

Homestay accommodation

Our homestay families reflect the diversity of life in the UK and Ireland. They include young, senior and single parent families and couples with and without children or pets. Hosts have varying ethnic backgrounds and different interests and lifestyles. However, all our hosts are looking forward to sharing their home with an international student.

Your life in a homestay

Living in a homestay will allow you to practise your English in a real-life setting. Please remember that you are both part of a family and a guest at the same time. It is important that you respect different habits and customs such as meal times and different foods. You may have to help with household chores, keep your bedroom tidy and make your bed each morning. Make sure that you always ask for permission to bring friends round and remember to ask before you change channels on the television!

Meals

Breakfast: Breakfast is usually a light meal consisting of cereal, fruit, toast, juice or tea/coffee. Hosts will usually ask you to prepare your own breakfast.

Lunch: You will be responsible for purchasing your own lunch at the school, a local restaurant or from the local shops.

Dinner: You will usually eat dinner with your host, or occasionally you may prepare your own meal with food supplied by your host.

What to bring

You can buy toiletries and other personal needs in the local shops, but if you have specific items that you need, you should bring them with you. Your host will provide you with bed sheets, pillow case and towels. If you have any prescription medications that you are required to take, you should bring a supply with you. Although not required, some students like to bring a small token of their country as a house gift upon arrival at their host home.

Telephone use

You should purchase a phone card or use your own mobile phone to make phone calls. Your hosts' telephone should only be used for emergency incoming calls. Remember to notify your family back home of any time differences to avoid calls in the middle of the night. It is often very expensive to make international calls from a home line, which is why we recommend using a phone card.

Laundry facilities

Laundry facilities will depend on your selected location and homestay option. If your family does not do your washing please take it to a launderette to wash and dry - please do not wash clothes in the bathroom or dry them in your bedroom or cupboards. The average cost per load of washing in a launderette is £5 / €7.

Getting to and from school

Your host will help you to find your way to and from school on your first day and will show you how to use public transport. Journey time will depend on the location of your homestay. Your school will give you more information about this. Explore several options when considering transport to school such as trains, buses or even bike riding.

Smoking

When you book your accommodation, please request a family that allows smoking if you smoke. Most hosts will ask smokers to smoke outside. Always ask your host family upon arrival for their specific house rules regarding smoking. It is general courtesy to ask someone for permission to smoke next to them, even if you are outside.

■ Things to remember....

- You are a guest as well as part of the family
- You may have to take part in family chores
- Purchase a phone card for international calls
- Do not hang your laundry to dry in your room
- Ask permission to have a friend come visit you
- Notify your family if you are not coming home for the night
- Always ask permission to smoke even in a house where smoking is permitted