

Eat & drink for FREE

From: Money Saving Expert <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/shopping/how-to-get-free-or-cheap-food/>

1. Grab free food via fast-food apps & clubs

Fast-food chains often offer discounts and freebies to new and existing customers via their apps and membership 'clubs'. It's worth joining and keeping an eye out for any new offers which pop up.



Here are some of the top freebies currently out there (each freebie can only be redeemed once):

- **Krispy Kreme – free doughnut for new sign-ups.** Sign up to [Krispy Kreme's newsletter](#) and enter your details to get a free original glazed Krispy Kreme doughnut.
- **Taco Bell – free crunchy taco when you sign up to the app.** Simply download the app and sign up (available for [iPhone](#) and [Android](#)).
- **Greggs – free hot drink when you sign up to the app.** In the past we've also seen it offer free slices of pizza, sausage rolls, doughnuts and more for those with the app. Available for [iPhone](#) and [Android](#).

These restaurants also offer freebies from time to time, so it's worth downloading and keeping an eye on their apps:

- **Burger King.** In the past we've seen it offer free Whoppers. The app's available for [iPhone](#) and [Android](#).
- **McDonald's.** If you download the app right now, you'll get 20% off the first time you use it to order. But in the past we've seen it offer freebies such as burgers, fries, veggie wraps and iced lattes. Available for [iPhone](#) and [Android](#).

- **Subway.** It's offered free six-inch subs, for example, on 'World Sandwich Day' in November. Available for [iPhone](#) and [Android](#).

2. Nab free food from Pret, Costa, local bakeries & more (plus eat neighbours' leftovers for free... if you dare)

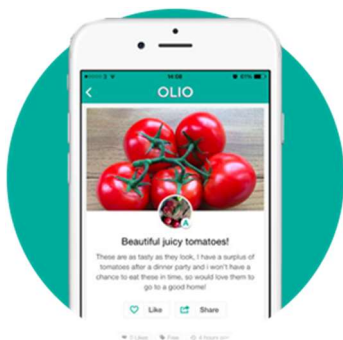
Whether it's burgers, beer or blackberries, a free food and drink-sharing app offers you quality grub for free. The idea is that instead of binning surplus food, people sign up to [Olio](#) and offer it to their local community – think Freecycle for food.

And while many items on Olio come from people emptying out their store cupboards, major supermarkets and retailers such as Pret a Manger – as well as independent cafes, bakeries and shops – have now jumped on board to offer up leftovers at the end of the day.

Volunteers collect any spare food from these stores and list it on the app (you collect food from the volunteers rather than the stores themselves). For example, we've seen posh loaves of bread and pastries, plus Pret yogurt pots and sandwiches, all going completely free.

Once you've found something that tickles your fancy, request it and message to arrange a pick-up. You can sometimes find items listed which aren't food and drink too, though in most cases these are other items commonly sold in supermarkets, such as deodorant.

How to get the free app



Simply download it from Apple's [iOS App Store](#) or the [Google Play Store](#). You can also access it via the [Olio web app](#).

Sign up with your email address, or connect the app to your Facebook, and browse free goodies from neighbours and restaurants near you.

How to use it

Olio says over 1.2 million users are now signed up to its app across the UK. So there are lots of people offering food and picking it up – though as you'd expect, you'll find more listed in big cities.

National chains include **Costa, Pret a Manger, Sainsbury's, Selfridges & Tesco**. In London, there's also **Eurostar, First Group** and **Planet Organic** and we've seen lots offered by smaller, independent cafés, bakeries and restaurants across the country.

Unfortunately, there's no easy way to filter the listings to find food from major chains. But if you're using the web app, you can try the 'find' command (press 'Ctrl' and 'F') on your keyboard to hunt for what you're after. If there are a lot of listings in your area, make sure you scroll right to the bottom of the page, as this will load more for you to search through. You may find more available if you check towards the end of the day too.

It's a sharing community, so don't forget you can offer free food as well as claim it. Got some sausages going spare? To give an item away, simply snap a photo, add a brief description and provide pick-up details.



Food from your neighbours... isn't it all manky?

Not at all. When we looked, we found some top-quality goodies listed by individuals as well as chains. For example, MSE Jenny nabbed four free raisin buns, which had originally been bought from a posh bakery in North London (see pic).

People can add any food they like, as long as they'd be willing to eat it themselves. You can add food that's beyond its best-before date, but not use-by date. (See our [Food Expiry Dates](#) guide for more on the difference.)

MoneySaver Jean was impressed by her first experience using the app:

I downloaded the Olio app last week after reading the MSE email. Yesterday evening the Tesco food was added. There was loads on offer - veg, salads, chilled meals, bread and cakes. And when I collected the items I was asked by the volunteer if I wanted any extras as there were still items left! What a fab idea.

3. Get free chocolate, coffee & more via O2's and Vodafone's rewards apps

If you're a Virgin Media customer, or customer on the O2 or Vodafone mobile networks, you can get offers and freebies via their loyalty apps. (And even better, we've a trick to get you the O2 freebies even if you're NOT an O2 customer.)

To take advantage of these, you'll need to download the free apps and create an account. You'll then receive regular freebies, discounts and special offers. In most cases you claim your freebies and offers using a code that you show to the person serving you or enter online.

- **O2 Priority.** Past examples include coffee from Caffè Nero, chocolates from Thorntons and Hotel Chocolat and beer at Byron Burger. Although this app is for O2 and Virgin Media customers, we've found a loophole that means everyone can get the freebies simply by getting a free O2 Sim card (though you now have to top it up by £10 to access the app). See full info in [O2 Priority for EVERYONE](#).
- **VeryMe.** This is [Vodafone's rewards app](#). It's offered free hot drinks at Greggs or Costa, free wine at Majestic and free Tesco gift cards. See our [Vodafone deals page](#) for more info.

4. Buy totally free food using supermarket coupons

Most supermarket coupons and cashback apps just get you a discount on specific products, for example, 50p off a loaf of bread. But some offer products totally free.

Check out our [Supermarket Coupons](#) guide for a full list of coupons and cashback currently available. In the past we've seen totally free Covent Garden Soup, Warburtons bread and Dr Oetker pizza.

5. Drink free tea or coffee while you shop



Some shops offer free hot drinks to customers if they sign up for a loyalty card. Of course, this isn't just out of kindness – they want to get you into their shop more often and for longer so you spend more money. However, you don't need to spend much (or sometimes anything at all) to get the freebie.

Right now, it's just Ikea offering this freebie, but in the past other shops have offered drinks to shoppers, including Waitrose and Booths.

You can claim a free hot drink at Ikea on weekdays as many times as you like. Simply sign up for a free Ikea Family card to get a free cup of tea or filter coffee at the in-store restaurant. See [Ikea MoneySaving tips & hacks](#) for more info.

6. Bag a free doughnut, cupcake & more on your birthday

Celebrate your birthday with completely free food offered by various restaurants and cafés. Usually all you need to do is sign up to their mailing list and you'll be sent an email around the time of your birthday, with a voucher to claim the freebie.

Here's a selection of what you can get right now:



- **Krispy Kreme.** Register on the 'Friends of Krispy Kreme' rewards app, and you can get a [free doughnut of your choice](#), plus a free glazed doughnut for your children and significant other on their birthdays too.
- **Greggs.** Download its app and register for its rewards scheme to get a voucher for a [free cupcake, cream cake or doughnut](#), valid for a month after it's issued.
- **Hotel Chocolat.** Pick up a VIP card and get a 'surprise gift' (currently [£5 off a £5+ spend](#)) for your birthday.

For the full list, see our [Birthday Freebies](#) deals page.

Get FREE stuff on Freecycle and Freegle

1. It's all about web communities

Giveaway sites are where, instead of binning goods or trying to eBay them, people harness the web's power to offer them to their local community. In return, they often hope they can grab back something when they want.



As well as kitting up for nowt, there's the environmental benefit of saving unwanted possessions being flung into landfill sites.

It's all about web communities, and the big names are [Freecycle](#) and [Freegle](#). They're free-to-join, volunteer-run local online groups.

It's up to you to monitor new freebies on offer. When you want to offer something, you just post an offer message to the group page.

2. Bagging the best is all about etiquette

Freecycle and Freegle are not just sources of freebies. The spirit is that it's a recycling community, so consider giving, as well as getting.

Don't worry if you've nothing special. You'll be amazed at what's willingly taken, including old magazine collections, spare carpets or EMPTY paint pots.

Advertising discarded items on giveaway sites is also an excellent way to offload objects unsuitable for donating to charity shops. Many no longer take electrical goods or collect large items.

3. Sign up to both Freecycle & Freegle



The original giveaway site, [Freecycle](#), was set up in the USA. A few years later, rival UK site [Freegle](#) was set up after a transatlantic difference of views. Many local UK Freecycle groups moved to this new site.

The two groups work in a very similar way. Happily, nothing stops you doing both. Find your nearest by searching on the sites above.

4. It's not all crapola

While occasionally there can be grotty, moth-bitten junk, there's also top-quality unused stuff people just don't want anymore. It's astonishing what people chuck out. Everything from pianos to surf boards to boats will pop up at some point.



Office clear-outs or emigrating families are rich sources, while others are just from generous givers passing on hand-me-downs. After all, one man's junk is another's treasure.

Most commonly available are big 'n' bulky items that are tough to take to charity shops or the tip – like sofas, futons, computer desks, fridges and freezers – as well as baby buggies and DVDs

5. A free car, sofa, boat and more – some inspiration

We've had reports of huge successes from giveaway sites. Reports include bagging a pristine designer settee and a taxed car. Here are a few of the best:

Struck it lucky on Freecycle with a Metro car owned by a vicar – mint condition, full service history.

- Shayshay

We got a 6ft sailing boat from Freecycle.

- Vikkijbb

We are a single parent family, and have had lots of goodies from Freecycle, including a chest freezer, a sofa bed, various plants, two chooks [chickens or hens] and a Warhammer. And we've donated a table, telly, bits of bikes, football boots and a couple other random things. It's great at teaching that whole ethos

of stuff being 'worth' something to someone.

- Pippilongstocking

I had a fab Freecycle experience. Someone offered Guitar Hero I and II for PS2 and I didn't think I'd have a chance of being offered them... but I was! We collected later that day and the lovely person asked if I could make use of Singstar for PS2 also, complete with about five discs.

- notlongnow

6. How to sign up

Just find your village, town, city or borough on [Freecycle](#) and [Freegle](#) and sign up to those. It's worth joining both Freecycle and Freegle.

Freegle also has an app, available for [iOS](#) and [Android](#) devices. For ease, you may prefer the [Trash Nothing](#) app instead, as it lets you browse all local recycling groups in one go.

7. Check freebies as often as possible

You can choose whether to browse freebies online or, for a better chance but more effort, to receive every offer to your inbox. In some cases you can also opt out of all emails entirely, if you just wanted to browse online.

To get your hands on the best finds, you still need to check your site's listing page throughout the day, as freebies are offered and taken at breakneck speed.

8. Set up a dedicated email address

You can opt to get every single new freebie emailed to you.



You can also set your email filter to filter out emails with the word 'wanted' in the title (giveaway sites let people post wanted ads).

Never, ever, use your normal email address. It'll be immediately flooded. As an example, after joining one group, within a week we had 1,500 emails (this also gives an idea of the scores of freebies on offer).

Set up a dedicated email account. As a free option, [Gmail](#) is among the best.

9. Sign up in well-to-do areas

To ramp up your chances, also join one or two bordering areas, especially if they're swanky. Though be aware that strictly you're only meant to join your nearest area – if you try to sign up to several, you may get rejected.

10. Use a free app to scour multiple recycling groups at once

Joining several groups can yield the best freebies (especially if you've well-to-do neighbouring areas), but checking them all can be a faff. Ultra-handy app Trash Nothing lets you instantly see everything up for grabs in your local recycling groups in one go – there's no need to browse them all separately.

It covers hundreds of Freecycle, Freegle and standalone local recycling groups across the UK.

How to use it

Simply download the app – it's available for [iOS](#) and [Android](#) devices. Alternatively, try the [Trash Nothing](#) site, though we found the app more user-friendly.

Sign up and tell it your town or postcode. It then shows all unwanted goodies nearby. Whenever you see something you want, hit 'send message' to request it and arrange a pick-up.

Got a sofa or scooter going spare? To give an item away, simply go to 'Post', snap a pic, add a brief description and provide pick-up details. The best bit is you can post to multiple groups at once – just select which ones.

Trash Nothing works independently from the recycling groups and while the vast majority of groups and posts are covered, it's not guaranteed. So you may wish to double-check groups and posts yourself every so often.

11. How to post a freebie

Offering a freebie is easy. Just hit 'give' on Freegle or 'make a post' on Freecycle to post a message directly on your group's page.

List as many details about the item as possible, including a link to the item if you can find one. Include details of when and where you would like it picked up and any other salient points, for instance, if it's so big a van's needed.

Always include your general location, but not your phone number or full address at this stage.

12. Upload photos so people can see what they're getting

If there are no photos already online, consider uploading your own to put on your listing.

To minimise the risk of viruses, some groups have different rules on posting photos and links – it's worth checking these before posting.

13. Avoid freecycling old computers

You may wish to think twice about giving away old computers though, as even if you think you've deleted personal data, it can still be buried inside.

So try non-profit groups instead, such as [WeeeCharity](#), which responsibly reuses, recycles and resells electronic equipment. (Please note the organisation's currently experiencing issues with its website, so we're linking to its Facebook page for now instead.)

14. Wait 24 hours to give everyone a chance

Many folks offer freebies on a first come, first served basis. Yet this excludes many nice folks who don't sit at a PC all day. So try to wait at least 24 hours to give everyone a fair shot.

15. Decide who to pick



If you get 100 eager offers, it can be difficult to pick one. It's worth searching for usernames to see if they have donated in the past. Then just give it to the nicest, most genuine email or a charity if one's responded. If you're not sure, put the names into a hat.

Deal with one person at a time. If they don't reply, move on to someone else, though remember some people are unable to get online as often as others.

Once it's been collected, update your listing so people know it's taken.

16. Check for new posts as often as possible

When you first join, it's easy to get hooked as you see the staggering amount of freebies put up for grabs. Items are snapped up at speed, so to bag the best haul, check for new posts as often as possible.

Be ready to act fast and answer at speed. If something comes up and you can't collect it any more, let the giver know so they can give it to someone else.

17. Be polite

Impersonal responses like 'I'll take it' are loathed by many givers, so explain why you want the item, though avoid weepy Oscar-acceptance type pleas.

Then propose a collection time, give your phone number but suggest you call them to save their costs. If something comes up and you can't collect it anymore, let the giver know so they can give it to someone else.

18. Don't fall for scams

It's easy to be taken in by what looks sweet only to discover what's on offer is actually a scam.

Beware ads from any person saying 'I'm giving away a laptop, iPad or smartphone and I just need you to pay the postage fees'. Never transfer money or give bank account details – you won't see the item or your cash.

Don't be too worried though. The easy rule is simply to never send payment for anything to anybody for any Freecycle-related exchange. If you see anyone requesting cash, report them to your local group's administrators.

19. Ask yourself if it's worth it

The stonking amount of freebies offered can be head-spinning. If you like something, factor in collection time and possible petrol costs.

20. Follow via Facebook & Twitter

Many groups now let you browse for goodies on Facebook and Twitter. Just check to see if your local group has a Facebook or Twitter icon on its page. You'll also be able to browse freebies on the go by visiting the group on your mobile.

21. Be sparing with wanted ads



One of giveaway sites' more controversial features is that you can post 'wanted' ads. Just post an add to the site's page, and say what you're after and why.

Some sites won't let you post a 'wanted' ad unless you've posted an 'offer' ad in the past. It's all part of the giving ethos of these community web groups so even if it's something as small as a pack of unused light bulbs, try offering before you start making requests.

Also, be careful what you ask for. People won't take kindly if you start slapping in demands for cars, MacBook Pros or diamond rings. But if it's an old fish tank for a school project, someone might just remember they have one in the garage.

22. Safety first! Always be careful

Incidents are rare, but be careful. When collecting, if someone's listing or email sounds dodgy, trust your gut and walk away.

Go with a friend, or failing that, tell someone exactly where you are going and arrange to contact them afterwards. Take a mobile phone. If collecting smaller goods, etiquette suggests waiting on the doorstep.

When giving, don't be pressurised into letting someone into your home. Do make sure someone else is in the house when the taker comes to collect.

It's also a good idea to have a mobile phone in your pocket, keep valuables out of sight, and to limit the collector's movements to as few rooms as possible.

23. Don't give out too many personal details



If you decide to give out your phone number, only give it to one person at once, to avoid getting swamped with calls.

Some Freecycle groups let members include phone numbers in group emails, but it's not a good idea to give out personal details to all and sundry.

24. You can always say no

If you arrive to pick something up and it turns out to be not as expected, you don't have to take it. Just politely say 'sorry, its not quite what I'm looking for, please let someone else have it'.

Sadly, in rare cases, givers will describe rotting items as being in great condition just to try and get rid of them.

25. Get a phone number just for Freecycle & Freegle

If you're a giveaway site regular and feel uncomfortable giving out your mobile number, consider getting a [cheap pay-as-you-go Sim](#) – that way you can get a dedicated phone number for use with Freecycle, Freegle etc.



A Sim is the small (roughly 2cm by 1cm) microchip card that you insert into a phone when it's first set up. It provides the identity of a phone for the mobile network, so it can recognise, bill and send calls to individual customers.

When you switch over the Sim in your phone, you'll have a different number. The Sim is usually located behind the battery on the back of the phone. See [Best Pay-as-you-go Sim Deals](#) for more.

26. Find super-cheap local eBay bargains

Whether they're designer sofas, dishwashers, Wiis or children's books, sellers on eBay often specify items must be collected in person. While not free, as these items often get fewer bids, there are bargains to be had.

Our free tool locates them for you. Tell the [Local eBay Deals Mapper](#) your postcode, how far you're prepared to schlep, and it maps the gems nearby.

27. Try Gumtree and eBay too

Many people offload old gear on the 'freebies' section of the free classified site [Gumtree](#). People give away anything from beds to bikes.

For most items, Gumtree doesn't charge either the buyer or the seller to post listings. There are some situations where charges are applied – for example, if you post more than two job listings. See its [posting fees](#) for full info.

Alternatively, put items on eBay with a buy-it-now price of 1p. People with fixing skills often buy broken washing machines and TVs. See [eBay Selling Tricks](#) for more.

28. Browse freebies on local Facebook groups

Local [Facebook Selling](#) groups are where, instead of eBaying second-hand goods, people harness Facebook's power to sell to others in the local community. The best bit is there are NO fees, so you keep the profit.

The idea's simple: sellers post ads for unwanted goods, and buyers pop round and pay cash in hand if they're happy. Think old-school free classified sites.

As well as selling, people often give away items for free on these groups too. Try searching for the word 'free' in the group's search box.

29. More stuff-for-free sites

Freecycle and Freegle aren't the only options. Other giveaway websites include:

- **Preloved.** The popular classified site features a [Freeloved](#) section, letting you pick up things for free. While it's free to advertise your wares, users pay £5/year to get first dibs on the latest freebies.
- **Olio.** Whether it's burgers, beer or strawberries, free food and drink-sharing app [Olio](#) offers you quality grub for free, if you're game enough. While it originally started as a food-sharing app, people increasingly use it to give away household items too.

30. Freebies, freebies, freebies! There are lots of places to get 'em

Giveaway sites aren't the only place to grab quality freebies. Whether it's song downloads, free tea or gym passes, if you know where to look, it's all available on the web.



Our Deals team list the top freebies currently available on the [Hot bargains, deals & steals](#) page. Plus we've catalogued hundreds in our [Freebies, freebies, freebies](#) guide.

If it's food you're after, see our [How to get free \(or cheap\) food](#) guide for more tips and tricks.

'Freebies for feedback' sites give free goodies in return for your views or sometimes you sharing thoughts with friends. Forumites have grabbed everything from meat and mascara to E45 lotion and electric toothbrushes. Our [Earn freebies for testing products](#) guide shows you how.