

your GUIDE to  
LIVING IN ENGLAND  
for up to  
*6 months*



# Welcome

I've prepared this guide for readers of HipOverFifty who love the British lifestyle and are ready to experience all the joys of living in England!

My advice is come and get a taste and discover if the UK fits your lifestyle. Explore *before* you decide if making a permanent move here is right for you.

My perspective is from living in England. While the majority of my advice applies to ALL of the UK it's best to expect some subtle differences between the 4 countries of England, Wales, Scotland and N Ireland!

I've also written this from an "American moving to England" perspective the advice still applies if you're moving from any other country.

You're entitled to stay in the UK for **up to 6 months at a time without a visa.**

## The Rule of 6 Months

*There is no specified maximum period, which an individual can spend in the UK in any period such as '6 months in 12 months' (as long as each visit does not exceed the maximum period for that visit, normally 6 months). However, if it is clear from an applicant's travel history that they are seeking to remain in the UK for extended periods or making the UK their home you should refuse their application."*

This is the official guidance. You are legally entitled to stay for up to 6 months in the UK (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) but this allowance is not intended to establish permanent residency. However according to Gov't guidance you may be able to apply to stay for longer under certain circumstances. [UK Standard Visitor](#)

## Making the 6 Month Rule Work For You

**A. Split your time between home and away using your current home as a base to travel to the UK for up to 6 months**

### *PROS*

- Can be the best of both worlds
- Keep the familiarity and convenience of a US home and culture
- Easily manage your finances and investments in the US
- Keep family and friend ties active in the US

### *CONS*

- More expensive to maintain two homes
- Extra expenses of frequent travel costs
- Not eligible for UK resident benefits such as NHS

**B. Use the 6 month rule to find out if this lifestyle is for you. Then move to England as a permanent resident by applying for a visa.**

### *PROS*

- Full time residents of the UK are eligible for enhanced benefits such as the NHS
- You'll be able to settle, become part of a community and plan for the future
- Less expensive as you won't need to maintain two homes

### *CONS*

- You may be liable for taxation in both the US and UK
- Distance from family and friends
- Expenses of traveling back to US for business, family or necessity
- Homesickness!

The choice is yours. Only you can know which path is right for you and your family.

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# WHAT'S IT REALLY LIKE?

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You've watched Downton Abby a few times and you've traveled to England for vacations. Doesn't the English way of life seem more civilized and relaxed? The history and culture is magnetic. Perhaps you've immediately felt a sense of being home while visiting here.

Whatever your reason for moving to the UK, keep in mind it can feel *very* different from living in the US for example. Although we speak English, it is culturally very different. I'll help prepare you to navigate living here successfully.

Let's get started!

## ALCOHOL

Brits love their drink. From a pint of ale to a G&T, drinking and pub culture is a main feature of British life. When you order a glass of wine you'll be asked what size... small, medium or large? Beer or cider comes as a "half" (half pint) or "pint". Spirits are served as singles or doubles (shots) with a bottle of tonic or soda on the side and usually charged separately.

Unlike the US which has different laws state by state and often by county, I haven't found any such laws in England. Wine, beer and "spirits" are widely available.

## ATTITUDE

"Keep Calm and Carry On" is a uniquely British attitude. The middle and upper classes tend to do their best not to show emotion or talk about feelings. Outwardly everyone is very polite and follows the rules. But inwardly there are just as many anarchists here as anywhere else.

Read the Times or Telegraph (newspapers) comments to find out just what Brits really think! Unless you're in the midst of a football or rugby game or at closing time at the pub you'll rarely see Brits shout, yell or lose their cool.

## BEDS

UK to American size bed are as follows: a UK "**single**" is US twin size, "**double**" is US full size, "**king**" is US queen size and "**super king**" is a US king. Your American sheets *should* fit accordingly. Duvets are the norm here and top sheets are rare. Sheet sets aren't sold with both fitted and top sheets. Bring your own - I did!

# WHAT'S IT REALLY LIKE?

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## CULTURE

British culture depends on where you are... there's a big difference between the "north" and "south" both culturally and politically. With 5.8 weeks paid vacation a year, they take their holidays seriously and the work ethic here is quite different than the US. Stores will close early or not open at all at the whim of the owner.

If you're looking for more of a work life balance you'll be pleasantly surprised that not only aren't you expected to work yourself to death here, but you can take ALL your vacation days.

## DRIVING

The UK is one of only four countries in Europe that drives on the left side of the road. You can drive for up to 12 months on your US driving license. There is no reciprocity between the US and UK so you'll need to qualify for a new UK driving license once the 12 months is up.

I can attest that it's one of the hardest tests going. Driving on the left side of the road is just the beginning. The test process is where the UK's lack of efficiency and predilection for making things complicated is at its worst. I break down the process in this [article](#).

## FOOD

Brits love American food and have adopted a lot of our worst habits! Thanks to the EU, Great Britain has also learned to love French cheeses, creme fraiche, and a wide range of vegetables and fruits that previously weren't on the menu. Indian food is like our tex mex, everywhere. Seafood is good and fresh, fish and chips are a staple of seaside dining.

Sunday roast at a pub is a traditional meal that includes a roast meat, roasted potatoes, steamed vegetables, Yorkshire pudding and "lashings" of gravy.

Vegans and vegetarians always have options like a "nut" roast instead of meat.

## HUMOR

You either get British humor or you don't. That's if you even understand what they're saying! But having a sense of humor is considered a real virtue here and making fun of politicians and each other is a national pastime. I've never heard any jokes about Americans, at least not to my face! ha ha Do try to keep up if you can, but listen and learn is probably my best advice.

# WHAT'S IT REALLY LIKE?

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## LANGUAGE

I could write a whole book about the nuances and expressions that are uniquely British, but I'll leave those for you to discover. Just realize that even English can sound very different and know there'll be times when you won't understand a word of what's being said!

Just don't say "with all due respect" unless you're implying you *don't* think they're due respect. If you're greeted with "All right?" respond with a "Good, thanks" or "Good, you?" If you "fancy" someone you like them or think they're "fanciable". The American term "fit" doesn't quite translate the same here. It's basically saying someone is "hot".

Don't ask someone straight off what they do or even where they're from. Ease into it.

Always give a greeting first before asking a question, even if it's just "All right?" Although middle and upper classes won't use this expression.

You may be directed to "the top of High St" or conversely "the bottom". Or the high point of the street vs the lowest point.

If you're going to the pub for a "swift half" it means you're popping in for a quick drink.

## METRIC

While the UK was in the EU it had to adopt the metric system of measurement. Baking or cooking with metric means everything is weighed vs measured. I find this really difficult to adjust to, as I'm used to Imperial measurements or cups, ounces. To compensate, I use a Metric Conversion app for temperature, measurements, weights etc.

Another adjustment is Centigrade vs Farenheit. I've used F for so long, I can't tell how hot a C temp is. Try telling someone here it's 90F back in TX and they'll get a puzzled look on their face because it doesn't compute to them either. I use that Metric Conversion app when I get stuck.

# WHAT'S IT REALLY LIKE?

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## NEWSPAPERS

One of the aspects of English life I appreciate is the variety of national newspapers. If you miss reading a big Sunday paper complete with magazines, you're in for a treat. The paper you prefer is considered an indicator of your class, your political beliefs and generally what you stand for. Whether or not that's true I can't say but [here's an interesting breakdown](#) of *who* reads *which* major papers.

## PARKING

In the US we're used to free parking, but it's rare here. Almost every town has a pay to park public car park. The bigger the town, the more it costs to park. For example near the center of Bath it will cost about £3.10 (\$4.) for 2 hours.

As most councils (local town or county governments) control the parking in each town, they set the rates. In each parking area there's usually a payment kiosk. Here's where you choose the duration of parking you need using your reg number (car license or tag #). Insert payment by card or cash and take a ticket to display on your dash.

Look on the kiosk to see if they accept payment by app. Download the app which is noted on the kiosk and pay via Apple Wallet or Google Pay. I currently have about four different parking apps on my phone!

Don't ignore private car parks or even public car park fees. I parked in a private car park for about 20 minutes and didn't have change nor did I see an app to use. I received a £100 ticket in the mail! On site cameras take a photo of your car license plate and look up your address, so be sure to pay.

## PUBS

It's difficult to come up with a comparison to pubs in the US. A pub is a bar, but can also be a restaurant. But a pub is so much more than either of those descriptions. Because England is made up of a lot of small villages, pubs have always served as the heart of the community, a gathering spot. It's the social hub. Your "local" is the nearest pub or where you are known.

Pubs are where we gather to share news, meet friends, celebrate sports wins, watch live music, eat, have a drink and feel a part of the community.

Pubs are sometimes owned by a brewery such as "Harvey's" or "Greene King" whose beer is featured prominently on tap, but pubs can also be privately owned.

# WHAT'S IT REALLY LIKE?

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## RELIGION

Generally religion isn't a divisive topic in the UK as it is in other parts of the world. While you can certainly practice your religion here you won't find it a dominating influence on UK culture. The largest percentage of the population designate as Christian.

Here's a [Wiki page](#) if you're curious about how each major religion is represented in the UK.

## SPORTS

On the other hand, sports are easily as popular as in the US. If you're a supporter of your team then you'll likely be incredibly loyal. Sport in England [explained](#).

**Rugby** - played with an oval ball, most like American football but without the gear

**Football** - played with a round ball, most like American soccer, known for it's fan's hooliganism

**Cricket** - played with a bat and ball between two teams with a wicket at each end

## STORES

Every store is generally referred to as a "shop" or if it's a large store or chain, by its name. There are few national department stores and malls are almost non existent except in London or larger cities. Typically you'll have a large shopping district or "High Street". It's one thing I really miss, the vast amount of choice in the US!

There aren't national chains like Target, and the few stores which try to cater to "everything under one roof" fall far short in my opinion. While you'll find Costco, it's a pale comparison to what's available in the US. If you're a Trader Joe's fan, you won't find any here and the only Whole Foods is in London. You'll find a lot of small health food stores and a chain Holland & Barrett, but again it doesn't even come close to Natural Grocers or Sprouts.

My favorite grocery stores are Waitrose (higher quality, gourmet \$\$) and Marks's & Spencers (own brands and known for their fresh "ready meals" \$\$). Lidl, Aldi and ASDA are small price conscious chains you'll find throughout the UK.

Most stores are open normal business hours except on Sunday with hours of 10AM-4PM

Small town and village shops make up their own hours which can sometimes be wildly inconvenient!

# WHAT'S IT REALLY LIKE?

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## TIME

The UK is on Greenwich Mean Time or 0. Greenwich is the Prime Meridian for the world and all time zones are set from here. For example, US Eastern time zone is 5 hours behind UK time, Pacific is 8 hours behind.

### Daylight Savings Time

- US - DST begins on the 2nd Sunday in March and 1st Sunday in November
- UK - DST begins on the last Sunday in March and last Sunday in October.

The UK is in the far northern hemisphere; expect long days in the summer and short days in winter. These times are for London; days will be shorter & longer the further north you go.

- On June 8, sunrise is at 4:45 AM and sunset is 10:14 PM.
- On December 8, sunrise is at 7:52 AM and sunset is 3:51 PM.

Visiting the Royal Observatory in Greenwich (London) is a fascinating day trip. Take one of the boats up the Thames and get off in Greenwich. You can return by boat or by tube.

## TV

You've heard of the BBC. It's responsible for many classic programs that PBS carries in the US and is the main source of news if not entertainment here in the UK. Affectionately referred to as "Auntie", the BBC has been around for almost a hundred years!

The BBC is publicly funded but not by donations like PBS. It's supported by the population. If you watch live TV (of any kind) you're required to purchase an annual TV license, which costs £159 per year (\$210.) and can be paid in monthly installments.

This supports not only TV programs on the app iPlayer and live TV but also BBC radio which is an institution here.

If you're renting a short term property don't worry about this fee, but if you intend to have a TV at a home in your name then you're legally obligated to pay for the license. It's a bit contentious at the moment and may be scrapped in the future but for now it's still required.

# WHAT'S IT REALLY LIKE?

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## WEATHER

I have been known to say “no one comes here for the weather” and I’m afraid it’s true. Of course when the sun is shining there’s nowhere more glorious than the English countryside with it’s endless blue skies and massive white clouds. However the reverse is also true.

There’s nothing more daunting than day after day of solid grey skies. Unless you’re used to Seattle or enjoy a good overcast day!

Average annual rain or snow fall in the UK can vary widely but a good median is about 1500 mm or 59 inches. No one ever complains it doesn’t rain enough. Except perhaps the farmers.

Almost 60 inches is quite a lot of rain when you’re not used to it. For example annual average rainfall in Colorado is between 12- 25 inches which includes snowfall. Average rainfall in Massachusetts is about 43 inches, and surprisingly just 37 inches in Seattle.

The big difference is that temperatures here are moderate. You won’t get any wild swings like you get in high altitudes for example. Even though England sits in a northern latitude, its temperatures are moderated by the Gulf stream and rarely get too hot or too cold. Perfect for those Goldilocks!

Long heavy downpours are rare here. Usually it will be more of a steady misty rain or a short sharp shower that’s over quickly. Obviously the further north you go in the UK the colder it gets.

### **Temperate Maritime Climate:**

If you’re from a Northern latitude the UK may feel normal *or* warmer than you’d expect, however if you live in a Southern latitude (like Florida) it will feel cold here.

- not usually colder than 32F (0C) in winter or higher than 89F (32C) in summer
- damp and very changeable
- warmest months are July and August, although September can be just as warm
- May, June, September and October nicest months to travel, drier and warm
- southern England gets the most sunshine - no surprise
- hot days in summer are rare but do happen, typically don’t last more than a few days

# VISA & ENTRY INFO

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**LEGAL DISCLAIMER:** This guide is intended to give you general advice about living in England for up to 6 months and is not intended to provide legal guidance. Legal requirements change and I advise you to use the links provided to find the most current information on the [UK Gov portal](#) for your situation.

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## GENERAL GUIDANCE

*You can visit the UK as a Standard Visitor for tourism, business, study (courses up to 6 months) and other permitted activities.*

*You can usually stay in the UK for up to 6 months. You might be able to apply to stay for longer in certain circumstances, for example to get medical treatment.*

### **You can visit the UK as a Standard Visitor:**

- for tourism, for example on a holiday or vacation
- to see your family or friends
- to volunteer for up to 30 days with a registered charity
- to pass through the UK to another country ('in transit')
- for certain business activities, for example attending a meeting or interview
- to take part in a school exchange programme
- to do a recreational course of up to 30 days, for example a dance course
- to study, do a placement or take an exam
- as an academic, senior doctor or dentist
- for medical reasons

### **As a Visitor You cannot:**

- do paid or unpaid work for a UK company or as a self-employed person
- claim public funds (benefits)
- live in the UK for long periods of time through frequent or successive visits
- marry or register a civil partnership, or give notice of marriage or civil partnership - you'll need to apply for a Marriage Visitor visa

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### Check You Meet Eligibility Requirements

You must have a passport or travel document to enter the UK. It should be valid for the whole of your stay.

You must be able to show that:

- you'll leave the UK at the end of your visit (show an airline ticket for example)
- you're able to support yourself and your dependents during your trip (or have funding from someone else to support you)
- you're able to pay for your return or onward journey (or have funding from someone else to pay for the journey)
- you'll not live in the UK for extended periods through frequent or successive visits, or make the UK your main home

## VISA & ENTRY INFO

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*You can visit the UK as a Standard Visitor for tourism, business, study (courses up to 6 months) and other permitted activities. If you're unsure of whether or not you need a visa follow these instructions:*

### Check if you need a visa to visit the UK

Depending on your nationality, you'll either:

- have to apply for a Standard Visitor visa before you travel to the UK
- be able to visit the UK for up to 6 months without needing a visa

You can [check if you need a visa](#) before you apply.

If you do not need a visa, you must still meet the Standard Visitor eligibility requirements to visit the UK. You may be asked questions at the UK border about your eligibility and the activities you plan to do.

If you've previously been refused entry to the UK or have a criminal record, you may want to apply for a Standard Visitor visa (even if you do not need one).

What if you want to stay in the UK beyond 6 months? [Check your visa options](#)

If you've been advised you need a longer term visa to enter the country you can apply for a long term [Standard Visitor Visa for 2, 5, 10 Years](#)

# CAN YOU BRING YOUR PET?

## BRINGING YOUR PET INTO THE UK

You may bring a dog, cat or ferret into the UK (different rules apply to Northern Ireland).  
Not sure why ferrets are on the list but hey ho.

For more details follow the [bringing your pet](#) guidance straight from the Gov.UK site.

You can enter or return to Great Britain with your pet cat, dog or ferret if it:

- has been [microchipped](#)
- has a [pet passport](#) or [health certificate](#)
- has been [vaccinated against rabies](#) - it will also need a blood test if you're travelling from an [country that is not 'listed'](#)

Dogs must also usually have a [tapeworm treatment](#).

Your pet may be [put into quarantine](#) for up to 4 months if you do NOT follow these rules - or refused entry if you traveled by sea. You're responsible for any fees or charges.

There's different guidance if you're [taking your pet dog, cat or ferret abroad](#).

If you bring a [banned breed of dog](#) into Great Britain it can be taken away from you by the police or local authorities and could be destroyed.

Your pet must arrive in Great Britain no more than 5 days before or after you, or you'll have to follow different rules.

You must use an approved route unless you're traveling within the UK or from Ireland.

You need to fill in a declaration confirming that you are not going to sell or transfer the ownership of your pet.

Your pet can travel with someone else if you've authorised it in writing.

These rules only apply to these particular pets. Different rules apply to other pets.

# WHAT TO BRING WITH YOU

## WHAT TO BRING TO THE UK:

- Dual voltage electronics like phones, tablets, laptops, computers, Kindles, some electric toothbrushes
- Wireless charging pad or charging cords
- Portable battery bank for on the go charging
- A dual voltage or travel hairdryer (should be compatible with 220V)
- Voltage converters for non dual voltage electronics
  
- Drug store medications you prefer.
- Supplements - they are cheaper in the US
- Prescriptions with enough refills to last for your time away
- Melatonin for sleep if you use it- isn't sold in UK
  
- Walking shoes - cheaper in the US
- Waterproof jacket from Eddie Bauer, REI or Sierra Trading Post
- Top bed sheet if you prefer to sleep with one
- Backpack ( I got my Baggallini at TJMAXX)
- Packable umbrella
- Packing cubes

## WHAT NOT TO BRING:

- Appliances that are NOT dual voltage or compatible with 220V
- Ibuprofen and aspirin (sold here as Nurofen and Paracetamol)
- Viagra, Buscopan (IBS relief) and Zovirax (cold sores) are available here OTC
- Hairdryer or curling iron unless its dual voltage
- Any weapons, knives or banned goods

# WHAT TO BRING WITH YOU

## PACKING TIPS

- light layers during any season
- gloves & scarves for warmth
- packable breathable hat
- lightweight folding umbrella
- versatile tote or cross body bag

## SHOPPING RESOURCES

For rain, outdoor & travel wear

### USA

[Eddie Bauer](#)

[Athleta](#)

[LL Bean](#)

[Sierra Trading Post](#)

### UK

[Marks & Spencer](#)

[Cotswold Outdoors](#)

[Mountain Warehouse](#)

[Clarks Village](#)

[Bicester Village](#)

[Designer Outlet Swindon](#)

# GETTING THERE

Travel into the UK

Travel into the US from UK

General Advice

## FLIGHT ADVICE

Fly **non stop** whenever possible. First it's less stressful. You'll be flying west to east overnight and it's easier to settle down to sleep if you don't have to worry about a connection. Second once you take off you won't have to worry about weather delays complicating connections. Third, you won't have to go through security more than once.

## SEATING

Upgrade your seat to Premium Economy or higher as budget allows. I'd recommend at least upgrading on the flight *to* London. You'll get a better nights rest and arrive the next morning refreshed. Flying back home will be during daylight hours and isn't as critical to comfort, but if you can afford it, go Premium both directions.

You know what your seat preferences are but I try to book as close to the entrance door as possible, near the front of the plane. Getting out faster on arrival ahead of the rest of the plane? Priceless.

## BAGGAGE

Consider booking your luggage requirements differently for both segments of your trip.

To the UK, I would advise getting one carry on and 1 full size baggage allowance fare. In the past I've taken an empty packable bag inside one of my full bags. On your return you may need more space so paying for an extra bag on the return leg makes sense.

On the other hand, if you're moving over to England, paying for an additional bag on the flight *to* London makes sense. I've done this and it's a lot cheaper to pay for an additional bag or two than paying to ship items.

# ACCOMMODATION TRACKER

Destination	Accommodation
Day 1	
Day 2	
Day 3	
Day 4	
Day 5	
Day 6	
Day 7	
Day 8	
Day 9	
Day 10	
Day 11	
Day 12	
Day 13	
Day 14	

# ACCOMMODATION TRACKER

Destination	Accommodation
Day 15	
Day 16	
Day 17	
Day 18	
Day 19	
Day 20	
Day 21	
Day 22	
Day 23	
Day 24	
Day 25	
Day 26	
Day 27	
Day 28	

# ACCOMMODATION TRACKER

Destination	Accommodation
Day 29	
Day 30	
Day 31	
Day 32	
Day 33	
Day 34	
Day 35	
Day 36	
Day 37	
Day 38	
Day 39	
Day 40	
Day 41	
Day 42	

## PRE DEPARTURE CHECKLIST

- Apply or renew passports 8-12 weeks in advance
- Book air tickets at least 8-12 weeks in advance
- Book accommodation 8-10 weeks in advance
- Book a rental car or arrange transportation on arrival in UK
- Arrange for a housesitter/ petsitter/boarding if needed
- Research towns and cities to visit
- Contact local real estate agents to set up viewings
- Create a packing list for each passenger
- Start a file with travel documents, passports & visas as required
- Put vaccination records on phone or print
- Go to bed 1 hour earlier for several days before your flight

## ARRIVING IN UK: FIRST STEPS

- Arrange transportation to your first hotel or Airbnb
- Take a quick nap on arrival then get some daylight exposure to acclimate your body
- Go shopping to stock your fridge and cupboards
- Take a walk around the neighborhood to acclimate
- Pick up your rental car or arrange car sharing service if needed
- Set up a new UK phone with a month to month SIM plan
- Set up a UK bank account at a local branch
- Install apps for Trainline, bank, parking (Just Park, Ringo, MiPermit)
- Get in touch with estate agents about properties you want to check out

# GETTING AROUND THE UK

## RENTAL CAR

Book ahead to get the best price - although discounts aren't as available as they once were.

If you're a Costco member, check out their price on a UK or European rental car.

### **Car rental companies serving Europe**

Costco | Alamo | Thrifty | Hertz | Budget | Europcar

## CAR SHARING SERVICE

Become a member of a car sharing service to rent a car hourly or when you need it. Register with your US driving license. Check first to see if there's cars available near your location to make pickups and dropoffs easy. You'll need to return to the same pickup location.

### **Co Wheels**

- per hour from £5. (\$6.50)
- per day from £40. (\$52.00)
- Insurance & fuel included but you'll pay an additional per mile charge of 0.20 (.26)

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

When I first came to live in England, relying on public transportation was quite a novelty but it can come with a steep learning curve!

### **Trains**

I've written extensively about [train travel here](#) . I recommend the app/site Trainline to book all trains within the UK (and some in Europe). There's a small additional fee to book with the app but I feel the convenience makes it worth it. Trainline is invaluable for searching by journey, time and fare when booking *and* alerts you to problems like cancellations or delays.

Pay within the app then download the ticket to your Apple Wallet to store the ticket digitally. You'll scan it at ticket barriers or show to conductors.

The more in advance you buy tickets normally the better the price. Tickets are supposed to go on sale 6 weeks in advance. Morning and evening commuting times are the priciest.

# GETTING AROUND THE UK

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

### Buses

If the rail network is the artery or backbone of public transportation, buses are the veins that connect all the smaller towns and villages. National Express coaches (buses) are used for cross country travel but most towns and counties are served by local bus services run by the local council/town.

The National Express coaches serve Heathrow and Gatwick airports as a possible option if you don't have direct train service to the airport. There's no train to/from Heathrow - except into London - but there's extensive train service to Gatwick.

One option to get to Heathrow airport is take the train to Reading and then get on Heathrow Railair coach/bus service

National Express coach or long distance buses can be cheaper than trains but I wouldn't recommend them unless you're not in a hurry!

To find out what bus options there are from your location, I advise using the Google maps app. Search for your destination, touch Directions, then choose the *Public Transportation* option instead of *Car*. Be sure to specify the time because that will affect what services are available. All your options will populate under the map with bus numbers, times and stops. You should be able to see which bus will take you where you need to go. Buses are typically known by their number such as the D2. The destination should be displayed on headliner over the front window.

Most local buses use regional apps or credit card for payment. If you plan on using that bus system often, download the app to make paying easier or pay by card so you don't need to make change. Tickets are sold as singles (one way) or return (round trip).

Local bus times website

National Express bus service

Heathrow Railair

## NEED TO KNOW: BANKING

To stay in England for up to 6 months, I'd advise getting a local bank account. I use Lloyds Bank but any bank with a branch convenient to your home will work.

You'll need a UK bank account to set up a direct debit payment for rent and any local utilities that aren't included in your accommodation such as cell phone service. Most vacation or short term rental agencies should accept payment by credit card but estate agencies (real estate offices) won't.

You'll probably be asked to pay for your accommodation in full prior to your stay. Most short term agencies ask for a deposit and then the balance is due 90 days before.

You need a UK address to apply for a local UK banking account. Use the address of your Airbnb or short term rental or the address of a friend or relative. The bank will send confirmation by mail so be sure you'll be able to receive mail at whatever address you use.

- Most rentals and utilities are paid by direct debit from a UK bank account.
- Pay individuals or small businesses with a direct one time or recurring payment ("standing order") from your UK bank account.
- Your bank account is assigned an account number and "sort code" which is used to send or receive a payment.
- You may not be extended any credit until you have lived here for at least 2 years so be prepared to use your US accounts or cash.

### UK Banks

- Lloyds Banking Group
- Barclays
- HSBC
- Halifax Bank of Scotland
- Metro Bank
- Nat West
- Royal Bank of Scotland

# NEED TO KNOW: RENTING

## RENTALS:

Unless you have the "right to reside" you won't legally be able to rent a home through traditional real estate (estate agency) offices. You'll need to rent privately through short term rental sites (see Where to Stay for local agency recommendations)

If you do qualify for long term residency and are eligible to rent (let) a home, expect a 6 month lease (tenancy) with the option to renew on a month by month or longer term.

You may be expected to pay 6 months rent upfront before moving in if you don't have local credit or rental history.

Most long term rentals in England will come unfurnished similar to the US. In Scotland; especially in cities like Edinburgh, many rentals will be available furnished.

It's not unusual for rentals in vacation areas to be available for "winter lets" from November to May, furnished and with utilities included. You can find these on estate agency web sites as well as short term or holiday rental sites.

## Property Search

- UK search portal [Rightmove](#) to rent & buy
- UK search portal [Zoopla](#) to rent & buy
- [Spareroom](#) - share a room or house (this can be a great option if you're single)

## Vacation Rental Agencies

- Cottages.com
- Holiday Cottages
- Original Cottages
- Independent Cottages
- Classic Cottages
- Sykes Cottages
- VRBO
- Airbnb

## NEED TO KNOW: UTILITIES

In the event your rental doesn't include utilities you'll need to arrange for those to be transferred or set up in your name.

### GAS/ELECTRIC/INTERNET

UK utilities require setting up a direct debit, but a deposit isn't usually required.

- You'll be responsible for reading your meter unless a smart meter's been installed. You can easily swap between providers unless you sign a long term deal which I don't recommend.
- Search for rates for both gas/electric/internet (broadband) and phone service [here](#).

### PHONE

I advise getting a local UK phone number for use within the UK.

- Walk into any cellphone provider like EE, Vodafone, Three or Virgin and ask for a month to month SIM plan.
- You can use an unlocked phone from the US (make sure it's unlocked by your US provider before you leave the US) or buy a cheap UK phone to put the SIM in.
- Your US phone can be used for WiFi and data if your plan covers you in the UK
- Call the US using Whatsapp which is free for calls & texts
- I used a US phone with TMobile along with a UK phone with SIM card initially. I advise not giving up your US phone number because you'll need it for US banks, two factor authentication and more.
- I have a UK home phone number with my internet plan but I don't use it. It's up to you. I find a cell phone is all I need.
- You will get texts from your local GP (doctor), the NHS not to mention the Home Office (passports) so it's handy to have a local number.

## NEED TO KNOW: SHIPPING/MAIL

### MAIL:

Mail service works about the same here as in the US. It's rare to find a stand alone post office, look for them inside a WHSmith, grocery like Co-Op or stationery store. Oh and it's called the "post" not mail!

- Everything is weighed at the time of mailing so it's hard to pre-buy stamps or postage.
- You can choose 1st or 2nd class for letters etc. I believe 1st class promises next day delivery. 2nd is obviously cheaper but honestly the mail here is super speedy so unless it's urgent save a little and go 2nd
- Expect to see UPS, Evri, Royal Mail and DPD or DHL for package deliveries.
- Anything you ship here from the US or another country will be assessed customs and VAT duty. It's a beast! Very expensive. Buy what you need in the US and bring it, don't ship it.

# NEED TO KNOW: HEALTH CARE

## HEALTH CARE IN THE UK:

You've heard about the NHS - National Health Service - and wondering, am I eligible for health care while I'm in the UK?

The short answer is: anyone who's a legal resident of the UK is entitled to free health care services. Those who are NOT residents are entitled to free emergency services. If you're not planning on becoming a legal resident, you may want an additional travel insurance plan for coverage.

## Health Care services through the NHS

*Treatment provided by a GP and other primary care services are free of charge to all whether registering with a GP as an NHS patient, or accessing NHS services as a temporary patient. A temporary patient is someone who is in the area for more than 24 hours and less than 3 months.*

*For secondary care services, the UK's healthcare system is residence-based. This means that you must be living lawfully in the UK on a properly settled basis to be entitled to free healthcare.*

*The measure of residence that the UK uses to determine whether someone is entitled to free NHS healthcare is known as 'ordinary residence'. To be ordinarily resident in the UK, people from countries outside the European Economic Area (EEA) who are subject to immigration control need to also have the immigration status of 'indefinite leave to remain'.*

*People who are not ordinarily resident in the UK may be required to pay for their care when they are in England. However, some services and some individuals are exempt from payment.*

## The NHS services that are currently free of charge

(irrespective of an overseas visitor's country of normal residence)

- *accident and emergency services, such as those provided at an A&E department, walk-in centre, minor injuries unit or urgent care centre (not including emergency services provided after being admitted as an inpatient, or at a follow-up outpatient appointment, for which charges must be levied unless the overseas visitor is exempt)*

## How to Access NHS Services as a Visitor

## WHERE TO STAY

Where to stay can be one of your biggest decisions once you've decided to spend more time in England.

Ask yourself these questions... Are you envisioning living in a city or would you prefer to experience the English countryside. Or perhaps a bit of both?

What's your preference when it comes to lifestyle? Do you like the idea of the hustle and bustle of living in a London neighborhood with endless options for culture, eating out and the buzz of city life?

Will you prefer to live somewhere you don't need a car? Perhaps a smaller scale city with lots of cafes, shops and amenities to walk to but with a less hectic pace.

Or the best of both worlds?

A regional town with easy access to public transport and cities but still easy to get to know your way around by walking and exploring is ideal. It's more relaxing to have options if you don't want to fuss with a car.

I've come up with a selection of cities and towns to suit any of these lifestyles. Depending on how long you'd like to stay, you may need to consider multiple locations. Unless you're traveling in the off season of November to April, It's unlikely you'll be able to find *one* short term property for a full 6 months.

Nov-April is known as a winter let and is sometimes available in coastal towns or summer vacation hotspots. Each recommendation is rated by my own observations, as I'm familiar with all of these locations.

Let's start looking shall we?

## WHERE TO STAY

### Lewes

Lewes is convenient to London for day trips yet small enough to not feel overwhelming. Plus it's an easy hop from Gatwick airport by train.

Hands down Lewes is my top pick. I've spent over 6 months here along with countless visits and I can highly recommend it's charms and easy accessibility.

It's the perfect blend of having easy access to London, but with glorious countryside walks along the Downs steps away. You're not too far from the English Channel and seaside towns like Brighton and Eastbourne as well.

Gorgeous architecture, thriving restaurant and pub scene, lovely antique and independent shops plus a posh little cinema and cafe. What more could you ask for!  
Good train links into London and to Gatwick Airport round off it's charms and desirability as a home from home.

If you love:

A smallish town with it all. Nature, shopping, easy access to coast or London

Distance to London by train: 1+ hour

**Vacation Rental Agencies**

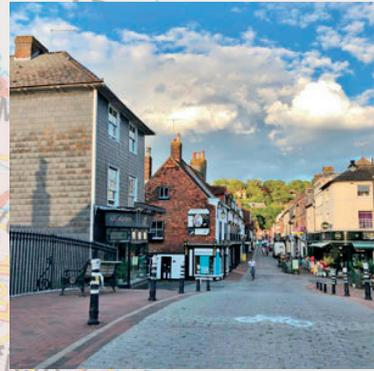
Visit Lewes

Amberley House Cottages

Bramley & Teal

# WHERE TO STAY

Lewes



## WHERE TO STAY

# Windsor

Windsor is a close commute to London, with more urban, but posh neighborhoods overlooked by lovely Windsor castle

Windsor enjoys regular train service to London, sits on the Thames river and has the pretty town of Eton (Eton College) just across the bridge.

It has a cosmopolitan feel with easy access to London and it's home to the Royals. There's a vibrant shopping district with both High St (chain) and independent stores, plus pretty neighborhoods to stroll through.

One of my favorites is *Daniel of Windsor*, a one of a kind department store.

If you love:

Being on the Queen's doorstep with easy access to London plus plenty of buzz, shopping and dining. Stay in Old Windsor.

Distance to London by train: 1 hour

**Vacation Rental Agencies**

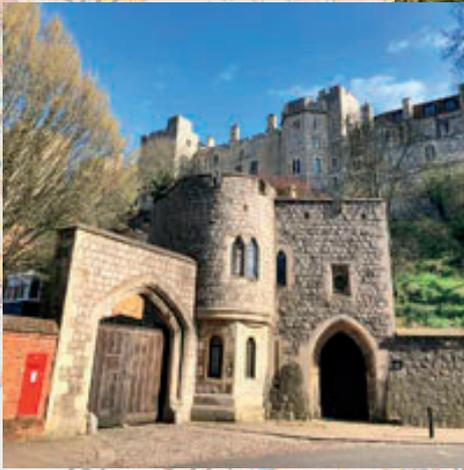
[Windsor VRBO rentals](#)

[Plum Guide](#)

[Windsor Self Catering](#)

# WHERE TO STAY

Windsor



## WHERE TO STAY

# Guildford

Guildford is a highly desirable commuter town outside of London in the county of Surrey that offers a cosmopolitan experience.

Guildford is known for its eclectic cobbled High Street with the medieval Guildford Castle in its center.

It's also within easy access to several National Trust properties like Wisley, Polesden Lacey and Loseley Park.

Lots of shopping, cafes, restaurants and pubs make for a very lively lifestyle without a hectic pace. Very residential and non touristy.

If you love:

A medium size town with upper class vibe close enough to London by train to pop back and forth

Distance to London by train: 1/2 - 1 hour

### Vacation Rental Agencies

[Foxtons Short Let](#)

[Guildford VRBO](#)

[Cottages.com](#)

# WHERE TO STAY

*Guildford*



## WHERE TO STAY

# Westminster London

If you'd like to stay within London's bustling and buzzy city center, you can't go wrong with the Borough of Westminster.

Central to everywhere in London, Westminster has a classy residential feel that I appreciate. Basing yourself in London doesn't get any better than this and if you want to be close to major train stations to make connections elsewhere in the UK this is a convenient location.

London and all it offers is at your doorstep. Westminster is a little calm within the hustle and bustle of the big city and within easy access to the Thames, Westminster bridge and the Houses of Parliament.

I would highly recommend [Dolphin Square](#) for your long term stay.

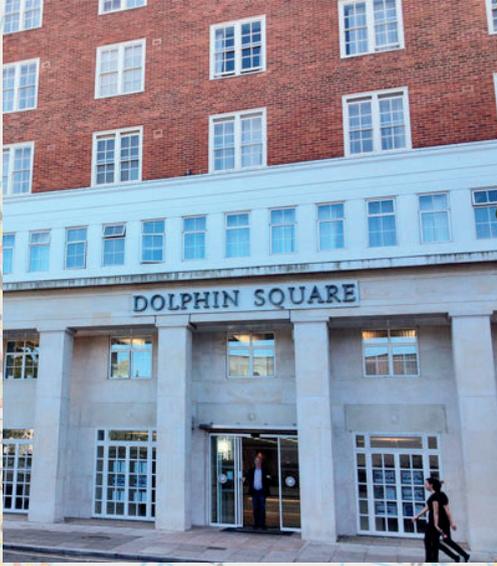
If you love:

Being in the heart of London but tucked away in a quiet residential area

Distance to London by train: 0

# WHERE TO STAY

Westminster London



## WHERE TO STAY

### Bath

Bath is a bustling historical Roman spa town well known for it's stunning Georgian architecture and being one time home of Jane Austen.

Nestled in the Somerset countryside Bath is surrounded by beautiful towns and country perfection. You'll have lots to explore if you want a break from this very manageable city.

Bath is surrounded by gentle hills which can be challenging to walk so I suggest finding a spot within walking distance of the bustling town center.

Bath can be touristy in the Southgate shopping center but there are many hidden corners to explore away from the well trodden tourist spots. Get your fix of stunning movie locations like Bridgerton and Pride and Prejudice too.

If you love:  
History, culture, literature and shopping along with a dose of incredible architecture. Very manageable city.

Distance to London by train: 1 1/2 hours

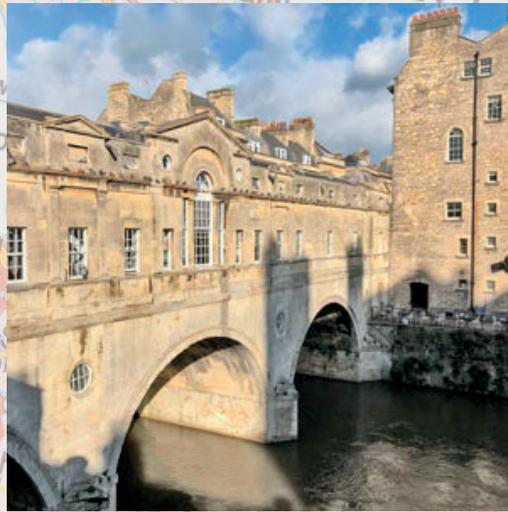
**Vacation Rental Agencies**

**Bath Self Catering**

**Bath Holiday Rentals**

# WHERE TO STAY

Bath



## WHERE TO STAY

### Bradford on Avon

Just southeast of Bath on the same train line is Bradford on Avon a small pretty town with a population of about 10,000

If you'd prefer to be closer to country living while having easy access to Bath, this very liveable town sits astride the Avon river and the Kennet Avon canal.

Nice pubs, small shops and a towpath to walk along and view narrowboats as they make their way up and down the canal locks.

Very picturesque town with similar architecture to Bath on a smaller scale. You may need a car to fully explore the countryside around it.

If you love:

A peaceful historic town that's walkable with pubs and restaurants but more focused on nature than shopping

Distance to London by train: 1 3/4 hours

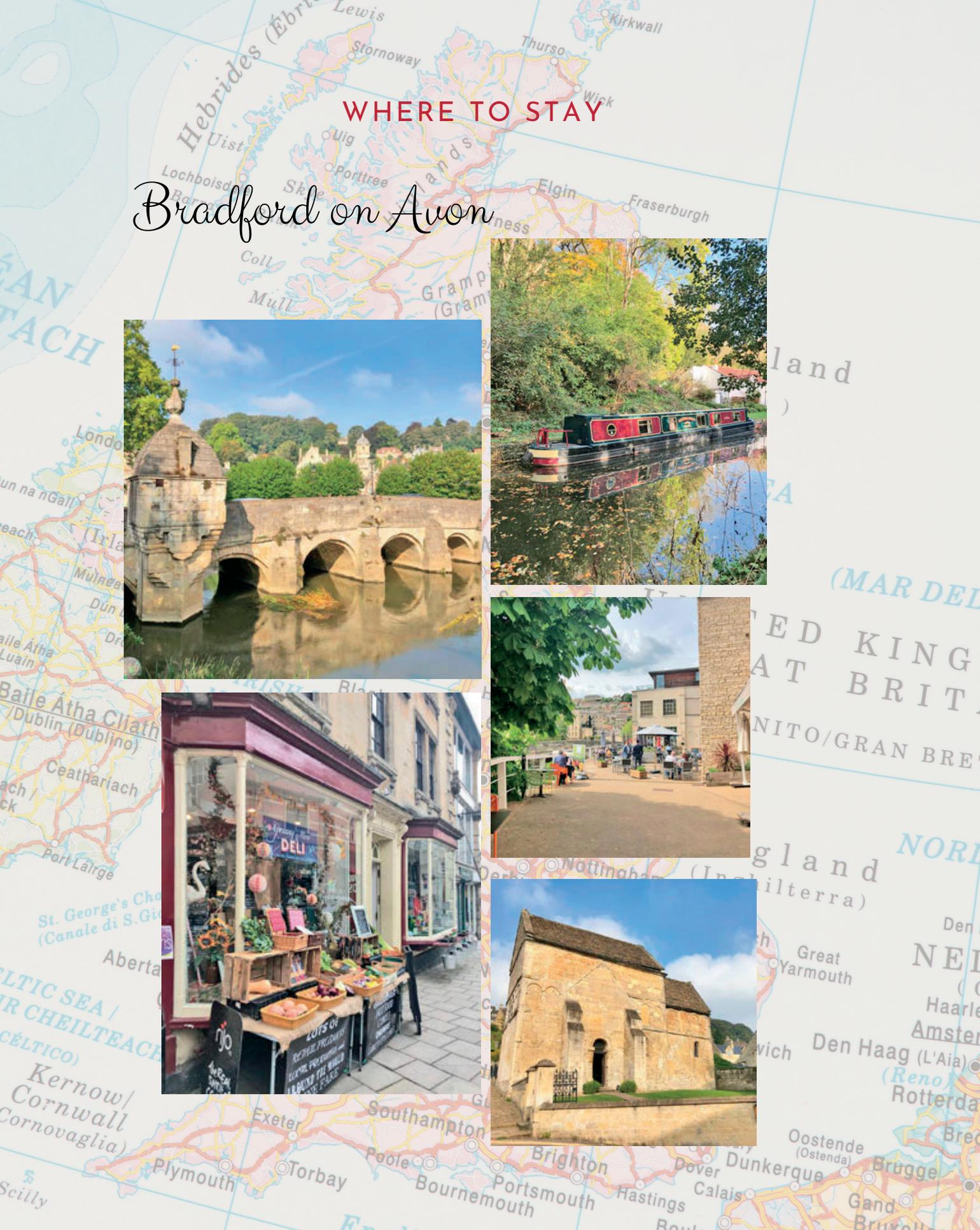
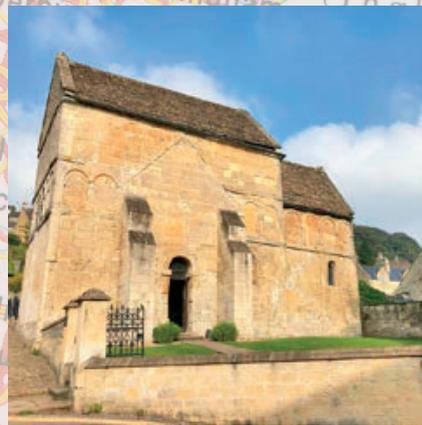
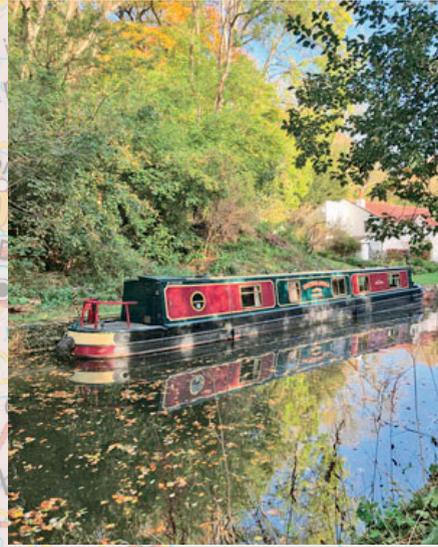
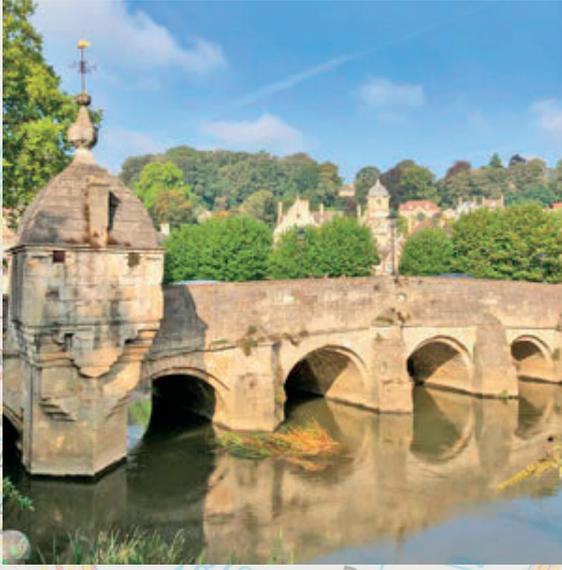
[Vacation Rental Agencies](#)

[Bath Self Catering](#)

[Bath Holiday Rentals](#)

WHERE TO STAY

Bradford on Avon



## WHERE TO STAY

### Eastbourne

Eastbourne's a good choice if you'd like access to London via train, prefer being on the coast but don't want the full on buzz of Brighton.

It's a traditional English seaside town with a large historic pier that's not too far from Lewes or Brighton. Considered to be retirement-centric but that's been changing. It's larger than Lewes but smaller than Brighton.

My favorite neighborhood is the Meads area, a historical section of town with it's own small High Street which sits right against the South Downs.

I love that you can walk over the Downs to Birling Gap and the Seven Sisters, two iconic local landmarks as well as have long walks along the beach promenade.

If you love:

A traditional seaside town with easy access to walks and aren't too picky about better shops or culture

Distance to London by train: 1 1/2 hours

**Vacation Rental Agencies**

[Eastbourne Holiday Cottages](#)

# WHERE TO STAY

Eastbourne



## WHERE TO STAY

# Lymington

For a completely unique experience, Lymington is a coastal town in the county of Hampshire that has a big sailing vibe.

Lymington is a ferry port so a great option to take a quick ferry ride over to the Isle of Wight to visit Osbourne House, Cowes or the Needles.

You'll be able to take walks along the harbor and watch sailboats and ferries navigate out into the Channel. There's a bit of a posh sailing vibe but it's a relaxing spot for all. Browse boutique shops amongst cobbled stoned streets and enjoy the relaxed small town feel.

There's a huge marina but no beaches and the shopping is somewhat limited. However Lymington has a Waitrose and Marks & Spencer food hall which is a plus to me!

If you love:

Sailing, being on the coast, a small scale town you can get around easily and aren't looking for world class shopping or dining.

Distance to London by train: 2 hours

**Vacation Rental Agencies**

[New Forest Cottages](#)

[Mulberry Cottages](#)

[New Forest Living](#)

# WHERE TO STAY

Lymington



## WHERE TO STAY

# Edinburgh

I love Edinburgh and its world class culture, history and architecture. I've only been there in September which may be the perfect month.

Edinburgh is in Scotland and so can be quite a bit chillier than England. I always end up buying more layers! But it's a vibrant lovely city that oozes culture, charm and history.

Can be a bit touristy in spots but it's easy to find delightful hidden neighborhoods. I'd avoid August as you won't find anywhere to stay because of the Edinburgh festivals.

The city is the perfect jumping off point to explore the rest of Scotland and there's so much to see! Try Rabbits Tours for a relaxed way to see those castles and take in a whisky tour without stress. We rented a place for two weeks through Dickins and used Edinburgh as a base.

If you love:  
Scottish culture, wool, whisky, history, shopping and being able to explore more of Scotland

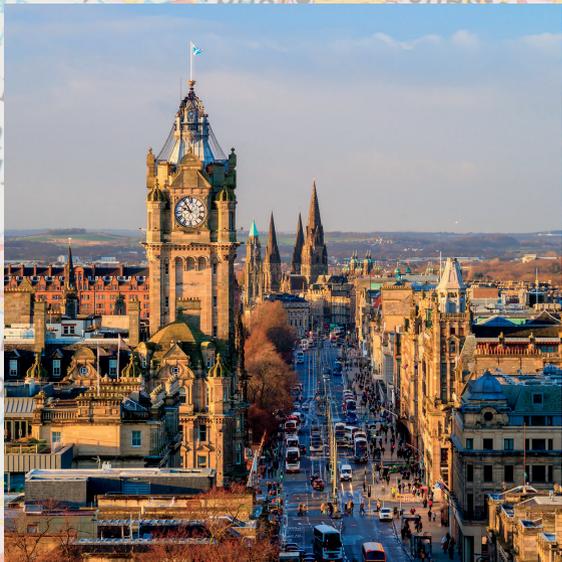
Distance to London by train: 4 1/2-5 hours

**Vacation Rental Agencies**

**Dickins Homes from Home**

# WHERE TO STAY

Edinburgh



## WHERE TO STAY

In addition to the local agencies I've listed with each destination, I can also recommend these national agencies as a good resource. Holiday cottages are big business in the UK and it shouldn't be too hard to find somewhere to suit you. If not get in touch with me and I'll be happy to put together some recommendations for you.

Although I've used Airbnb many times, I prefer using a local agency. Going local gives professional service with more accountability. Local rental agencies are more competitive in pricing and there's always recourse if something goes wrong or if you need additional advice. After all, a local business is preferable to calling a toll free number when you need answers.

With a local agency you'll need to pay a deposit to secure your reservation and then pay in full, usually 90-120 days prior to your arrival. Be sure to ask when booking.

Due to current demand, vacation rentals are often booked far in advance especially in desirable locations. I'd advise you to secure your accommodation with a deposit as soon as possible once you've firmed up your dates! Even before the pandemic I've had to scramble and it's not much fun to have to move on when you'd prefer staying where you are.

### Vacation Rental Agencies serving the entire UK

- Cottages.com
- Holiday Cottages
- Original Cottages
- Independent Cottages
- Classic Cottages
- Sykes Cottages
- VRBO
- Airbnb

## MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR VISIT

If you're traveling solo you'll need to be both the planner *and* explorer. If you travel as a couple, one of you is probably better at planning than the other. Go with your strengths!

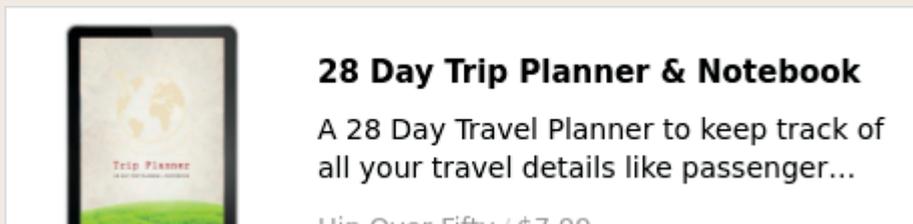
I like to plan all of the details like airfare, car, accommodation ahead of time and then discover the day to day things organically. Knowing where I'll be sleeping each night is peace of mind.

Research your trip goals ahead of time. Decide what you want to accomplish on this trip and plan accordingly.

### Trip Goals

- What would be the best outcome from this trip?
- What's important for you to accomplish while you're here?
- What locations do you plan to visit?
- What are your next steps to follow up on this visit?

28 Day Trip Planner will help you organize the first month of your trip.



When we travel for exploration and enjoyment, we tend to let the experiences wash over us and not take stock of what it all means!

But I'm assuming you have a bit more of an agenda than being a tourist. You're looking for a change in life style and perhaps a permanent change in where you make your home. Be aware of what you want to accomplish on this trip, but also **tap into your sub conscious and intuition**. How does being here make you *feel*? Ultimately that's the best way to decide if this is where you want to be. Does it shift where you see yourself happy in the future?

## CAN YOU EXTEND YOUR STAY?

I receive a lot of comments and inquiries about living in England and the UK, especially from Americans. It's natural to assume that living here legally might be a fairly straightforward process with the US and UK close ties.

Unfortunately it's not easy to become a legal resident of the UK. Although it can be done if you fall into one of the [visa buckets](#) that exist.

It doesn't mean it's impossible to extend your stay but be prepared for a limit of up to 6 months.

I actually think six months is a good test run. It's easy to romanticize life here as being the antidote to what's happening elsewhere but it's not suited to everyone. I can find myself frustrated by the inefficiencies in local business and government for example. It's a good idea to come here first with an open mind and see if it provides you the lifestyle you want!

### **My best advice on extending your stay?**

The Gov.Uk site is the most up to date source of information on visa eligibility and residency options. Follow [these links](#) to find out if you qualify.

If you find you're NOT eligible for residency, there's no reason why you can't return often.

When you enter the country, the UK government wants to know you can afford to stay here without looking for employment or be a burden on the system *and* that you have a flight home booked. I think you'll find the UK customs/border is willing to work with you. Be prepared with a brief description of what you'll be doing while here as well as where you'll be staying. No need for full chapter and verse but be courteous and they'll be the same.

Don't expect to extend your stay past 6 months unless you're legally able to do so!

## UK GOV LINKS

[Check if you need to apply for a Visa](#)

[Apply to come to the UK](#)

[Visit the UK as a tourist or for a short stay](#)

[Marriage visitor visa](#)

[Apply for a work visa](#)

[Apply for a study visa](#)

[Apply for a family visa](#)

[Visas for commonwealth citizens and British nationals](#)

[UK Ancestry visa](#)

[Moving your belongings to the UK](#)

# HELPFUL UK LINKS

Here are some of my favorites and recommendations. I'm sure you'll find your own in good time!

## REAL ESTATE

[Rightmove](#) - rent or buy

[Zoopla](#) - rent or buy

[Open Rent](#) - rent privately

[Spareroom](#) - share a room or house

[Buying & Selling a home in the UK](#)

[Advice for House Sellers](#)

## TRANSPORTATION

[Trainline](#) - book train travel

[Great Western Railways](#)

[National Rail](#)

[Bus times](#)

[Ferrys](#)

## JOBS | BUY | SELL

[Gumtree](#)

## FOOD | GROCERIES

[Mark's & Spencers](#) - department store and food hall - prepared food

[Waitrose](#) - grocery store with online shopping

[Lidl](#) - bargain food store chain

## HISTORIC HOUSES & GARDENS

[National Trust](#)

[English Heritage](#)

## NEWSPAPERS

[The Times](#)

[The Telegraph](#)

[The I](#)

[The Guardian](#)

## COMPARE UTILITIES | INSURANCE

[Compare the market](#)

## ACCOMODATION LINKS

- [Cottages.com](#)
- [Holiday Cottages](#)
- [Original Cottages](#)
- [Independent Cottages](#)
- [Classic Cottages](#)
- [Sykes Cottages](#)
- [VRBO](#)
- [Airbnb](#)
- [Dickins Homes from Home](#)
- [New Forest Cottages](#)
- [Mulberry Cottages](#)
- [New Forest Living](#)
- [Eastbourne Holiday Cottages](#)
- [Bath Self Catering](#)
- [Bath Holiday Rentals](#)
- [Dolphin Square](#)
- [Foxtons Short Let](#)
- [Guildford VRBO](#)
- [Windsor VRBO rentals](#)
- [Plum Guide](#)
- [Windsor Self Catering](#)
- [Visit Lewes](#)
- [Amberley House Cottages](#)
- [Bramley & Teal](#)

# SHIPPING+EXPAT LINKS

## INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING

- My Baggage - Luggage shipping service
- UPAK - International shipping service

I used Upak to ship a crate from the US to the UK and although it took several months to complete, I can recommend the service. One of the most affordable services available.

- Moving hub -International shipping

## MAILBOX SERVICE

- Best virtual mailbox services for expats

Even if you keep your US "home" address, it can be helpful to set up another "virtual" mailbox to receive mail and have it forwarded to where you're staying in the UK. Some services will scan and only forward mail or packages you request.



## ENGLISH WAY OF LIFE

Brits are just as fascinated with Americans and US culture as we are with Lady Mary and Harry Potter. Your accent will elicit curiosity and conversation.

They'll want to share their experiences of traveling in the US with you and will be curious about where you're from and what matters to you. I've had many Brits tell me they love my accent and I always laugh because of course I think they're the ones with the accent!

Don't worry about putting your foot in your mouth or making some dangerous faux pas. I've found most Brits are very tolerant and happy to indulge our ignorance ...to a point.

The English way of life is mostly tolerant and inclusive. You can be as weird as you like and most won't look twice at you because they've already seen it. However there's still very much a class system which I think is hard for Americans to understand. If you look at the example of Downton Abby as example, you'll know what I mean!

The upper class and titled are considered privileged in a way that no amount of money will ever change. In fact being a member of the aristocracy - a lord, lady, duke or duchess - means you can get away with being poor because you have the social clout. It's not like it is in the US where money is the all important social clout.

Not to say you can't buy your way into any club or social event, because you can. But you will always be an outsider to those who have grown up with privilege by birth or by land. If you follow my Instagram you'll know I've come across homes that have stayed in families for hundreds of years. Most of these homes and the titles and privilege that go with them were originally conferred by royalty - the king or queen. It's a legacy.

On the other end of the spectrum are the lower classes, sometimes referred to as "chavs" if they're really beyond help. More common in cities but lower classes can be found anywhere. While there's a sense of entitlement in the upper to middle class (btw middle class here is higher than middle class in the US) there seems to be a sense of defeat and resignation in the lower classes.

# ENGLISH WAY OF LIFE

Here's my observations about what you can get away with and what to avoid. If you want to fit in with the British culture there are certain habits that are ingrained and if you flaunt them you'll find it harder to be accepted and invited into their lives.

## **DON'T do this**

- **Jump a queue or line!**

Brits are used to standing in a line for just about everything. From getting on a bus, to waiting for a ticket to getting a coffee. It may not be obvious right away but there's a pecking order. If you show up, be aware that others before you are waiting and it's appropriate to ask "is there a queue"?

- **Say "this is how we do it in \_\_\_\_".**

Yes I know it's almost unavoidable at times when you're trying to explain your point of view but try to refrain from pointing out how much better washing machines are in the US or something similar. Even though they are! No one really wants to hear that it's better somewhere else. They already have a sneaky suspicion that's true!

- **Get into political or religious discussions**

This is frowned upon here although I had many people ask me how I felt about Trump during the elections. They may be curious but let them bring up the topic. Whatever you do avoid talking about Brexit as it's a very divisive topic!

- **Talk too loudly**

Unless you're in a pub at closing time or everyone is shouting at a football or rugby game then keep the volume down. Generally folks are a lot more reserved here and they may tune you out if they perceive you're a loud talker. In fact I think Americans have a reputation for loudness.

- **Expect to talk about how you feel.**

Yes I know this sounds silly but it's amazing how well most Brits keep a lid on how they actually feel about anything. It's almost a badge of honor. Feelings, thoughts, fears etc aren't freely shared even amongst friends. So don't be surprised if your sharing isn't reciprocated.

# ENGLISH WAY OF LIFE

## DO this

- Say “morning” when you pass someone on the street
- Greet someone *before* asking a question. I still use the American “Hello, how are you...?” and get a few confused looks but you know what I mean
- Ask before asking - for example “Excuse me... would you mind if I...?”
- Offer to buy the next round at the pub if you’ve been treated to a drink
- Use “please” and “thank you” - a lot. Brits are persnickety about politeness
- Wait until everyone is *off* the bus/train before you get on
- Say thank you or “cheers” to the bus driver when you get off



## ENGLISH WAY OF LIFE

In closing I'll say that you can't go wrong with keeping your opinions to yourself and being overly polite!

I know that may sound harsh.

I just want to remind you that culturally we're very different from one another even if it seems like we shouldn't be. "Two countries separated by a common language" sums it up pretty well!

Once you're around friends or family you can relax a little. Just remember you're a visitor. Since I know I'm seen as American, I always try to be on my best behavior.

Although Brits have a reputation for being very reserved, underneath they're just like you and me. Ask politely and you'll be amazed at how helpful they can be.

Oh of course there are the same morons you'd expect in any culture, but the majority are very nice. This is what they call civilized :)

Keep your sense of humor as they love "taking the piss" out of anyone who is non-native. That means they'll find a way to poke fun at you. It's nothing personal it's just a national pastime!

## ENGLISH WAY OF LIFE

ENGLISH	AMERICAN Translation
boot	car trunk
knees up	wild party
with all due respect	without respect
bangers	sausages
the bill	police
brilliant	very good
dodgy	sketchy
the loo	toilet aka restroom
snog	kiss
whinge	whine
sorted	taken care of
decent	very good
lush	tasty or attractive
trousers	pants
knickers	underwear
knackered	exhausted
bloody	damn
flog	sell
Auntie	BBC
quid	a pound coin
playing away	cheating
No 10	Downing St. Prime Ministers home
GP	General Practitioner or Doctor

# TOP 5 TRAVEL APPS

## 1. TRIPIT app

The Tripit app is indispensable for keeping track of flights, hotels, even train trips. It sorts all your travel details in chronological order so you can see at a glance where you're supposed to be!

Set up the app with your details then you forward all booking confirmation emails to Tripit. It's a phenomenally useful app if you love to see all your travel details in one place.

## 2. APPLE WALLET

Keep your credit and debit cards in Apple Wallet for iPhone. A US credit card triggers a signature request no matter how small the transaction, so this is a quick and safe way to pay by CC.

I also save my digital train tickets or boarding passes in Wallet to scan instead of carrying a ticket. The Trainline app will ask if you want to download to Wallet.

## 3. BANKING APPS

Get access to all your US banking and investment accounts by installing those apps on your phone. Make sure you download the apps before you leave the US!

## 4. WHATSAPP

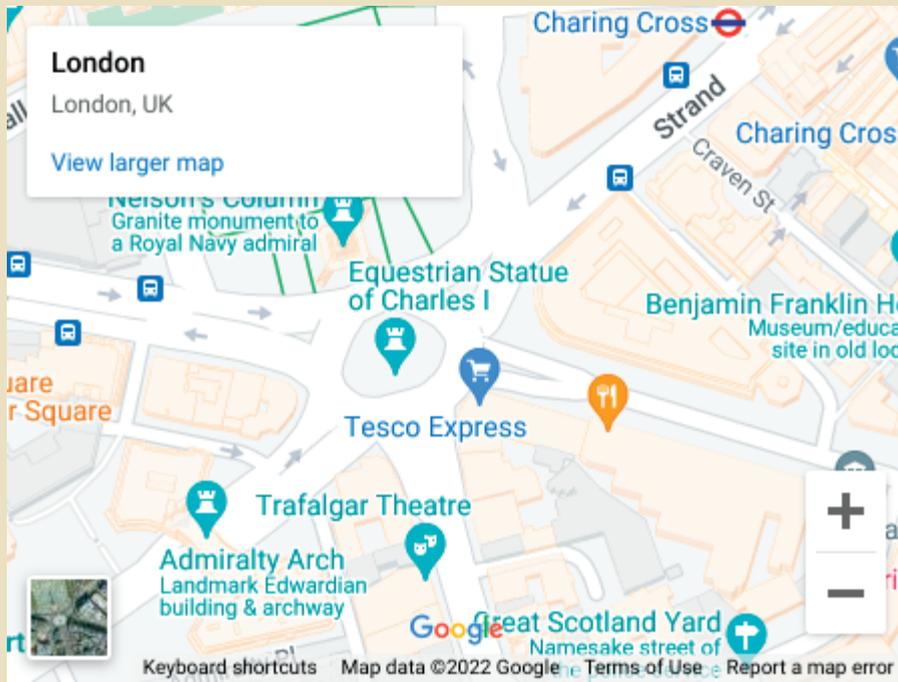
If you don't already use it, install Whatsapp on your phone so you can make free calls and texts to friends and family in the US while you're away.

Oh and don't forget to make sure they all have Whatsapp too. It's super common to use here, but I'm not sure it's been fully adopted in the US yet.

## 5. PASSWORDS

Make sure you have all your passwords with you before you leave home. We know how important those are! Store them in a password app or a safe place so you'll have access in case you lose cell or WiFi service.

# START EXPLORING LONDON



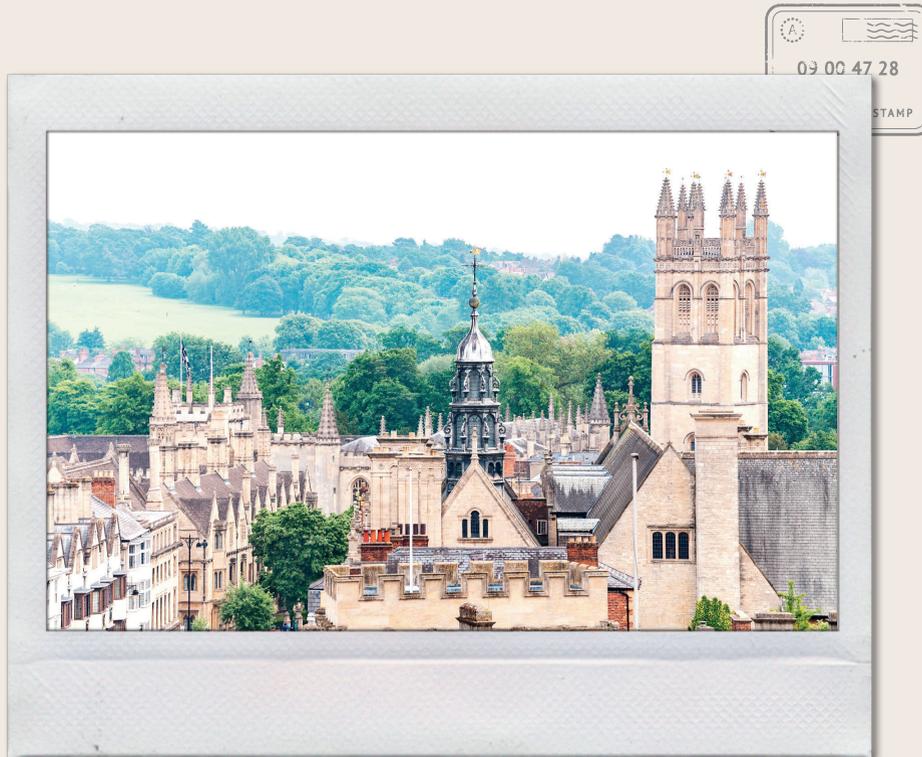
I know you're going to love your stay here! It's an amazing country and there's so much to explore that you'll never run out of things to do.

I hope you'll let me know how you "get on" as they say here. I'd love to hear about your experiences and adventures!

I'm always happy to help you plan your visit. Schedule a complimentary Whatsapp call to discuss any questions you have by using my [contact me](#) to get started!

Don't forget to check out my new [Youtube channel](#) for more advice and tips on moving to England and the UK.

*cheers, Tessa x*



CONTACT ME

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TRAVEL OR MOVE ABROAD IN MIDLIFE TO ENGLAND