



Breakspear Technologies

What is a National Insurance number?

Your National Insurance number is your own personal account number. It is unique to you and you keep the same one all your life. It makes sure that the National Insurance contributions and tax you pay are properly recorded against your name. It also acts as a reference number when communicating with the Department for Work and Pensions and HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC).

You can find out more about National Insurance numbers, including what they're used for and why you need to keep yours safe, by following the link below.

Receiving a National Insurance number automatically

You'll be sent a National Insurance number automatically just before your 16th birthday if both of the following apply:

- you live in the UK
- your parents or guardians are getting Child Benefit for you

If you're between 16 and 20 years old and haven't received a National Insurance number contact the National Insurance Registrations Helpline on 0845 915 7006 for advice. Lines are open 8.30 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday.

When and how to apply for a National Insurance number

If you don't already have a National Insurance number you must apply for one in the following circumstances. How you apply varies, as explained below.

If you need to claim benefits and/or tax credits

If you need to claim benefits and/or tax credits (or if your partner needs to claim benefits and/or tax credits for you) you will need a National Insurance number. Your application will be made as part of the benefit claim process.

Need to Get A National Insurance Number?

Phone Jobcentre Plus on 0845 6000643 - lines open 8.00 am to 6.00 pm Monday to Friday. (The National Insurance number is free, but other unofficial websites may charge you if you apply through them.)

When starting work or setting up as self-employed

If you're looking for work, starting work or setting up as self-employed you will need a National Insurance number. If you have the right to work in the UK, you will need to telephone Jobcentre Plus on 0845 600 0643 to arrange to get one. Lines are open 8.00 am to 6.00 pm Monday to Friday and are normally less busy before 9.00 am. They may require you to attend an 'Evidence of identity' interview - see the section 'What happens when you apply for a National Insurance number'.

Although you need to have a National Insurance number to start work you don't need to have a plastic National Insurance number card.

If you're a non-UK citizen and want to find out whether you have the right to work in the UK, see the link below 'Documents you will need before you can work in the UK'. The other two links below explain how you'll pay tax and National Insurance when working.



What happens when you apply for a National Insurance number

Jobcentre Plus will arrange an 'Evidence of identity' interview for you or send you a postal application. If relevant, they will confirm the date, time and location of your interview and what information/documentation you need to support your application.

What to expect at the 'Evidence of identity' interview

The interview will usually be one-to-one (unless, for example, you need an interpreter). You will be asked questions about why you need a National Insurance number, your background and circumstances.

You will also have to prove your identity. Bring as many 'identity documents' (originals, not photocopies) as you can to your interview. Examples of documents which count are:

- valid passport (UK or foreign)
- national identity card (UK or foreign)
- residence permit or residence card including biometric immigration residency documents full
- birth or adoption certificate
- full marriage or civil partnership certificate
- driving licence (UK or foreign)

If you don't have any of these - or other - identity documents you still must go to the interview. The information you are able to provide might be enough to prove your identity.

During the interview a National Insurance number application form will be completed and you will be asked to sign it.

What happens next?

If you were asked to provide additional information you will need to do this by the agreed date. Jobcentre Plus will write and let you know whether your application was successful and, where appropriate, tell you what your National Insurance number is.

If relevant, tell your employer your National Insurance number as soon as you know it. Do not share your National Insurance number with anyone who does not need it as knowledge of your number might help someone to steal your identity.

It is important to keep the letter telling you what your National Insurance number is safe as it is a useful reminder of your number. However, the letter on its own cannot be used to prove your identity and you do not need it to start work. It's the National Insurance number itself that's important.

If you've lost or can't remember your National Insurance number or lost your National Insurance number card

If you've lost or can't remember your number, you might be able to find it on official paperwork like:

- your P60 (end of year tax statement, given to you by your employer)
- a payslip
- a copy of your annual Self Assessment tax return
- other official correspondence



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If you still can't find your number, you can ask HMRC to confirm it by:

- completing and returning form CA5403 Your National Insurance number
- contacting the National Insurance Registrations Helpline on 0845 915 7006 (lines open from 8.30 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday)

HMRC cannot confirm your National Insurance number by telephone. They will write to you instead.

If you've lost your National Insurance number card

As announced by the Chancellor on 10 September 2010, HMRC no longer issues replacement National Insurance cards. You don't need to have a card - it's the number that's important. If you can't remember your number, find out what to do by reading the section above.