

A-Z on Student Life**Parents v Students****STUDENTS**

v

PARENTS**A****Accommodation**

This will be the place that comforts you when your entire loan is spent up and there are too many essays to write to even consider going out for a Snakebite. So make sure you pick it well. Many offer en-suite, high spec kitchens, and spacious living rooms and some even allow you to pick your roommates. Consider www.unite-students.com for quality student accommodation.

B**Booze**

No doubt you'll spend lots of time with this during your Uni years but remember- it'll also be your worst enemy when you've got a 9 o'clock lecture to get to! So drink responsibly. Most Universities offer responsible drinking advice and support, if you need to speak to someone, see your Student Counselling Service, Health Centre or local SU.

C**Community**

Even if you live in a student area it's important to remember that you are part of a community. Respect your environment and try to get along with all your neighbours. This is where you'll be living for a year or longer so treat it well! According to the UNITE Student Experience Report two-thirds of students agree that students should become more involved in the community. You can get involved in lots of projects, your local SU will have further information and it will look great on your CV.

D**Debt**

Debts are inevitable, but make sure you stay on top of them and try not to blow your whole month's budget in one week. For debt advice, try <http://www.thestudentzone.com>. There are also lots of bursaries out there if you are in real difficulty, Uniaid is the student's charity and offers accommodation bursaries, as well as lots of great tools to help you manage your finances. Check out; www.uniaid.org.uk

A**Accommodation**

Worried sick about where the budding academic in your house is going to live at university? Don't worry. *Young Ones* style squalor is a thing of the past for students of the noughties. Students can choose between halls of residence, traditional houses, flats and bedsits and purpose-built student housing such as that provided by UNITE, the UK's largest provider of specialist student housing. www.unite-students.com

B**Books**

Get a sneak preview of the recommended reading list. Buy the books on Amazon.co.uk, so they get delivered direct to your offspring's new pad. This way you maximise the chance they will actually get read and ensure that the money is actually spent on books. www.amazon.co.uk

C**Cooking**

Teach the little darlings the basics before they leave the nest. That way they will not need to rely on unhealthy take-outs alone. Delia Smith's online cookery school is not a bad place to start. IKEA also does a starter pack of crockery and cutlery, including pots and pans, etc. so they will have no excuse. www.deliaonline.com
<http://www.ikea.com/>

D**Drugs**

Savvy students know how to party and have fun without resorting to illegal substances. But if you think your child needs advice or support, help is at hand. Talk to Frank is a very informative web site – for parents and students alike. www.talktofrank.com

E**Early mornings**

Yep, it's true there is such thing as an early morning start at University. Going out is great but make sure you wake up for your early morning lectures and attend them all; you'll be grateful in the long run.

F**Freshers week**

Freshers week is your guide to everything and everyone at your Uni. Along with freebies from the freshers fair you'll get to join any society or group you want and meet as many people as you want! Make sure you get stuck in with all the activities going on. A word of warning though: be prepared. After the buzz and excitement of meeting hundreds of new people and getting minimal sleep, it's inevitable that you're going to be slightly run down. Stock up on water, fruit and lemsips and you'll be ready to go again in no time.

G**Grades**

A busy social life is part of the University experience, but remember if you go out every night of the week, your grades will eventually suffer and re-takes are a real drag! Make sure you have a healthy balance between your social and academic lives.

H**Homesickness**

It's probably inevitable from time to time, but remembering to book early for cheap coach fares will make going home at weekends and holidays more affordable.

E**Education**

You know this is the whole point of university, but your child may sometimes forget it. Gentle reminders are recommended. But if you think you need back up, try directing them to DirectGov which is very informative on the subject:

<http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/WhyGoToUniversityOrCollege/index.htm>

F**Friends**

Trust your teenager to make the right friends. They should be big enough and ugly enough to do that on their own by now. But their first year away from home can be pretty scary and they may need more phone calls and treats in the post than you might imagine. Aim Higher is a useful starting point for students keen to make the right choices in all aspects of undergraduate life. See the link below for some advice about socialising, that new students may appreciate.

www.aimhigher.ac.uk/student_life/you_ve_arrived/socialising.cfm

G**Growing Up**

It had to happen some time. You have done as much as you can to help your kids get on in the world. Now it is up to them. If you are still worried, there is a lot of good advice online at DirectGov.

www.direct.gov/en/Parents/WorriedAbout/

H**Health**

Encourage your child to register with a local doctor and dentist and remind them they do not have to pay for treatment or prescriptions – provided they fill in the right forms.

Information about help with health costs is available on the internet at the Department of Health's website.

www.dh.gov.uk

I

Insurance

Always make room in your budget for insurance. Sometimes landlords offer inclusive insurance, but make sure you top up for your laptop and all your gadgets as these are often left uncovered, and targeted! Insura is a search engine that can find you the best deal on contents insurance.

<http://www.insura.co.uk/index.htm>
www.endsleigh.co.uk

J

Job

Although spending your days off watching daytime TV and sleeping may sound perfect now, you'll soon get bored. Getting a job can help you gain work experience, better your CV, earn money and give you something more interesting to do instead of watching *This Morning*. Try searching for a job on jobsearch.

<http://www.jobsearch.co.uk/>

K

Kebab shop

This will become a central part of your nights out and the last stop before you stagger home and into bed. But remember to maintain a balanced diet, as you'll need as much energy as possible to get you through the next day's lectures.

L

Late nights

Watching the sunrise is not something all students get up for, but watching the sunrise when you're staggering home from an after-party is more typical of any student. All work and no play is not good for anyone, so make sure there's a balance between partying hard and studying hard.

M

Mini fridge

For about £20 you can pick up a mini fridge which come in handy to stash your supplies away from prying milk thieves.

www.argos.co.uk

I

Improvement

It might be hard to let them go, but deep down you know higher education will improve their chances of getting a good job. Aim Higher has some persuasive arguments.

www.aimhighersurrey.org.uk/parents/faqs.asp

J

Journey

The journey home when you first drop your child off at their new home is going to be a tough one, but remember, while it may be the end of one journey; it's just the beginning of another. Enjoy your freedom while it lasts, they'll soon be back at weekends and holidays to do their laundry and pick up some food!

K

Keeping Fit

Take up a healthy new hobby such as walking, cycling or swimming. You should have more time on your hands now and it will keep your mind off missing your baby.

<http://www.ramblers.org.uk>
<http://www.britishcycling.org.uk>
<http://www.britishswimming.org>

L

Laundry

If there is one thing you must teach them before they go it alone, it is to separate whites and coloureds and how to hand wash their clothes. That'll cut down the need to keep buying new clothes – and you'll be the ones buying them, remember! The website, All That Women Want, has some tips worth passing on.

www.allthatwomenwant.com/laundrymonster.htm

M

Money

You want to stop the Bank of Mum & Dad going bust? A part-time job is the answer. Not for you! However, for the budding academic in your life, take a look at Nations Finance to help keep hold of your senses when it comes to lending money to your children. In short: try not to. The UNITE Student Experience Report stated 93% of parents contribute. On average, this is £4000 which is mostly spent on fees, food and accommodation.

<http://www.nationsfinance.co.uk/news/042007/bank-of-mum-and-dad-calls-in-its-debts.html>

N**Night's in**

When you're loans spent up and it's nearing exam time then staying in will become the norm. However it can be just as fun as going out. Having good accommodation and great housemates makes it easier to stay in and those little extras such as internet and digital TV make it even better, so it might be worth investing in these at the beginning of the year.

O**Overdraft**

Many banks offer freebies if you open an overdraft with them but shop around for the best deal and don't get carried away - you still have to pay it back when you finish Uni.

P**Parents**

You'll be glad to get away from them the minute they've helped you move into your accommodation, but before time, you'll be secretly looking forward to seeing them again. Don't forget them at Uni because they can help when your cupboards are bare or you need to buy that essential textbook.

Q**Queues**

If you're not queuing for enrolment you'll be queuing for assignment deadlines or library books. Don't leave things to the last minute - if your hand-in is at 12.00pm, try not to leave it until 11.55am or you may be penalised.

N**Nights Out**

Make the most of your freedom while the kids are at Uni.

You never know when they will be back! So check out the gig guide for your area, go along and let your hair down.

http://www.spacemonkeylab.com/mfgu/gig_guide.php

O**Overdraft**

You think that your little ones have grown up and gone, you will get a break from their endless demands for expensive gadgets.

Think again – a student loan only goes so far and the Bank of Mum & Dad may still be needed. But encourage them to be smart with their money so that you can have a chance to pay your existing overdraft off. Accountancy firm Grant Thornton has some top tips to help you.

https://debt.grant-thornton.co.uk/top_tips.php

P**Package Holiday**

After years of doing what the children want, you can now book an off-peak bargain at your favourite resort.

<http://www.lastminute.com/site/travel/holidays>

Q**Quiet**

Shhhhh. Enjoy!

R**Rebel**

University is the perfect place to flaunt your individuality. Make the most of rebelling because, once you've graduated, chances are it will become a lot harder to do!

S**Sex**

If you think you're grown up enough to do it, you should be grown up enough to practice safe sex as you don't want to get a nasty STI. Condoms are usually available from your welfare officer at the SU or local family planning clinic.

T**Toilet paper**

This may not seem obvious now, but toilet paper has the ability to make or break friendships with your flatmates. When you move in, you should sit down with your flatmates and agree with them what should happen when someone uses the last sheet. It may be wise to have a rota in place. Handy tip: always keep a spare roll in your room, as this may help in an emergency and win friends on occasion.

U**Underwear**

Make sure you've always got clean underwear – you never know what situation you might find yourself in!

V**Vegetables**

Make sure you eat your 5-a-day. You need to be healthy and keep your energy levels high, especially with all that partying going on.

W**Washing up**

This can cause a few arguments from time to time amongst flatmates. It's worth agreeing a rota so you can avoid falling out with each other on a regular basis. From time to time your landlord may do inspections and it's important to keep common areas like the sink clean and tidy to avoid a nasty fine or health and safety notice.

R**Romance**

It is never too late to get the romance back. Without the threat of constant interruption, now is the time to do it. If you need a bit of a push in the right direction, try out the link below.

<http://beromantic.com>

S**Stress**

Seeing your child leave the nest for the first time can be stressful. But remember, they are not alone and you can always ring them if you need some reassurance. But if you need a bit of a pick-up, take a look at Empty Nests Support on the internet. Its light-hearted approach should keep the black clouds at bay.

www.emptynestsupport.com/blog

T**Texting**

If you haven't got the hang of it already, get little Johnny to show you how it's done before he disappears to uni. It is a cheap and easy way to stay in touch – and far cooler than calling! T Mobile has some good advice for first-timers.

www.t-mobile.co.uk/services/mobile-messaging/text-messaging

U**Understanding**

You are going to need oodles of patience and understanding to cope with the ups and downs of your offspring's student life. At least it isn't you who's the student this time. Count your blessings!

V**Vinyl**

It's been locked away in the loft for years. But there has never been a better excuse than the kids leaving home to get out the record player and blast those tunes from your past.

W**Work**

Not you, silly! It's time to take life a bit easier. So work less hard, relax and enjoy life. It is not that long until reading week, when the little blighters will be back. Relax and enjoy life while you can.

X

Xmas

Although you'll be so excited to be out on your own during Fresher's Week, come December and you'll be longing for home and the delights of Xmas.

Y

Young

You're only young once and your student years will be some of the best, so make the most of them.

Z

zzzz

So now you have an idea as to what student life looks like and I'm sure you're looking forward to all of the new people that you'll meet, but remember to get your rest and catch as many zzzzzzz's as you can!

X

Xanadu

Re-read Coleridge's Ballad of Kubla Khan, close your eyes and imagine you have arrived at the dream city. You should have plenty of spare time for a bit of gentle day dreaming now.

www.poetry-online.org/coleridge_kubla_khan.htm

Y

Youthful

Be youthful again. After years of skivvying for your kids, why not start again with a fresh outlook on life.

Z

Zoo

Go on...you know you want to! Book yourself a day at the zoo. Without the kids in tow you will at last have time to read about the animals rather than just gawp at them.

www.zsl.org/