

At a glance - childcare costs

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Universal Credit payments can include an amount for childcare costs subject to a maximum amount, if two specific conditions are met. These conditions are the [Childcare Costs Condition](#) and the [Work Condition](#).

Childcare costs can only be claimed up to and including the assessment period that includes 31 August following the child's 16th birthday.

The Childcare Costs Condition means the claimant must be:

- responsible for the child for whom they are paying childcare costs
- paying childcare costs in order to stay in work
- using a [registered and approved childcare provider](#)

The Work Condition means the claimant must also satisfy one of the following conditions:

- be in [paid work](#) (both parents if the claimant is part of a couple)
- be about to start paid work before the end of the next assessment period
- have ceased paid work in the current or previous assessment period
- have just finished paid work no more than a month before the date of claim and be in either their first or second assessment period
- be absent from work and in receipt of a specific benefit or allowance

[Exceptions to the work condition](#) can apply if the claimant is part of a couple.

There is specific information [claimants need to report](#) before Universal Credit can be paid for childcare costs. There are also [time limits](#) for the claimant to report childcare costs. This applies throughout the claim.

There are rules relating to [the payment of childcare costs](#) that determine

- how much Universal Credit that can be paid
- if the amount claimed for childcare costs is [reasonable](#)
- what [assessment periods](#) childcare costs apply to
- what can be paid when claimants start or finish work or following the [death of a child](#)

For more information please [see childcare costs guidance](#).

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