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# Is your child two?



## Children can start using their 15 hours of free childcare the school term following their second birthday.

- Children born between 1 January and 31 March can start on 1 April after their second birthday.
- Children born between 1 April and 31 August can start on 1 September after their second birthday.
- Children born between 1 September and 31 December can start on 1 January after their second birthday

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To find out about childcare in your area throughout England and to see if your child can get a free place, speak to your local children's centre or find details of all local childcare from your Family Information Service by searching at:  
[www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/finder](http://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/finder)

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You could get 15 hours of free childcare at a nursery, pre-school or childminder.

Play and learning in their early years is important for the healthy development of your child.

Spending just a few hours a week at a nursery, pre-school or with a childminder will help your child explore the world around them and give them a head start when they start school. They can try out different activities, develop their speech and make new friends.

### Young children learn through play in many different ways:

- **Picture books** will help your child to start matching pictures to sounds and letters. Every child loves a good story!
- **Painting, drawing and scribbling** allows your child to start to make marks and shapes that will help them when they learn to write later on. Children love creating pictures!
- **Dressing up** develops your child's imagination. They can pretend to be in the zoo one day, a castle the next and then fly to the moon and back.
- **Building bricks and construction toys** help your child to understand how things fit together and to build different shapes. Children love building the tallest tower and watching it topple over.
- **Playing outdoors**, helps your child to learn about the natural world. They also love to plant seeds and eat the vegetables they grow.
- **Climbing, crawling, jumping and running around** helps your child to take safe risks, to play with other children and to keep fit.

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At a good quality childcare setting there will be a range of toys, games and activities for your child, but most of all they're playing and learning with other children.

Childcare is good for the whole family. It can also give you a break, to study, look for work, get stuff done at home or care for your other children.

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If your child is two, you may be able to get 15 hours a week of FREE childcare at nursery, pre-school or a childminder, if your family receives any of these benefits:

- Universal Credit
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (if you are unable to work due to illness or disability)
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit and earn £16,190 or less per year
- Working Tax Credit and earn £16,190 or less per year
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

#### Or your child

- receives Disability Living Allowance;
- has a current statement of special educational need or an Education, Health and Care plan; or
- has left care through special guardianship or child arrangements order or residence order.

