



## Emergency Numbers In The UK

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Of course, no tourist wishes to find themselves in an emergency situation on holiday but if this is the case, it's best to be prepared. The most important emergency number needed in the United Kingdom is **999**. You should only call this number if you are facing a serious emergency. This number puts you through to a call centre, where you can ask for the police, ambulance, fire service, coastguard, mountain rescue, lowland rescue, cave rescue, moorland search and rescue, mine rescue and bomb disposal. The call centre will put you through to the appropriate service and you will be asked about your emergency so the right people can be sent to help you.

All calls to this emergency number are free and even if you have no signal, emergency calling should still be available. However, it is recommended to register for the text emergency service in any case. You can simply text "register" to 999 to carry out this process.

### Police

You should only call the emergency services for police if there is a serious emergency. In the case of less serious crime, such as stolen items, you should call the non-emergency number **101**. This will put you in touch with the Metropolitan Police. Calls to this number cost 15p per call.

In the case that a crime has been committed, such as something has been stolen, you will be asked to provide a statement to the police. You may be asked for personal information and contact details and if you are claiming for the lost/stolen item through your travel insurance, you will need a copy of this police statement to make your claim.

You will often find police or community support officers walking around the streets in the UK and you can easily approach them in case you need anything. Below is an image of what a police officer may be wearing in the UK. Unlike many other

countries, police officers do not carry guns in the UK, only specially trained Firearms Officers have a licence to carry these.



The level of crime and pickpocketing isn't that high in the UK compared to other countries so you should feel relatively safe on the streets. Having said this, all tourists should take precautions and act sensibly. This means having full travel insurance before travelling to the UK, staying in areas with people, not walking down unlit streets alone, not carrying large amounts of cash and valuables around with you, avoiding using ATMs in the dark and acting sensibly. By acting responsibly you are more likely to avoid trouble.

If you have lost something, such as in a taxi or on public transport, your best bet is to contact the company. They tend to have lost property offices.

### **Healthcare**

You should only call the emergency services for healthcare if there is a serious emergency. In the case of less serious health issues, you should call the healthline for advice on **111**. This will put you in touch with the National Health Service (NHS). You will be asked numerous questions about your condition so the best advice can be provided. You may have an ambulance and paramedics dispatched to your place or you may be asked to make your way to the local Accident and Emergency Department (A&E). You can find this using an online tool or asking your accommodation providers. There are interpreters available on this service if you do not speak English.

If you find yourself in a health emergency in the UK, healthcare provided is free of charge. However, it is always recommended to have full healthcare and travel insurance before travelling to the UK. If you suffer a less-serious health emergency, you will be expected to pay the full cost and will need to claim this back through your insurance. Ensure you keep all doctor's notes and receipts to help you with this process. Some countries do have special healthcare agreements with the UK, so check this before you travel. Most travel insurance companies offer their own 24-hour line and point you in the right direction too.

You can easily access over-the-counter medicines in most pharmacies (also called chemists) on the highstreet. The most popular names to look out for are *Boots*, *Superdrug* and *Lloyds Pharmacy*. However, many supermarkets and corner shops may also sell medication. If you're looking for basic medical advice, you can find this at local pharmacies too. Unfortunately, not all medication is available over the counter. In some cases you may need a doctor's prescription. You must visit a local doctor to get this and then collect the medication from the pharmacy or bring a prescription with you from your home country.

Dentists generally don't provide free services in the UK, even through the NHS. Therefore, if you encounter a dental emergency, it's advised to use a private dentist and claim this back through your travel insurance.

### **Fire**

In any case of a fire you will most likely need to call the emergency services on **999**.