# Best Start Foods

## What is it?

Best Start Foods is a prepaid card which provides pregnant women and families with children under the age of three on certain low income benefits with a minimum of £4.25 a week. The card can be used to buy certain healthy foods and replaces the UK Government’s paper “Healthy Start” vouchers.

The Best Start Foods payment card can be used in food shops and supermarkets via contactless, chip and pin and online.

## What can I buy with the card?

* Plain cow’s milk
* First infant formula
* Fruit and vegetables – fresh, frozen or tinned
* Pulses – dried, tinned or frozen
* Eggs – any fresh eggs

## Am I eligible?

You may be eligible if:

* You live in Scotland
* You are pregnant or the parent or carer of a child under three years old and you or your partner get certain benefits or tax credits (there is an income limit for some of the benefits)
* It does not matter whether you are in work or not

Under 18s are eligible for Best Start Foods during pregnancy and up until their child turns one without the need to be in receipt of benefits.

If you are 18 or 19 and do not get any benefits you can still apply if your parent or carer gets child tax credit, child benefit, universal credit child payments or the child addition of pension credit for you.

## When can I apply?

You can apply from the start of pregnancy and anytime up until your child is three years old. There is no limit on the number of children you can claim for.

## How much will I be paid?

During pregnancy you will be paid £17 every four weeks. You will be paid £34 every four weeks from the child’s birth until they turn one and £17 every four weeks from the age of one until your child turns three if you remain eligible.

## How do I apply?

You can apply:

* By phone on 0800 182 2222
* British Sign Language users can apply via video relay using the [contactSCOTLAND](https://contactscotland-bsl.org/) app
* Online via the [Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods section](https://www.mygov.scot/benefits/best-start/) of the mygov.scot website
* By post – you can request a paper form by calling the above number or download and print a form from the [mygov.scot website](https://www.mygov.scot/benefits/best-start/)

## Where can I find further information?

Further information about Best Start Foods can be found on the [mygov.scot website](https://www.mygov.scot/benefits/best-start/)

Many organisations provide welfare rights advice and support to apply for benefits. For details of support available in your local area please contact Visibility Scotland:

* By phone on **0141 332 4632**
* Email us
* [Visit our website](https://visibilityscotland.org.uk/)

## We value your feedback

You can help us improve this factsheet by letting us know what you think about it. Contact us by phone on **0141 332 4632** or email us.

Factsheet produced in collaboration with [Social Security Scotland](https://www.socialsecurity.gov.scot), [seescape](https://www.seescape.org.uk/) and [VisionPK](https://visionpk.org.uk/)

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