



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		Age 2 years		Age 9-23 months	
All parents		Families receiving some additional forms of government support		Working families	
15 hours Now	15 hours Apr 2024	15 hours Now	15 hours Apr 2024	15 hours Sept 2024	30 hours Sept 2025
15 hours Sept 2024	15 hours Sept 2025	15 hours Sept 2024	15 hours Sept 2025		
Working families		Working families		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.	
30 hours Now	30 hours Apr 2024	15 hours Apr 2024	15 hours Sept 2024		
30 hours Sept 2024	30 hours Sept 2025	30 hours Sept 2025			



Sign up for updates at
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

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.

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

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)