



# Free early learning and childcare is increasing

Free early learning with a nursery or childminder supports your child's development.

- Social skills:** spending quality time with other children and adults
- Learning:** young children learn while they play and explore
- Routines:** children gain confidence, independence, and a sense of security

Free hours are available for 38 weeks a year, or some providers will allow you to 'stretch' the hours over more weeks, using fewer hours each week.

## How many hours of childcare can you get a week?

### Age 3-4 years

All parents			
15 hours Now	15 hours Apr 2024	15 hours Sept 2024	15 hours Sept 2025
Working families			
30 hours Now	30 hours Apr 2024	30 hours Sept 2024	30 hours Sept 2025

### Age 2 years

Families receiving some additional forms of government support			
15 hours Now	15 hours Apr 2024	15 hours Sept 2024	15 hours Sept 2025
Working families			
15 hours Apr 2024	15 hours Sept 2024	30 hours Sept 2025	

### Age 9-23 months

Working families	
15 hours Sept 2024	30 hours Sept 2025

Free hours are available from the start of the term after your child turns the relevant age by 31 March, 31 August, or 31 December.



Sign up for updates at  
[childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://childcarechoices.gov.uk)

## Current offers

### Age 3–4

**15 hours a week – for everyone; no need to apply.**

Contact early years providers to ask about a place.

**30 hours a week – for eligible working parents\*.**

Apply at Childcare Choices – [childcarechoices.gov.uk](https://childcarechoices.gov.uk)

### Age 2

**15 hours a week – for families receiving benefits or on a low wage.**

**Also, for children looked after, families with no recourse to public funds, children receiving DLA or with an EHCP.**

Apply at [islington.gov.uk/free2](https://islington.gov.uk/free2)

## New expanded childcare offers

### Age 2

**15 hours a week – for eligible working parents\*; both parents need to be working. Available from April 2024.**

You can apply from January 2024 to take up a place from April 2024.

**You must apply by 31 March 2024.**

Go to [childcarechoices.gov.uk](https://childcarechoices.gov.uk)

### Age 9–23 months

**15 hours a week – for eligible working parents\*; both parents need to be working. Available from September 2024.**

You can apply from April 2024 to take up a place from September 2024.

**You must apply by 31 August 2024.**

Speak to your local childcare providers to find out what they are offering.

### 30 hours free childcare

From September 2025 eligible working parents\* of children from the age of 9 months until they start school, will be able to get 30 hours free. Eligible working parents of 3 and 4 year olds can already receive this.

\*Eligible working parents – this means that each parent is working and earning under £100k per year and at least £167 per week (equal to 16 hours at National minimum or Living Wage)

For more  
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