



University: Durham University

Location: Durham, England

Compiled by: Nicole

1) **Transportation:**

The best way to figure out how to get from Point A to Point B is to [use the route planner on this website](#). You type in both destinations and what time you need to leave or arrive by, and it will calculate everything! It's great for estimating walking distances, driving routes and times, and getting bus and/or train numbers and timetables.

I. Bus

[Here](#) is the bus information for Durham. The bus system is a way to get easily around town and to and from the city centre.

II. Bike

Biking is the quickest way to get around town without a car, and there are plenty of hills to keep you healthy. Remember, you can only ride on the roads – not on the sidewalk – so it's not for the faint of heart. You can get great deals for bikes on [Gumtree](#) or from local students on [DUO](#).

III. Cab

Cabs can be pricey, but [here](#) is a list of the local services.

IV. Train

Train tickets can be bought with [East Coast Trains](#), which we use most often. Buying as far in advance as possible (up to 10 weeks) and online will save you lots. Also, two single (one way) tickets are often times cheaper than a return (round trip), so do be aware of that. We love taking the train over driving, especially to cities like Newcastle and Edinburgh to the north, and York and London to the south.

2) **Shopping:**

I. Groceries

[Asda](#), [Iceland](#), [Tesco](#), [Sainsburys](#), [Marks & Spencer](#)

All are great shops to get groceries, and the best part is they deliver and you can order online! Save loads of time and effort. We do most of our shopping at Tesco because it has the cheapest prices and the most availability of the products we use most. There are also greengrocers on North Road by the bus station if you want a variety of fresh

fruits and vegetables. [Robinson's](#) is good, and they also deliver.

II. Pharmacy

[Boots](#) and [Superdrug](#) - similar to a large CVS-full pharmacy, wonderful baby section, make-up, hair care, photo kiosks, etc.

III. Home Goods

- a. Yorkshire Trading Company – in the Gates shopping center. It's like a strange combination of a hardware store/dollar store/craft store/clothing store. We bought things like a tool set, a rain coat, Christmas decorations, and a water pitcher there. From gardening equipment, tools, paint, household furnishings, cards, clothes, pet accessories, cleaning products, vitamins, books, underwear, fabrics, toys, stationary, sweets, ornaments and everything else for the home - this is my first port of call when I'm looking for a specific item at the cheapest price.
- b. [Asda](#) - Literally owned by Wal-mart. Order online or drive there.
- c. [T.K.Maxx](#) - We couldn't have been more joyful when we found this treasure. Just like T.J. Maxx.

IV. Children's Items

- a. [Boots](#) - great Parenting Club rewards program available. Sign up when you arrive. Diapers, food, wipes, medicines, etc. Great deals!
- b. [Gumtree](#) - great to search for deals on used prams (strollers), beds, cots (cribs) travel cots (pack-n-plays), high chairs, toys, etc.
- c. Charity Shops -also great places to find the above used items. There are lots of shops along North Road by the bus station.

3) Housing Options:

I. University/College Housing

This can be looked into on the University's website or through your colleges. These accommodations fill up quickly and there is usually a waiting list.

II. Private Market

[Rightmove](#) - A great site for navigating the housing market in Durham, especially if looking from overseas.

There is very high turnover and openings get snatched up quickly here, so if you find something you like, we'd suggest inquiring immediately. There are a number of letting agents on their website that advertise.

Do not expect agents here to behave like agents in the U.S. They will not do any research for you. They will not pick you up and take you around to look at multiple properties in one day. They will expect you to find the place you want to look at and then make an appointment for someone to meet you there to unlock it and let you take a look around. When a property is listed with one agency, other agencies do not have access to it, so you have to call multiple agencies if you want to look at several different properties not listed by the same one.

Quick tutorial:

Terraced house = townhouse

Semi-detached house = duplex (but can be very nice)

Detached house = regular house

Flat = apartment

Shared housing = privately rented student housing with each person paying rent per room per week

PCM = pounds per calendar month

P/W= = pounds per week

4) **Summary of Areas of Town:**

- I. *City Centre* – anything within a 10 minute walk of the market square
- II. *Gilesgate* – north of the city centre , about 25 minutes into town on foot
- III. *Framwellgate Moor* – northwest of the city centre, near the County Hospital, about 30 minutes into town by foot
- IV. *Pity Me* – northwest of the city centre, past Framwellgate Moor, probably a bus ride into town
- V. *Nevilles Cross* – southwest of the city centre, probably 20 minutes into town on foot
- VI. *Langley Moor* – past Nevilles Cross, southwest of the city centre, probably a bus ride into town

5) **Services:**

- I. *Libraries* – Palace Green, Cathedral, Science Site, and individual college libraries are available for students. Also try the [Clayport Library](#), Durham's only public library and only place to get free internet access.
- II. *Gyms* – Most colleges will have a gym, but if you can't access it, try [Freeman's Quay](#) (pronounced "key").
- III. *Hair Salons* – There are lots around town, but I've only gone to [Rayna's](#) and have been very satisfied. Ask for Janine.

6) **Restaurants/coffee shops**

- I. [Durham Restaurants](#)
- II. [Coffee Shops](#)
- III. [Pubs](#)

7) **Tourism/Entertainment**

- I. [This is Durham](#), official tourism website
- II. [Gala Theatre](#), cinema and theatre

8) **Durham County Council**

9) **Churches**

We go to [Christ Church Durham](#), and we absolutely love it. For us it is, without question, the best part about living in England. The community is loving and hospitable, and the teaching is solid. We tried it when we first arrived and felt right at home. There are other good churches in the area, but I can't recommend any by personal experience because I've never been anywhere else!

10) **Utilities**

I. Phones – [BT](#), [Virgin](#), [Talk Talk](#), [T Mobile](#), [Vodafone](#), [Orange](#), [O2](#), [Carphone Warehouse](#). Please check with each one of these for rates/plans. All have fairly compatible international calling rates. Most international students have pay as you go (PAYG) plans because they don't have credit here.

II. Utilities – If you're living in college housing, then your college will direct you on setting up utilities. If you're living privately, the landlord or letting agency will direct you on setting up utilities, more than likely the following: [Thames Water](#), [Scottish & Southern](#), [BT Gas & Electric](#). Word of caution for those living privately: Shop around, and get a rate locked in, as they're always raising prices. There are several companies that are sort of the 'middle men,' charging higher prices than dealing directly with the gas/electric companies. Avoid using them, if possible.

11) **Health**

I. Doctors

You'll need to register with a doctor's office upon arrival into the UK. Most of the time, this is done through your college. If not, go [here](#) for the NHS website.

Quick tutorial:

GP = general practitioner = family physician

Surgery = doctors' office

II. Dentists

The NHS website also provides dentists for the Durham area. However, it may take several calls to various offices to find out if they're accepting new patients. You can also go to a private dentist, although it will be more expensive. We've heard that appointments last only 10 minutes, during which the dentist counts your teeth and checks that there are no major problems.

12) **What to expect: weather, people, culture, etc.**

I. Weather

Expect rain. Lots of it. The weather in England tends to be mild, but layers are a must. So are wellies (rain boots) and a raincoat. Winters are usually mild, with temps hovering in the low 40s / high 30s. Summer weather is amazing, never (well, almost never) exceeding 80 degrees.

II. People/Culture

A great read on life with the English – [*Watching the English*](#) by Kate Fox. Even our English friends rave about it.

13) **Banking**

The following banks all have some form of graduate/student accounts available. All have locations near or in the city centre.

- a. [Lloyds TSB](#)
- b. [Barclays](#)
- c. [HSBC](#) (Not recommended. Bank there at your own risk!!!)
- d. [Nationwide](#)
- e. [Natwest](#)
- f. [Royal Bank of Scotland](#)