

Week 1 Survival Checklist

Everything to sort in your first 7 days on the ground.

Your only mission this week is to get stable. Don't try to do everything. Do these things, in this order.

DAY 1 — LAND AND BREATHE

- Get a local SIM card**
Buy at the airport or a high street phone shop. Don't use roaming — it's brutal. In the UK: giffgaff, Smarty, or Lebara are cheap and work well.
- Get local cash**
Use an ATM (not currency exchange). Withdraw enough for 2–3 days of transport and food.
- Get to your accommodation**
Check in. Put your bags down. You're here.
- Eat something proper**
Not airport food. Find a local shop or supermarket. Aldi and Lidl in the UK are your best friend.
- Rest**
Seriously. Don't try to do everything on day 1. You'll make bad decisions when you're exhausted.

DAYS 2–3 — GET THE BASICS SORTED

- Get a transport card**
In London: Oyster card or just use contactless. Other cities have their own systems — Google it for your city.
- Open a local bank account**
In the UK: Monzo or Starling open in minutes with just your passport. Traditional banks take longer and need proof of address.
- Find your nearest supermarket**
Aldi, Lidl, Tesco, Sainsbury's. Learn the prices. This becomes your budget anchor.
- Sort your WiFi situation**
If your accommodation doesn't have WiFi, a mobile data plan is essential. Compare via Uswitch.
- Register with a GP (UK)**
NHS registration is free. Find your nearest GP surgery and register — you'll need it eventually.

DAYS 4–5 — WORK AND MONEY

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- Apply for National Insurance number (UK)**
You need this to work legally. Apply at gov.uk/apply-national-insurance-number. Free to apply.
- Set up online banking**
Download your bank's app. Enable notifications. Know your balance at all times.
- Start your job search**
CV updated? Uploaded to Indeed, LinkedIn, Totaljobs. Apply to 10+ places a day.
- Find out about local tax obligations**
Know your tax code. In the UK: you'll get this from your employer. Check it's right on your payslip.
- Set a weekly budget**
Food, transport, fun. Know your number for each category.

DAYS 6–7 — SETTLE IN

- Explore your neighbourhood**
Walk it. Learn where things are. Park, gym, pharmacy, laundrette.
- Buy household essentials**
Bedding, towels, basic cooking gear if your place isn't fully equipped. Charity shops are gold.
- Find a free activity**
Most cities have free museums, parks, markets. Get out and see something good.
- Check in with home**
Call your family. Let them know you're alive and thriving.
- Reflect on week 1**
What went well? What do you need to sort next week? Write it down.

Day 1

SIM + cash

Day 2

Transport + bank

Day 3

NI number

Week 2

Job + routine

■ *Don't panic if you don't tick everything. Week 1 is survival mode. Week 2 is when you actually start building.*

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