

Inviting your friends and family to the visit you in the UK

What visa will they need?

If you have friends or family who are non-EEA nationals, then they will need a Standard Visitor visa to visit you in the UK.

What is a Standard Visitor visa?

A Standard Visitor visa is valid for up to 6 months, although most people use it to come to the UK for much less than this.

To make a successful **Standard Visitor visa** application, they must demonstrate that:

1. They have a valid reason to come to the UK
2. They can afford their accommodation, living costs and return travel while they're here
3. They intend to return home before their visa expires

Their application may be refused if they continuously apply for visitor visas for the UK and it is evident that they spend more time in the UK than in their home country.

What evidence do they need to provide?

- Current passport (with at least 1 page that's blank on both sides)
- Any expired passports that they have used to travel to the UK on previously
- One passport sized colour photograph. You can check photo guidance here: <https://www.gov.uk/photos-for-passports>
- Evidence that they have enough money to support themselves while they're in the UK, in the form of bank statements or pay slips for the last 6 months. There is no exact amount that they are required to show, but they need to demonstrate that they can meet the costs of travelling and being here – flights, accommodation, food and general living costs. If they are staying rent-free with you while they're here, then you can provide evidence of this, and the UKVI will understand this will reduce their living costs.
- They can use financial evidence provided by their parents, family members or official sponsors (such as a government agency); but they must have a written statement that they have permission to use these funds
- All documents must be original.
- Official translations, if any documents aren't in English.

- Evidence of their intention to leave the UK before their visa expires – if they are employed they could provide a letter from their employer stating that they're expected back at work on a certain date. Or if they have a tenancy agreement, they could provide a copy of their contract to show that they have strong ties to their home country that they have to go back for.

How can I help my friends or family get a Standard Visitor visa to visit me?

Your visitors should prepare the documents listed above. You should also provide to your visitors:

- A photocopy of your passport ID page
- If you are a non-EEA national, and have a visa to be in the UK you should provide a photocopy of your current visa
- A student status letter from the Information Point to confirm your course here
- If your visitors are coming for your graduation ceremony, then you should request a graduation letter from the Information Point that confirms the dates of your ceremony
- An invitation letter from you. This should be a formal, typed letter in English, addressed to the Entry Clearance Officer at the Visa Application Centre where your guest is applying. It doesn't have to be particularly long, but should include:
 - The full name and date of birth of your visitor
 - How you are related (e.g. brother, friend, parent etc.)
 - Why they want to visit you (e.g. for your graduation, for a holiday etc.)
 - How long they will be staying in the UK for. If possible, also give their proposed arrival and departure dates
 - Where they intend to stay – if it will be with you, give your full address in the UK
 - What type of visa you have to be in the UK, and how long it is valid for.

Why do people get refused?

Some common reasons for refusing a Standard Visitor visa are that:

- **There is not enough money to realistically live on** - the Immigration Officer will apply common sense when assessing how much money is "enough". For example, if your visitor is staying in a luxury hotel in London for 6 months they would expect to see more money than if they are staying on your sofa for 1 week.
- **There is not a clear source of the funds available** - if your visitor's bank statements show they have no salary and very little money and then suddenly have a deposit in their account for thousands of pounds, with no explanation of where this came from, it would be reasonable to expect questions to be raised about the source of the money.
- **There are no obvious ties to their home country** – the Immigration Officer will want some assurance that they intend to leave the UK before their visa expires. If it seems like

they don't have any strong ties to another country, it could be interpreted as a risk that they might try to stay in the UK. Good evidence of their ties to the home country can be employment, education, housing, family etc.

If your visitors can provide evidence that these issues are not relevant to them, and if they complete the form correctly, they are putting themselves in the best possible position for a successful outcome.

How do I apply?

This depends on their nationality, as the UK government treats applications from **visa nationals** and **non-visa nationals** differently. If you are a national of one of the countries below, then you are a **visa national**:

- Afghanistan
- Albania
- Algeria
- Angola
- Armenia
- Azerbaijan
- Bahrain
- Bangladesh
- Belarus
- Benin
- Bhutan
- Bolivia
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Cape Verde
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- China **[1]**
- Colombia
- Comoros
- Congo
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Cuba
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Djibouti
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- Egypt
- Equatorial Guinea
- Eritrea
- Ethiopia
- Fiji
- Gabon
- Gambia
- Georgia
- Ghana
- Guinea
- Guinea Bissau
- Guyana
- Haiti
- India
- Indonesia
- Iran
- Iraq
- Jamaica
- Jordan
- Kazakhstan
- Kenya
- Korea, Democratic People's Republic of
- Kosovo
- Kuwait
- Kyrgyzstan
- Lao Peoples' Democratic Republic
- Lebanon
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Libya
- Macedonia
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Mali
- Mauritania
- Moldova
- Mongolia
- Montenegro
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Myanmar
- Nepal
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Oman **[3]**
- Pakistan
- Peru
- Philippines
- Qatar **[3]**
- Russian Federation
- Rwanda
- São Tomé and Príncipe
- Saudi Arabia
- Senegal
- Serbia
- Sierra Leone
- Somalia
- South Africa
- South Sudan
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
- Surinam
- Swaziland
- Syria
- Taiwan **[2]**
- Tajikistan

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|----------------|----------------------------|------------|
| ○ Tanzania | ○ Uganda | ○ Yemen |
| ○ Thailand | ○ Ukraine | ○ Zambia |
| ○ Togo | ○ United Arab Emirates [3] | ○ Zimbabwe |
| ○ Tunisia | ○ Uzbekistan | |
| ○ Turkey* | ○ Venezuela | |
| ○ Turkmenistan | ○ Vietnam | |

[1] Except those Chinese nationals holding passports issued by Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and by Macao Special Administrative Region.

[2] Except those nationals of Taiwan who hold a passport by Taiwan that includes the number of the identification card issued by the competent authority in Taiwan in it.

[3] Except those nationals of Oman, Qatar, or the United Arab Emirates who hold and use an Electronic Visa Waiver (EVW)

If you are a national of a country **not** on the above list, and you hold a valid passport for that country, then you are considered a **non-visa national**.

The difference between being a visa national and a non-visa national is how and where you apply:

Visa nationals

- **Visa Nationals** will need to apply for a Standard Visitor visa in advance before they travel to the UK.
- They apply online here: <https://www.visa4uk.fco.gov.uk/>
- Select these options at the beginning of the form:

Reason for Visit	Visit	*
Visa Type	Tourism	*
Visa Sub Type	Visit - tourism - 6 months	*

- The fee for applying is **£89**.
- Once they've submitted online, they will have to go to the Visa Application Centre for an appointment and to give their documents.
- They can check the processing times in the country where they're applying here: <https://www.gov.uk/visa-processing-times>
- They should carry the documents used to make their application in their hand luggage, just in case the Immigration Officer asks to see them when they arrive in the UK.

Non-visa nationals

- **Non-visa nationals** can choose to apply online in advance, in the same way as a visa-national

Or

- They can apply on entry when they arrive at the airport in the UK.
- This isn't a traditional application process, but a conversation with the Border Force Officer at the airport. They will want to know why they are coming to the UK, and for how long.
- They must have all of the original evidence listed above in their hand luggage to request entry as a Standard Visitor.
- Applications made on entry are **free**, and are a quick and easy option for non-visa nationals. Most non-visa nationals who are coming to the UK as Standard Visitors apply this way.
- However, those with a complicated immigration history or who have had a visa refused before would be cautious to apply online in advance

How do I get more information?

For most applicants, this guidance covers everything they need to make a successful Standard Visitor visa application. However, you can find more information on the government's webpage: <https://www.gov.uk/standard-visitor-visa>

You can also contact us with questions or for further information.

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