

Universal Credit support for a maximum of 2 children

From 6 April 2017, most people will only get the child amount of Universal Credit for up to 2 children (unless an exception applies).

In general, claimants will be entitled to an additional amount for any child born before 6 April 2017. Please see the flowcharts for full details.

You will still get any child amounts of Universal Credit in payment before 6 April 2017.

If you're responsible for a child or children through adoption or as part of non-parental caring arrangement, you'll be able to receive an additional amount for these children. This will not affect any amounts you may get for any other children in your household.

If you have 2 or more children and are moving to Universal Credit from Child Tax Credit because you have formed a new couple with someone already claiming Universal Credit, your partner will need to notify us of a change in their circumstances to include you and your children.

The following flowcharts are to help you understand what you can claim.

Find out more about the [support for a maximum of 2 children in Universal Credit](#).



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[Opening up work_](#)

Universal Credit support for a maximum of 2 children



**Claiming Universal Credit
I have 2 or fewer children**

[Find out more >](#)



**Claiming Universal Credit
I have 3 or more children and
have been receiving
Universal Credit in the
last 6 months**

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**Claiming Universal Credit
I have 3 or more children and
have NOT been receiving
Universal Credit in the
last 6 months**

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Definition of a child in Universal Credit: a child is anyone aged up to 16, or up to the 31st August following their 19th birthday if they are in education or training.

Claiming Universal Credit

I have 2 or fewer children

You can apply for [Universal Credit online](#) - subject to the usual entry criteria.

If you already have 2 children and then you either:

- have another child
- become responsible for another child born on or after 6th April 2017

DWP won't pay an additional child amount of Universal Credit for that child unless an exception applies.

If all of the following apply:

- you already have a second child born on or after 6 April 2017
- you become responsible for a child born before 6 April 2017

DWP won't automatically pay an additional amount for the new child added. This is because DWP will continue to pay for the second child. DWP would pay an additional amount for the new child added if an exception applies.

If you're responsible for a child or children through adoption or as part of non-parental caring arrangement, you'll be able to receive an additional amount for these children regardless of any other children you have. This will not affect any amounts you may get for any other children in your household.



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Find out more about the [support for a maximum of 2 children in Universal Credit](#).

[Exceptions >](#)

Claiming Universal Credit

I have 3 or more children and have been getting Universal Credit in the last 6 months

You can re-claim Universal Credit by either:

- signing in to your online account if you have one (Universal Credit full service)
- calling the Service Centre on 0800 328 9344 if you don't have an online account (Universal Credit live service)

You will get the same Universal Credit child amounts as last time as long as your circumstances are the same.

If you have another child or become responsible for another child born on or after 6th April 2017, DWP will not pay an additional child amount of Universal Credit for that child unless an exception applies.

If all of the following apply:

- you already have a second child born on or after 6 April 2017
- you become responsible for a child born before 6 April 2017

DWP won't automatically pay an additional amount for the new child added. This is because DWP will continue to pay for the second child. DWP would pay an additional amount for the new child added if an exception applies.

If you're responsible for a child or children through adoption or as part of non-parental caring arrangement, you'll be able to receive an additional amount for these children regardless of any other children you have. This will not affect any amounts you may get for any other children in your household.



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Find out more about the support for a maximum of 2 children in Universal Credit.

[Exceptions >](#)

Claiming Universal Credit

I have 3 or more children and have NOT been getting Universal Credit in the last 6 months

You can't currently claim Universal Credit*. You may be able to claim [Child Tax Credit](#), [Housing Benefit](#) and/or other benefits.

However, you can claim Universal Credit if you form a new couple with someone already claiming Universal Credit and have a claim to Child Tax Credit with 2 or more children. A change of circumstances will need to be reported to add you as a new partner and your children to their existing claim.

From 6 April 2017 claimants will no longer be paid an additional amount of benefit for more than 2 children, unless the children are born before 6 April 2017*, or an exception applies.

***These rules will change in February 2019.**



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Find out more about the support for a maximum of 2 children in Universal Credit.

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Exceptions to the support for a maximum of 2 children

The exceptions apply to third or subsequent children who are:

- additional children in a multiple birth (e.g. twins)
- likely to have been born as a result of non-consensual conception, including rape or when the claimant was in a controlling or coercive relationship by the child's other biological parent at the time of conception

An exception will also be made for any children (regardless of the order they joined the household) who are:

- adopted where it is likely they would otherwise be looked after by a local authority
- living long term with friends or family and would otherwise be looked after by a local authority
- where a child (under 16) living with their parents or carers has a child of their own (until they make a separate claim upon turning 16).

Any amounts you receive for children you are responsible for through adoption or as part of a non-parental caring arrangement (including where your child has had a child) will not affect any amounts you may get for any other children in your household.

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