

What to expect from your Host Accommodation with BLS

Your hosts

Not all hosts live as a family. There are some hosts who are single and others who live with partners. Some have children and some do not. What all hosts have in common is the desire to share our culture and welcome students as visitors to their home.

Travel to and from BLS Centre

You will need to be willing to walk a maximum of 30 minutes to and from school each day. This is quite normal, although many hosts live closer. Some host also live outside of the main town in local villages, so will therefore drive you in and out each day. They will drop off and pick up at a selected meeting point. The longest drive is again 30 minutes each way.

Meal times/food

In the UK, we have three main meals a day which consist of breakfast, lunch and dinner. Depending on your host family, dinner time may vary but breakfast typically falls between 7.00am-9.00am, lunch between 12.00pm-1.30pm and dinner between 6.30pm-8.00pm. We encourage you to respect your host family and eat with them and eat the food you are offered. Your host will be aware of any allergies or dietary requirements and will make your food accordingly. Food may be left for you to help yourselves but clarify this with your host and ask for a snack if you're hungry. If you have any dislikes, then make your host aware so they can plan your meals for the week.

Typical meals will be as follows:

Breakfast: Cereal with milk and or toast. Tea and coffee.

Packed Lunch: If on full board you will get some or all of the following – Sandwich, fruit, drink, crisps, chocolate or other snack.

Dinner: This is the main meal of the day. Pasta, rice dishes, meat, eggs, (fish is not so common). British eat a lot of potatoes!

Curfews

Whilst you are staying here in the UK with us, it's our job to keep you safe. If you're out in the evening, 16–18-year-olds are required to be home by 10pm. Students aged 14 and 15 years by the end of the course must be in by 9 pm. Please inform your host of where you are and where you may be going and exchange contact numbers. Also make a note of the emergency BLS English contact telephone number so that you can get hold of the school if you need. Your group may request a special group curfew, but this is done before arrival and this will determine if you're allowed out alone or not. School groups in spring and autumn may have different curfews.

Pets

In the UK, 62% of households own a pet and embrace them as a member of the family. Respect for the host and their pets is very important. Please treat them as one of the family as pets in the UK are just as much as a companion as people. The most common pets are cats and dogs but expect that some people may have reptiles, amphibians, or small mammals such as rabbits and guinea pigs. Also, please make us aware of any allergies you may have so we can put you with the correct host family.

Washing

While staying with your host family, they are required to do your washing throughout your stay. Washing is to be done once a week minimum. Discuss with your host when they would like this done. Some hosts may offer to do your washing more than once a week. Adults may be shown how to use the washing facilities so they can do this themselves.

Bed Linen / Towels

Hosts will provide bed linen and a towel. These will be washed a minimum of once per week. If you need an extra blanket or pillow you should ask your host politely.

Showers

Don't unnecessarily have showers if you don't need one. Usually one shower a day is normal here in the UK. Don't take too long in the shower as it's a waste of water which becomes costly for your host family. Your host will let you know the best times for showers. Please follow these guidelines.

Sharing rooms/bathrooms

Adult students (18+) will have single rooms with shared bathroom. Please note that all students must be willing to share a bathroom. Private bathrooms are rare. For juniors under 18, they should be willing to share a room with other juniors on the same course. When sharing, you may be required to share with up to 3 other students (4 total).

Travel

Depending on where your host family live, you may be required to walk to the school. All host families are within a 30-minute radius of the school whether that be driving or walking. If you are within a 30-minute walk away from the school, you are able to walk, if not you will be driven into school by your host. If you're walking to school, your host will show you the way or show you a route to follow on google maps. No buses are required throughout your stay. No students should be going on public transport. You will not be driven more than once each way each day.

Damage

If any part of the host accommodation property or belongings are damaged during your stay, you are required to pay for it to be replaced/fixed. You will be expected to let your host know. The School will then work with you and the host to get the situation resolved as quickly as possible. You must hold the correct insurance to cover such costs otherwise you will need to cover the cost personally.

Keys

Adult students (18+) should be given a front door key with freedom to come and go within reason. We ask that you respect the host curfew that they will set. For example, coming home after midnight on a week day would be considered as unacceptable. Many hosts work and have young children at school. Students under the age of 16 aren't permitted to have a key on them or have access to their room during the day. Please refer to the section on curfews. Please ask the host how to lock / unlock the front door so that appropriate security can be followed.

Changing Accommodation

It might happen that you are not comfortable in your host accommodation. The best way to deal with this situation is to talk to the office team at BLS as soon as possible. We do not move students within the first 48 hours after arrival because we believe students have to allow time to settle into their new environment. It can be a big culture shock and not necessarily anyone's fault that you do not feel comfortable. We will always try to talk to the host to work things out and help you settle in. Changing host must always be seen as the last option.