

# Top 10 Ways to Save Money in London

We're sure you've all realized that London gets pretty pricey, so your GCs have put together a few ideas to help you save some pounds.

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1. **EAT IN!!!** When previous students were asked the best way to save money while living in London, the most frequent answer was to buy groceries and cook in the flats. While London offers loads of amazing restaurants, limiting how often you eat out can save you hundreds of pounds over the semester. Cooking dinner with your flatmates and splitting the cost is a great way to hang out, have a good meal and save money. Trust us on this one.

2. **Always ask for student discounts** – Even if it is not advertised, many places and events offer student discounts that can save you tons. Keep your ISIC card handy at all times, as many places won't acknowledge IDs from your home university. It never hurts to ask.

3. **Don't pay covers** – Why bother paying when you can get in for free? Many clubs in London have free entrance...if you get there early or go on certain nights. Find out when different clubs start charging a cover and get there before. Also keep an eye out for student nights and specials.

#### 4. **Choose your public transport wisely**

**Take the bus** – Yes, the Tube is the quickest means to get around the city, but it is also the most expensive. To get to places outside of walking distance, hop on the bus. It is also a great way to actually see where you are going. And remember, whether you take the bus or tube, it's always cheaper to get an Oyster card than pay cash.

**Walk** – You would be amazed at how many places in London you can get to by foot. It is absolutely free, allows you see more of London and is great exercise! Just give yourself plenty of time and bring a map. London's public transport costs a small fortune, so walking can save you a lot of money.

**Don't take the express trains to the airport** – Sure, they are the quickest and most convenient way to get to the airport, but the Stansted, Heathrow, and Gatwick Express trains are expensive! If you are just travelling for the weekend or spring break, and don't have a lot of luggage, look into taking a bus to the airport. It takes longer, but will save you several pounds, especially if you book a return ticket. Or, if you are flying out of Heathrow, just take the Tube on the Piccadilly line all the way to the terminal.

**5. Know where to shop-** for groceries, try Tesco rather than Sainsbury's. It's further away, but prices at Tesco Metro on Goadge Street are generally lower. There is also usually more of a selection. For cheaper-than-Starbucks coffee try the Forum Café, further down Great Russell Street, or Eve's, which is right next to the Study Centre. Eve's also does great sandwiches, plus you can feel good about yourself for supporting local business. Finally, for cheap electric goods and home stuff, check out Argos on New Oxford Street. £4.99 for a blow drier? Can't be beat.

**6. Text messaging and phone cards** – We've noticed a lot of you have mobiles. The best way to get more for your money when it comes to communication is to text other people instead of calling. Calling other mobiles is particularly expensive. When calling the States, it is much cheaper to buy a phone card and call from a landline instead of using your mobile. Alternatively, keep the folks at home up to speed with your news via email.

**7. Go to museums** – Most of the museums in London are free. There is a huge variety here in London, so why not check out the National Gallery, the V&A, or the Imperial War Museum to name but a few. Also, some museums that usually charge admission open their doors for free one day each month, usually in the first or last week. Stop by the admin office or library and look in *Time Out* magazine for weekly updates. And talking of free culture, don't forget to take advantage of the programme of daytrips and London excursions laid on for you!

**8. Don't pay full price if you don't have to!**

Know when and where the bargains are to be had... Buy theatre tickets on the day, when they do great student standby offers, or keep an eye out for the discounts on websites like [www.lastminute.com](http://www.lastminute.com) and [www.getintolondontheatre.com](http://www.getintolondontheatre.com). If you are planning to do a lot of travelling round the UK, it might be worth buying a Young Person's Railcard, which gives you a 30% discount on all national rail journeys. These are for 16-25 year olds and they cost about £20, which, if you are planning on going to Wales or Scotland, will pay for itself in a single trip. In any case, make your travel plans as early as possible to get the cheapest tickets. And strange but true, on National Rail, it's often cheaper to buy two single tickets than one return.

**9. Get a free haircut**

London is a world leader in fashion; new trends in clothing and hairstyles begin right here. When hairdressers from around the UK want to learn the very latest styles and techniques, they come to London. These hairdressers need people to practise on - this is how you can get a great new style for free! You need to be open-minded to go to academies like Aveda, Vidal Sassoon and Toni and Guy, but it is a great option for someone looking for a change on a low budget. Take a chance! Hair grows back!

**10. Stick to a budget!**

Might sound obvious, but it's not so easy to resist the oh-so many ways to spend your money in London town. Figure out in advance whether you want to spend your cash on weekly trips to the amazing theatre of London's West End or on jet-setting off to Europe as much as possible. Planning ahead is the best way to ensure you get the most for your money in one of the world's most expensive cities.