



Founder Member of British Au Pair Agencies Association



Some helpful hints on how to make the most of your Au Pair experience ALSO SEE HANDBOOK E-MAILED TO YOU

When your Au Pair arrives they may well be homesick – they may not make it apparent because they could well be embarrassed about it. Do encourage them to phone home to say that they have arrived safely. Try to encourage them to relax and settle in and remember that they are the fish out of water – not you! They are in a new country having to communicate in their second language and they are going to need help and patience to adjust.

The most important thing to remember is that an Au Pair is not an employee. They are a young willing helper coming to live as part of your family to experience English family life and be of help to you. In exchange for their own bedroom and full board and lodging and a minimum of **£100** pocket money per week which includes our mandatory extra of £20/week toward college or other expenses, they help you with light housework (approx. 20%) and childcare. If you make the effort to integrate the Au Pair into your family life you stand a chance of the Au Pair being a willing flexible helper rather than a dogmatic employee. Extra hours should be paid at £4 minimum.

When your Au Pair first arrives they will have endured a long journey and may be tired and disorientated so they may take a few days to recover. You should give them time to settle in before expecting them to be immediate help. IF YOU HAVE ANY PROBLEMS PLEASE DO CONTACT US AND WE ARE HAPPY TO HELP.

Families and Au Pairs often experience a culture shock at the beginning of the relationship. Things that you may find different are eating habits – type of food and times of meals. Try to be tolerant and flexible within reason.

General Guidance points

1. Write down a timetable and list of duties for the Au Pair and go through it with them to make sure that they understand everything. The standard timetable is 30 hours a week to INCLUDE ANY EVENING of babysitting which should be on their working days. If you want the Au Pair to babysit on one of their days off they must be paid additional pocket money. By all means use our HANDBOOK GUIDE AS A TEMPLATE- THIS WAS EMAILED TO YOU EARLIER AND ALSO WHEN YOU PAID OUR INVOICE.
 - a. If you want to make amendments to the timetable, make sure that you all agree changes in advance.
 - b. Additional hours over 30 per week are normally paid at a minimum £4 per hour.
2. Encourage the Au Pair to be honest about not understanding something that you have said. They must feel that you are tolerant and approachable about this or you risk them saying yes without understanding and all sorts of problems then arise.
3. Discuss how you expect them to discipline your children – TELL THEM THAT THEY MUST NEVER SMACK YOUR CHILDREN OR LEAVE THEM UNATTENDED – This should be common sense but if you positively discuss it you will avoid future misunderstandings.
4. Make sure that they understand your house rules – smoking, drinking, friend coming to visit etc. You may want to impose curfew restrictions relating to going out at night. Restrictions during their working days are totally reasonable but do remember that they should be able to have a social life in their free time and are young adults. If they want to go away for a night in their free time this should be acceptable but you are well within your right to want to know where they are going and who with in case you need to contact them in an emergency.
5. Take your Au Pair to your local GP and register them. The GP should be happy to take them on as an NHS patient. Dental treatment will not be on the NHS. They will be expected to pay as a private patient
6. Find out about the local language school and encourage them to attend. Some Au Pairs do not want to go to college because of the expense. Still try and get them to go for a couple of sessions as this is the best way to meet other local Au Pairs and make friends.
7. We send the Au Pair a list of other Au Pairs in your area. Help them to contact them if they wish

SPECIAL NOTE FOR FAMILIES EXPECTING AN AUPAIR TO DRIVE IN THE UK

IF YOU ARE EXPECTING YOUR AUPAIR TO DRIVE A CAR YOU MUST ASSESS THEIR ABILITY BEFORE GIVING THEM THE KEYS. THIS MAY SOUND COMMON SENSE BUT IT HAS BEEN KNOWN FOR AN AUPAIR TO BE EXPECTED TO DRIVE THE CHILDREN TO SCHOOL ON THE DAY AFTER THEIR ARRIVAL!! We would advise that you organise a driving instructor to take them for at least one lesson to assess their ability and then act on the advice of the instructor.

Please also remember to organise your car insurance. Most insurance companies allow an Au Pair to drive on their valid foreign or international full licence for 1 year but after this year they will be required to take an English driving test in order to continue driving in the UK.