



the **Money**  
**Advice Service**

# Get ready for Universal Credit






➔ Three things to do now to get ready for the introduction of Universal Credit

The **Money Advice Service** is independent and set up by government to help people make the most of their money by giving free, impartial advice. As well as advice about getting ready for Universal Credit, we offer information on a wide range of other money topics.

Visit our website today for advice, tips and tools to help you make informed decisions.

 [moneyadvice.service.org.uk](https://moneyadvice.service.org.uk)

**Free, impartial advice:**

-  on the web
-  on the phone
-  face to face

# Here to help you

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**This guide is for you if you are out of work or on a low income and receiving benefits, and are likely to be moved onto Universal Credit.**

The benefits system is changing and many benefits are being phased out and replaced by Universal Credit. The Money Advice Service has put together this handy guide with things you can do now to get ready for Universal Credit.

# **What is different about Universal Credit?**



Universal Credit will be paid directly into your bank account



You'll get one monthly payment for your whole household



Any help you get with your rent will be included in your payment



You'll have to pay your landlord yourself



Most people will claim Universal Credit online

**This guide will show you how to:**



1. Get the right bank account
2. Draw up a budget
3. Get online to manage your claim

# 1

## Get the right bank account

### **Did you know?**

If you open a bank account that doesn't have an overdraft facility you won't normally have to go through a credit check.



## **Choose an account that lets you receive automated payments**

Your bank, building society, or credit union account will need to receive automated payments because that is how your Universal Credit will be paid.



## **Set up Direct Debits**

It's useful to set up Direct Debits and standing orders for bills like your rent, gas and electricity.



## **Decide whether you need a joint account**

If you and your partner are both eligible for Universal Credit, you'll get a single payment for both of you – you can choose to have it paid into a joint or a single account.

Find out more about the different types of bank accounts and their pros and cons at

 [moneyadviceservice.org.uk/bankaccounts](https://moneyadviceservice.org.uk/bankaccounts)

# 2

## Draw up a budget

### **Did you know?**

Over half of UK households who keep a budget say it gives them peace of mind and makes them feel better about life in general.\*





## Use our budget planner

Use our online budget planner tool to sort out your finances and draw up a list of all your income and outgoings.



## Prioritise your rent payment

If you're used to having your rent paid directly to your landlord you'll soon be responsible for paying it yourself. You will need to keep it separate from your general spending money.



## Get ready for monthly payments

Universal Credit will be paid monthly so if you're used to working out your spending weekly or fortnightly, you'll have to start managing your money across the whole month.

Find out how to get to grips with your household budget and use our budget planner tool at

 [moneyadviceservice.org.uk/budget](https://moneyadviceservice.org.uk/budget)

# 3

## Get online

### **Did you know?**

Most people will have to make their Universal Credit claim - and keep their account up to date - online.



## Get access to a computer

If you don't have access to a computer connected to the internet, ask at your Jobcentre and they will tell you where you can get online. Or pop into your local library.



## Sign up for a training course

If you're worried your IT skills aren't good enough to be able to claim your Universal Credit online, your library should be able to help you find a course.



## Start using the internet to manage your money

Being online gives you access to lots of ways to save money – from cheaper energy tariffs to money off vouchers and comparison websites.

Find out about managing your money better and check out our money saving tips at

 [moneyadviceservice.org.uk/managingmoney](https://moneyadviceservice.org.uk/managingmoney)



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**Money Advice Line 0300 500 5000\***

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If you would like this guide in Braille, large print or audio format please contact us on the above numbers.

\*Calls to 0300 numbers are free if you have free or inclusive call minutes as a part of the contract you have with your landline or mobile phone provider. If you don't have free or inclusive call minutes then calls to 0300 numbers will be charged at standard rates for UK geographic numbers (eg UK numbers starting with 01 or 02). To help us maintain and improve our service, we may record or monitor calls.

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