e. you pay tax on all of your UK and foreign income and gains) or on a remittance basis (i.e. you pay tax on all your UK income and gains and foreign income and gains you bring to the UK). However, there are very complex rules around selecting the arising basis or remittance basis, which include (a)

your ordinarily resident status and (b) amount of your non-UK earned income and gains, and can have significant UK tax implications.

Unlike in the US, there is no system of joint filing in the UK, and individuals are therefore responsible for their own taxation and for making any claims in respect of applicable reliefs and allowances.

Keep in mind that transactions (such as purchasing a home or selling securities) in either your home country or expatriate country could impact tax returns in both countries. The bottom line is that, even with a tax preparer, you need to become very, very good at recordkeeping and paperwork.

Utilities and Other Accounts

Contributors: Carlene Kemmerer, Susan Lidback, Lisa Pizzi, Sandhya Koppikar and Delaina Westwood-Booth

If there is a problem, many utility companies will only speak with the account holder. Make sure both you and your spouse/partner are named on the account.

Cell Phones

They are known as “mobile phones” here. There are two types of mobile phone payment plans available in the UK. The first is a set term phone contract. This is a good plan for regular mobile phone users. By signing a contract, you are usually able to choose a free phone from a selection available with the phone provider.

Some AWBS members have found that they have been unable to obtain a contract account until they have six months worth of UK credit history.

If you find this to be the case, the second option is the Pay-As-You-Go phone. You purchase the phone, but aren't tied into a contract or a monthly payment. It is good for people who only use their phones for emergencies.

You may find that you are not able to make international calls until you have three to six months history with your provider. Make a point of calling them to activate international service when the time has passed; they won't do it automatically.

Telephones

Acquiring a new phone line can take a long time (sometimes 3-4 weeks), so if you are moving to a home where there is already phone service, do not disconnect it. Simply request that the number be transferred to the new name and account.

Telephones are rented at a flat monthly rate (usually referred to as line rental), plus extra charges for each call made, whether local or long distance. Rates vary according to the time of day.

Another option for long distance calls is the use of internet phone lines. For USA expats, Magic Jack and Vonage are examples. It is very convenient for calling other countries and you can keep your local USA phone number while living abroad.

Be sure to sign up for International calling plan if you plan to make calls overseas. Otherwise you might receive a very expensive bill. Some companies limit your international calling time and then charge extra on top, (BT). While with others, you pay a flat fee and get unlimited international calls (Sky).

Internet

It can take a long time to have your internet provider turn on service at your property (it is not unusual for it to take 4-5 weeks). If you plan to use the internet frequently at home, make it a priority to put your request in immediately upon moving.

There are several internet service providers in the UK. Some of the more popular ones are British Telecom (BT), Sky and Virgin.

In the meantime, if you need to get on the web, visit your local library. Most have computers which you can use for free or for a small charge. In some boroughs, internet access is free if you have a library card.

Freeview, Satellite and Cable

If you would like a few more TV channels (as well as radio stations) and are interested in digital viewing, you can install a Freeview box which works through a TV aerial. There is no monthly charge; you simply have

to buy the box which starts at approximately £20. Before purchasing a box, check that Freeview reception is available in your area by going to www.freeview.co.uk

For those interested in even more channels, satellite and cable are available. Satellite viewing is available via Sky (www.sky.com). Cable television is available through a variety of providers including Virgin (www.virginmedia.com) and British Telecom (www.bt.com).

If you are a sports fan, consider a subscription to NASN, the home of North American sports in Europe (www.nasn.com), or Sky Sports (www.sky.com) for professional football and all other sports worldwide. Bundling the telephone, Internet and cable with one provider may offer large savings, but please note that they usually require a long term contract (1-2 years). It is worth comparing the bundle packages of Sky, Virgin, BT and make the best choice for your family. Make



sure high speed internet is available for your area with each provider. Some bundles also can include mobile devices.

Directory Assistance

Directory assistance in the UK is now available from a variety of providers at differing prices. Some commonly used numbers are 118 500, 118 118 and 118 434. If requested, the service will send a message or text confirming the number.

Pay Phones

Although some pay phones take coins, an increasing number only accept prepaid phone cards. Phone cards can be purchased from most newsagents and post offices.

Television

American DVD players will only play DVDs purchased in the States. Consider purchasing a “multi-region” DVD player if you plan on purchasing DVD’s in the UK.

Television License

You need to be covered by a valid TV License if you watch or record television as it’s being broadcast. This includes the use of devices such as a computer, laptop, mobile phone or DVD/video recorder.



From 1 September 2016 you'll need a TV License to watch or download BBC programmes on demand, including catch up TV, on BBC iPlayer. The TV License is the British Government's way of funding the BBC, which accepts no advertising. The license is not optional. Inspectors with tracking equipment do travel neighborhoods and can impose fines of up to £1,000.



A standard colour TV License costs £145.50 per year for color and £49.00 per year for black and white. In some cases, you may be entitled to a reduced fee TV License. You can pay monthly, quarterly or annually by direct debit. To purchase or renew your license, please visit www.tvlicensing.co.uk.

Electricity - Converters & Transformers

Most non-European electrical goods are incompatible with the UK's electrical supply (due to voltage differences). English voltage is 220/240V, whereas American voltage only runs at 110V. Your American electrical items will blow out when they receive the stronger UK electrical current.

For some items, you can purchase a transformer at a store such as Maplins that will prevent a blow-out. Just make sure to read the fine print carefully and ensure you have the correct voltage.

A converter is not the same thing as a transformer. A converter only allows you to plug in an electrical appliance by using a small pin changer (2-prong to 3-prong). Converters do not adjust the voltage level, whereas transformers are plug-in devices that convert the electricity down to 110V.

Gas

Boilers can be complicated. Make sure that you have your heating/water system explained thoroughly when you take tenancy.

If your gas bill seems high, and your house is still cold, you may need help in understanding your boiler or your boiler's programmer. Contact your letting agent or failing that, call out a boiler repairman to show you the ropes. It may just need a service. But be warned, the call out charges for boiler repair can be very expensive. If possible, make sure your boiler has been recently serviced and is fully functioning before you move in to the property.

Do not turn off your boiler if you go away for a few days during the winter. Pipes have a nasty tendency to freeze, and you could return home to a flood.

Immersion Heaters

Immersion heaters serve two purposes. If you are running short of hot water, turning on the immersion heater for an hour or two can give you a boost.

Secondly, it can allow you to heat water in the summer when you wish to turn off the boiler. This is a more expensive way to heat water. Unlike boilers, immersion heaters do not run on timers. You must remember to

turn them on and off; otherwise, your hot water can become scalding and your electric bill will be very high.

Meter Readings (Electricity, Gas and Water)

Your electricity, gas and water providers may give you an opportunity to report your meter readings online. If so, take advantage of it and report in a timely fashion. If you do not report your meter reading online, your utility company may bill you based on estimated usage. If you have recently moved into the property, your usage will be estimated based on the prior tenant's consumption pattern.

When you move out, there will be a final meter reading to settle your account. It is wise to make sure the readings have been accurate during your tenancy or you could get a nasty surprise when your final bill arrives.

Water

A consequence of living in a hard water area is that appliances such as electric kettles and showerheads clog up with lime scale deposits. There are various lime scale removal products available at the grocery store to remove build up from showerheads, washing machines,

dishwashers, etc. You can purchase kettles with changeable water filters.

Typically, the water that comes in to your downstairs tap is fresh from the main water supply system and is safe to drink. However, all water flowing from your upstairs tap will be fed from the cold water tank in the loft/attic. It is not advisable to drink water from these taps unless you have a combi-boiler. If you want to drink water in your bathroom, it is best to keep a bottle of water there.

Make sure you ask the land lord how to turn off water to the property should there be a major leak. Have this information in your Emergency File.

Light Bulbs

In addition to the screw-in type fitting you may be familiar with, lightbulbs in the UK are also offered with bayonet fittings. Before buying lightbulbs, take a good look at your new lamps and light fittings to see what is required.

What's On

Every effort has been made to include accurate and updated information. Events are listed by anticipated dates at the time of going to press. Please check websites for specific dates/times.

September

Add **Open House London** to your list of events. It occurs every September and offers a wonderful opportunity for people to visit certain buildings in London that are not open to the public.

www.openhouselondon.org.uk

Tour the **Houses of Parliament** during the Summer Opening.

www.parliament.uk/visiting/visiting-and-tours/summeropening

Buckingham Palace is open only during August and September.

www.royalcollection.org.uk

Want to take the family to enjoy a little taste of the Berkshire rural life? Check out the **Royal County of Berkshire Show!** It's a fantastic day out to see the animals and have fun.

www.newburyshowground.co.uk/events/royal-county-of-berkshire-show

The **Braemar Gathering & Highland Games** are held in a small village in the Highlands of Scotland. Games, Scottish dancing and bagpipe competitions are featured. It is close to Balmoral Castle, and the Queen usually attends.

www.braemargathering.org

Looking for free music and entertainment? The **Thames Festival** is held on the South Bank, between Westminster Bridge and Tower Bridge. Don't miss the Night Carnival (Procession of Lights).

www.thamesfestival.org

October

Enjoy British films? **The Times BFI London Film Festival** is for you! You can check out previews of upcoming films, and they interview people involved with the filming.

www.bfi.org.uk/lff/

October Plenty, a harvest celebration, starts on the Bankside outside of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre with a procession of interesting characters (the Corn Queene, Hobby Horse, and Berry Man) leading everyone to Borough Market and the Apple Day Food Fair.

www.thelionspart.co.uk/octoberplenty

Had enough of city life? Take a walk through **Windsor Great Park**, and you'll see nature all around you. The **Queen's herd of deer** start their rut in mid-October, and you can see the bucks vying for dominance up close. The process generally ends by early November.

November

Not to be missed is the **State Opening of Parliament** in London. The Queen leaves Buckingham Palace (in a gorgeous gold coach) at 11:00 and heads to Parliament Square for the rest of the events.

www.parliament.uk

The **London to Brighton Veteran Car Run** features wonderful vintage cars traveling between London and Brighton.

www.veterancarrun.com

Guy Fawkes Day (Bonfire Night) is the celebration of a failed plot to blow up Parliament. Bonfires and fireworks can be found all over Britain. The best displays in London are usually at Alexandra Palace, Blackheath, Crystal Palace and Battersea Park.

www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/A199488

www.visitlondon.com/tag/bonfire-night#CUkYRVFlxQUwoaxx.97

The **Lord Mayor's Show**: There are 6,000 participants, with bands, floats, and incredible carriages (fairy-tale quality). It starts at 11:00 and travels from Mansion House. The day ends on the River Thames with fireworks between Waterloo and Blackfriars Bridges.

<https://lordmayorsshow.london>

Remembrance Sunday is similar to American Veterans Day or Memorial Day. The Queen and others lay wreaths of poppies at the Cenotaph, a WWI and II memorial in Whitehall, London. And what do all the red poppies mean? They

are a symbol of remembrance and are sold to raise money for the Royal British Legion, a charity supporting families of people killed or injured in war.

www.poppy.org.uk

www.britishlegion.org.uk

Christmas shopping kicks off in London with the **Christmas Lights Switch On Event, Regent Street**. They will be turned on at 18:15, so get there before 17:30 to get a good spot (the stage is outside Aquascutum). The lights will remain on until early January.

www.regentstreetonline.com

The St. Paul's Cathedral **Thanksgiving service** is held for the American community in England. www.stpauls.co.uk

December

There are many options for **outdoor ice skating**: on the banks of the Thames at **Hampton Court Palace** www.hrp.org.uk, in the dry-moat around the **Tower of London** www.hrp.org.uk, **Somerset House** in central London www.somersetthouse.org, Natural History Museum www.nhm.ac.uk, and Alexandra Gardens Windsor www.windsorice.com, to name a few.

The **Christmas Reindeer Parade** is this month in Windsor Town Centre, starting at Castle Hill. www.windsor.gov.uk/whatson

Come and see the lighting of the glorious **Norwegian Christmas Tree in Trafalgar Square**. This tradition dates to 1947, and the tree is selected by the Norwegian foresters months, even years, in advance as a thank you to Britain for its support during WWII. www.london.gov.uk/trafalgarsquare/events/xmas.jsp

Can't make it to the continent for a Christmas Market? Try Winter Wonderland in Hyde Park instead. (More amusement park than market.) www.hydeparkwinterwonderland.com

Love horses? Check out the **London International Horse Show** in Olympia. www.olympiahorseshow.com/

On December 24, Christmas Eve, enjoy the *Service of Nine Lessons and Carols* as sung by the acclaimed boys choir, the Choir of St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle at 17:15. A little later, join the community at 23:15 for the Midnight Sung Eucharist. Doors open at 22:45.

www.stgeorges-windsor.org

When Big Ben strikes at midnight on **December 31**, it's time to celebrate. Look for a spectacular fireworks show at the London Eye.

London New Years Eve Fireworks

London's New Years Eve fireworks display are known around the world. Tickets have been required since 2014.

You must sign up for ticket alerts.

www.visitlondon.com/things-to-do/event/

27002385-london-new-year-s-eve-fireworks#3DidRYpmis:GIWTUC.97

January

On January 1, the **London New Years Day Parade** is an "American-style parade, with extravagant floats." It starts at the Ritz Hotel around noon, through Trafalgar Square, ending at Parliament Street.

www.londonparade.co.uk

See the Queen's justices in full bottomed wigs at **The Old Bailey**. Visit the Royal Courts of Justice www.freetoursoflondon.com/visiting-royal-courts-justice-london/

February

The traditional **Pancake Races** on Shrove Tuesday take place across London. The tradition started when people would use up all their fats and creams to make a pancake before they started fasting for Lent. Today, racers run with frying pans in hand, flipping pancakes as they go. Covent Garden, Spitalfields and Lincoln's Inn Fields

February 6 is the **anniversary of the Queen's accession to the throne**. There is a royal 41-gun salute fired by the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery in Hyde Park at noon.

www.royal.uk/gun-salutes

Celebrate **Chinese New Year** with a parade, lion/dragon dances, Chinese food, and firecrackers. The main venues are Gerrard Street, Leicester Square, and Trafalgar Square. The London Eye will even be lit in red for the occasion. www.visitlondon.com/things-to-do/event/4733685-chinese-new-year-2017-in-london#myH6GJzVmuGE8Rx7.97

March

Here in the UK, Mother's Day (**Mothering Sunday**) is celebrated in March. If you plan to send a card to Mom back in the States in May, buy your cards now while they are available.

If you haven't been to **Sunbury Antiques Market At Kempton Park Racetrack** (Sunbury Antiques Market), you are truly missing out. It's "the largest & longest running bi-monthly market in the country", and it is close to home. Find a treasure amongst furniture, silverware, jewelry, and everything in between. www.sunburyantiques.com

Celebrate **St. Patrick's Day** in Ireland. Take advantage of our close proximity to Ireland and go where it all began. Their festival has music, theatre, carnivals, and more, including an amazing parade. www.visitlondon.com/things-to-do/event/7609013-st-patricks-day#2C57cWdWAar9IULb.97

If you can't make it to Ireland, **St. Patrick's Day UK** is great fun. Celebrate here in Trafalgar Square. It's a weekend-long celebration, with a huge parade. In Covent Garden, check out the Irish food market. www.london.gov.uk/stpatricksday/parade

April

A must-see is the **Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race**. The north side of the Thames before the Hammersmith Bridge is a good vantage point, but get there very early. www.theboatrace.org

Get out your jogging shoes for the **London Marathon**, on April 24, 2016.
www.virginmoneylondonmarathon.com

Need a dose of radical London fashion? You'll find it at the **Alternative Fashion Week** held in Spitalfields Traders Market. There will be new designers, fashion shows, and a fashion market.
www.alternativearts.co.uk/AFW

On Good Friday, attend the traditional **Hot Cross Buns Service** at St. Bartholomew-the-Great in Smithfield. The centuries-old ceremony gives money and hot cross buns to 21 widows. www.greatstbarts.com

St. George's Day honors the patron saint of England, and is celebrated all over the UK in many venues.

Vaisakhi, the Sikh New Year, is celebrated in Trafalgar Square. It features music, dancing, and bright colors.
www.visitlondon.com/things-to-do/event/41527179-vaisakhi-festival-at-city-hall#clakwf3YV2FPJ6x.97

May

Royal Windsor Horse Show is the largest outdoor equestrian Show in the UK, with more than 3,000 horses taking part in more than 250 jumping, showing and carriage driving classes. The event has been running for more than 66 years and takes place in Her Majesty The Queen's private grounds at Windsor Castle.
www.rwhs.co.uk

Come and experience **The Chelsea Flower Show**; attended by 157,000 visitors each year. The show has become an important venue for watching emerging gardening trends. It's the garden design equivalent of Paris Fashion Week. Tickets must be purchased in advance.
www.rhs.org.uk/Shows-Events

June

See Her Majesty as she presents the trophy at the *Queen's Cup Polo Match* at the Guards Polo Club.

www.guardspoloclub.com

The *Procession of the Order of the Garter* at Windsor Castle. Apply for tickets between January 1 and March 1.

www.royal.uk/order-garter

Send an email for tickets to Garterday.info@royal.gov.uk

Royal Ascot, a place for race-watching and people-watching alike. Ladies Day is Thursday, and this is the day to go if you want to see spectacular fashion and hats. Apply for tickets for the Royal Enclosure via the US embassy starting in February.

www.ascot.co.uk

Mid-June is when the Brits officially celebrate the *Queen's birthday*, with gun salutes in both

London and Windsor. Further celebrations take place at *Trooping The Colour*, with parades down the Mall to Horseguards.

www.trooping-the-colour.co.uk/trooping/troopinginfo.htm



Apply for *Wimbledon* tickets via public ballot between August 1 and December 31, or queue up on the day you want to attend.

www.wimbledon.com

July

The **Hampton Court Palace Flower Show** is billed as “the world’s largest annual garden and flower show”. Flowers, plants and garden items will be available to purchase.

www.rhs.org.uk/Shows-Events/Hampton-Court-Palace-Flower-Show

The **British Open Championship** is played this month.

www.opengolf.com

Classical music fans will enjoy the **Sir Henry Wood Promenade Concerts**, commonly known as **The Proms**, billed as “The World’s Greatest Classical Music Festival”.

www.bbc.co.uk/proms

August

Your kids are sure to enjoy the **Robin Hood Festival**, near Nottingham in Sherwood Forest.

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/country-parks/sherwood-forest/robin-hood-festival

It’s a beer lover’s dream come true. The **Great British Beer Festival** will feature 450 types of beer in one place.

<http://gbbf.org.uk>

Don’t miss **International Beatles Week** in Liverpool.

www.visitliverpool.com/whats-on/international-beatleweek-2016-p375241

The **Notting Hill Carnival** is a fantastic street festival, and one of Europe’s largest carnivals (up to a million people attend each year). Take the kids on Sunday (Children’s Day).

www.thenottinghillcarnival.com