

Leaving home

Had enough of living at home and want to find your own place? Leaving home is a great first step towards independence but lack of preparation can make it expensive.

TIP!

It's always much better to have an idea where you're going before you leave home.

First Steps

- Write down and think about all the responsibilities you'd have in your own place, don't forget things like:
 - paying the rent
 - sorting the bills out
 - washing
 - cooking
 - cleaning
- Think about how you'd find somewhere to live, and where you'd look.
- Also think about where and how you could get help and support if you needed it.

Leaving in a hurry?

You may be experiencing problems at home, and want to leave as soon as you can. Talking to someone can help you to think about your options. If you do have to leave in a hurry, don't forget

- Some identification, like your passport and national insurance number
- Medication - or any personal stuff like glasses or inhalers
- Money or cash cards
- A change of clothes, and a warm coat
- Toiletries
- Your address book and/or mobile phone
- To let your friends and family know how to contact you

Can you afford it?

Moving out can be a bit of a shock to your finances, especially at first. To work out how much money you'll need, take a look at the ideas below

- Write down an estimate of your monthly bills such as:
 - gas or oil
 - electricity
 - phone
 - rates
 - TV licence

- Remember to think about extra expenses such as food, transport and socialising.

- Then think about how much rent you can afford, taking into account your income, and the expenses above.

- Before you move in anywhere, you will normally need to give the landlord one month's rent, plus a deposit. A deposit is usually the same amount as one month's rent.

- You may be able to get help with a deposit.

- Remember to find out about which benefits could help pay your rent and how to claim them.

- Have you thought where you could go or what you might do if you ran out of money?

Where do you want to live?

When you're thinking about the area you want to live in, a bit of research can go a long way. Check out some of the handy tips below:

- Do you want to stay in the same area, close to friends and family?
- If not, where would you want to go, and do you know anyone there?
- If there is an area you are considering, visit it first.
- Think about if it feels safe, and if you'd feel comfortable walking around on your own.
- Check out what kind of work is available in the area, and if it's the kind of stuff you'd want to do.
- Also - what's the transport like - is it easy to get around without a car?
- Try and find out what the average rent is - towns and cities are generally more expensive.
- Check out the nearby food shops and entertainment - life can be cheaper if there's lots on your doorstep.

Who do you want to live with?

Even more important than where you live is who you live with, think about the points below to help you get it right:

- If you want to live on your own, would there be people around that you could visit?
- Remember it's a lot cheaper to live in a shared house than on your own.
- If you want to share, is there anybody that springs to mind?
- If not, can you think of the things you'd ask a potential flatmate?
- What do you imagine are the main causes of house arguments?
- How do you think you'd deal with issues like noise, mess or other people's friends being round all the time.