

Top Tips for parents sending their child off to university

1. **Cooking:** Teach them how to cook. Start with 2-3 simple recipes they can cook for themselves and others, which can help them make new friends.
2. **Laundry:** Teach them how to do their laundry. It's a simple and essential life-skill – and it saves your own time!
3. **Healthcare:** Teach them where to get over-the-counter medicines and prescriptions, how to register and book a GP appointment and how to navigate NHS if they're unwell.
4. **Budget:** Plan a budget for food shopping and other essentials. Instead of organising food delivery, let them learn for themselves how to shop sensibly. Useful financial tips for students are available at www.blackbullion.com.
5. **First aid:** Teach them basic first aid and provide them with a small kit containing essentials like plasters, bandage/ dressings, paper stitches and painkillers (make sure they know how to take them!).
6. **Security:** Explain basic security measures, such as avoiding to use cashpoints at night, protecting drinks so they don't get spiked and how to keep their belongings safe. Ask them to download a mobile security app such as Companion.
7. **Parental contacts:** Agree and plan in advance how often you'll contact each other, and which medium you'll use, such as weekly phone calls or WhatsApp every other day. Allow some flexibility and don't expect daily contacts, so you won't get stressed if they oversleep and didn't check in.
8. **Drop-off:** Don't hang around too long when dropping them off. They need to get on and meet people and start blending in, not be worrying about you.
9. **Biscuits:** Take biscuits or cake (ideally low-sugar and low-fat – with gluten and nut free options...) when dropping them off to create an instant talking point with other new students and their parents.
10. **Coming home:** Allow at least four weeks before they come home, so they can meet people and don't miss out on early events that help them build connections that are key to feeling settled and part of the wider university community.

Tips provided by **Dr Dom Thompson**, Student Health Expert (@DrDomThompson | buzzconsulting.co.uk) with input from **Dr Alys Cole-King** (@AlysColeKing) and **Dr Knut Schroeder** (@DrKnut and @expertselfcare)

