



## Get to know the State Pension

- After years of complaints about how complicated it is, the state pension changed radically in April 2016.
- Prior to that, the state pension was made up of two parts - the basic state pension and the additional state pension.
- The new state pension combines those into a single amount, which is higher than the basic state pension.
- The full level of new state pension is £221.20 in 2024-25, although you could get more or less than this.
- You won't get any less than what you would have received under the old system.
- With the new State Pension, people will know from a much younger age how much they're likely to get.

## What is your State Pension?

The State Pension is a regular payment from the government most people can claim when they reach State Pension age. Not everyone gets the same amount. How much you get depends on your National Insurance record.

For many people, the State Pension is only part of their retirement income. For example, they may also have money from a workplace pension, other pension and/or earnings.



## How does the new State Pension Work?

- The new State Pension is based on people's National Insurance records.
- People with no National Insurance record before 6 April 2016 will need 35 qualifying years to get the full amount of new State Pension, when they reach State Pension age.
- Most people will have made, or been credited with, National Insurance contributions before 6 April 2016. When they reach State Pension age, in most cases, their new State Pension will take into account their National Insurance record both before and after 6 April 2016. The new rules make sure that the amount of State Pension you get for your contributions to 6 April 2016 is no less under the new State Pension than you would have got under the old rules, provided you meet the 10 year minimum qualifying period.
- For the new State Pension, you will normally need at least 10 'qualifying years' on your National Insurance record to get any State Pension. These can be from before or after 6 April 2016, and they don't have to be 10 years in a row.
- Under the new State Pension, how much you get will usually be based on your own National Insurance record only.



## Qualifying Year

A qualifying year for State Pension can be made up through combining earnings, National Insurance credits, self-employment and voluntary contributions.

A qualifying year can be built up if:

- you are employed and earning over £242 a week (2023 to 2024) from one employer and paying National Insurance contributions
- you are employed and earning between [£123 and £242 a week \(2023 to 2024\) from one employer](#) and are treated as having paid National Insurance contributions
- you are [self-employed](#) and paying Class 2 National Insurance contributions (£3.45 a week in 2023 to 2024)
- you make voluntary National Insurance contributions (£17.45 a week in 2023 to 2024)
- you receive National Insurance credits



## Qualifying Year

If you do not earn enough, you can get [National Insurance credits](#) in certain circumstances, for example, when:

- you have caring responsibilities (including receiving Child Benefit for a child under 12)
- you're claiming certain working age benefits such as Working Tax Credit, Jobseeker's Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance

You need to apply for Child Benefit in order to receive your National Insurance credit even if you choose not to receive a payment. It is important that you apply for any credits you may be entitled to as soon as possible as it is not always possible to backdate them.

## How much is the new State Pension?

- Not everyone will get the full new State Pension amount, it will depend on your National Insurance record. The full amount of the new State Pension is set above the basic level of means-tested support (this is Pension Credit standard minimum guarantee). The full amount of the new State Pension is £221.20 a week (2024 to 2025 rate).
- You can get a State Pension forecast online from the Check your State Pension service. This provides personalised information, including your State Pension age, an estimate of how much State Pension you may get at that point and if you can increase this amount. It also allows you to view your National Insurance contribution history.

Visit [www.gov.uk/check-state-pension](https://www.gov.uk/check-state-pension) for more information

## Information on your National Insurance record and the State Pension

- How much State Pension you get depends on your National Insurance record. Generally, you build up your record by paying National Insurance contributions or getting National Insurance credits.
- You pay National Insurance contributions when you work and are earning over a minimum amount (£242 a week in 2023 to 2024). If you earn between £123 and £242 a week (2023 to 2024) from one employer, you may still be building up your National Insurance record. These figures relate to employed earners only..
- When you reach State Pension age, you will not have to pay National Insurance contributions, even if you continue working.





## Getting National Insurance credits

- If you're not paying National Insurance contributions because, for example, you can't work due to illness, or you're caring for a child or an adult, you may be able to get National Insurance credits.
- [National Insurance credits](#) help to build up your National Insurance record and so protect your entitlement to the State Pension. This means it's important you get your National Insurance credits.
- With some benefits (such as Child Benefit for a child under 12, Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance) you get National Insurance credits automatically, but there are some circumstances where you have to apply. It is important that you apply for Child Benefit even if you choose not to receive a payment to ensure that you receive your National Insurance credit.



## Gaps in a National Insurance record

- If you weren't paying National Insurance contributions, but were claiming benefits, including Child Benefit for a child under 12 (or under 16 before 2010), then you may have been getting National Insurance credits, and therefore not have a gap.
- If you do have a gap, you might not need to do anything. It is possible to have some gaps in your National Insurance record and still get the full new State Pension.
- Gaps in your National Insurance record can affect the amount of new State Pension you get. You may be able to pay voluntary National Insurance contributions to fill these gaps.

Visit [www.gov.uk/voluntary-national-insurance-contributions](https://www.gov.uk/voluntary-national-insurance-contributions) for more information.

**Can I get some State Pension based on the National Insurance record from my husband, wife or civil partner?**

If you reach State Pension age from 6 April 2016 onwards, your State Pension will be based on your National Insurance record only. See part 4 to see how you can increase your National Insurance record. There is one exception to this: married women or widows who have opted to pay reduced-rate National Insurance contributions. This is called a Reduced Rate Election (previously known as 'Married Woman's Stamp').





## What can I do to increase the amount of money I have in retirement?

The State Pension is intended to be a part of your retirement income. You can decide to put plans in place to increase the money you have in retirement.


Working past State Pension age:

- Some people decide to continue working after State Pension age. If you do work after State Pension age, you don't have to pay National Insurance contributions.
- For most people there is no longer a fixed retirement age (the age at which you stop working). And all employees now have the right to request to work flexibly and have it seriously considered by their employer. You therefore could have more choice about when and how you retire.

**By retiring at 65 instead of 55, an average earner could increase their pension pot by 60%.**

A woman with short grey hair, wearing a light-colored striped short-sleeved shirt and dark pants, stands against an orange circular background. She is holding a white rectangular sign that reads "Myth Busters".

## Myth Busters

- **Myth:** You have to retire when you reach state pension age.
  - **Fact:** You can keep working and still receive your State Pension. You can usually work for as long as you want to.
  - **Fact:** The default retirement age of 65 no longer exists.
  - **Fact:** After reaching State Pension age anyone can ask their employer for flexible working or part-time hours.
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- A decorative graphic consisting of four yellow dashed lines of varying lengths, arranged in a curved, upward-sloping pattern in the bottom right corner of the slide.



# Finding out about your State Pension

Plan your retirement: step by step  
[www.gov.uk/plan-for-retirement](http://www.gov.uk/plan-for-retirement)

Check

- Your State Pension age

Check

- When you can retire

Find out

- About working after you reach State Pension age

Find out

- How much pension you could get

## Future Planning and Finance (Wealth)

- Will my pension savings financially support the retirement I want?
- What can I do now to improve my pension?
- How might events between now and retirement affect my life and finances?





# Past Pensions

- The free 'Pension Tracing' service can find a pension even if you don't have the contact details of the pension provider.
- Before using the service, you'll need to collect as much information as you can, including:
- The name of your previous employer or pension service (you will need this to get started)

Use the Pension Tracing service to find past pension pots  
[www.gov.uk/find-pension-contact-details](https://www.gov.uk/find-pension-contact-details)





# Money Helper

Includes free employer letter templates  
to trace a Pension you've lost track of  
[www.moneyhelper.org.uk](http://www.moneyhelper.org.uk)