

What is Tax-Free Childcare?

Tax-Free Childcare is a government scheme to support working parents with childcare costs.

If eligible, you set up an online childcare account which you can use to pay your childcare provider directly. For every £8 you pay in, the government will pay in an extra £2.

You can get up to £2,000 per child per year, or £4,000 for disabled children.

You can use Tax-Free Childcare to pay for:

- Registered childminders, nurseries and nannies
- Registered after-school clubs and play schemes
- Home care workers working for a registered home care agency.

Using Tax-Free Childcare

How do I pay my provider using Tax-Free Childcare?

Your provider needs to sign up before you can pay them using Tax-Free Childcare. They can go to childcarechoices.gov.uk/providers to find out more and sign up. Once they've signed up, you can add them to your childcare account by clicking on the 'Your Tax-Free Childcare account' link on your account homepage. You can pay them directly through your childcare account, and can also set up a regular payment on a chosen day each month.

When you pay money in, it will take 24 hours to clear before you can pay your provider. Payments to childcare providers will take a further three days to arrive in their account. When you apply for Tax-Free Childcare, you'll be given a unique reference number for your child. You need to give this number to your childcare provider so that they can match your payments to your child. You can find this in your welcome pack by clicking the 'Secure messages' link on your account homepage.

How do I find out if my childcare provider is signed up for Tax-Free Childcare?

Tens of thousands of providers have already signed up. You can search for your provider in the 'Your Tax-Free Childcare account' section of the account homepage. If your provider is registered as sensitive with their regulator – perhaps because they're a childminder working from their home address – you'll need to search for them using their regulator ID and postcode.

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Regulator ID is 105217