



#

# Making this summer more affordable for families across the country



The conflict in the Middle East has pushed up the cost of energy, fuel and everyday goods for families across the UK. Rising costs at the fuel pumps and the tills are putting pressure on families across the country, with many opting not to travel this summer. The little joys in life matter, a family holiday, a meal out, or a day trip making memories with your kids.

The government is here to help. These measures won't undo that pressure, but they're designed to make the summer of 2026 a little easier and to help families so they don't feel squeezed this summer.

This is part of a wider package. The Great British Summer Savings sit alongside action on energy bills, fuel costs, wages and childcare, all part of the government's response to the cost of living pressures that global events have made worse.

## What's available this summer?

Three new measures come into effect this summer to reduce the cost of days out, travel and getting around for families with children.

### UK wide

#### **VAT cut on children's days out 🇬🇧 Reducing VAT from 20% to 5%**

We're cutting VAT to reduce the cost of children's restaurant meals, children's tickets for theatres and cinemas and all tickets for attractions like soft play, amusement parks, and museums. That means lower prices at the till, automatically.

### England outside London

#### **Free bus travel for children 🇬🇧 Free travel on local bus services in August**

Children aged 5-15 travelling on local bus services in England can travel free in August. Whether it's going on a day out, visiting family or just getting around, the bus is on us. This applies to local bus services in England.

### Wider cost of living support

These summer measures are part of a broader package the government has put in place to help households with the pressures of rising costs, made worse by the conflict in the Middle East affecting global supply chains and energy markets.

### **Energy bills**

£150 off bills through the Warm Home Discount. Insulation grants. Tariff switching support.

### **Fuel costs**

Fuel duty frozen. Fuel Finder to compare prices. £3 bus fare cap extended to April 2027.

### **Families and children**

Free breakfast clubs. Free school meals. Holiday Activities and Food programme.

### **Wages and work**

National Living Wage up 4%. 2.7 million workers receive at least £900 more a year.

### **Free and low-cost things to do this summer 🇬🇧**

Alongside the new savings measures, there's a range of free activities available to families across England, from museums and parks to holiday food programmes and reading clubs.

- **Free museums and galleries** – some venues across England offer free entry all year, with special summer programmes for children.
- **Summer Reading Challenge** – free at your local library for children aged 4–11. [library](#)
- **Holiday Activities and Food programme** – free holiday activities with meals for children on free school meals.
- **Parks, nature and the outdoors** – national parks, beaches and local green spaces with free ranger-led events.