Homesickness

www.sunderlandsu.co.uk/advice
I didn't think I would get homesick...

Starting university can be an overwhelming experience. You have to cope with being away from familiar people and places, whilst adapting to a new environment. You might not know where anything is or know anyone. You might miss your home comforts, loved ones or that security that a familiar place can provide.

My feelings are all over the place...

Remember you’re not alone. It is normal to feel a mix of emotions about starting university, and these emotions can be a combination of negative and positive. Everybody is different, and some people will take longer than others to settle into the university life. You might find yourself thinking about home a lot of the time, but keep reminding yourself that this is perfectly normal and it will pass. You may find yourself feeling homesick after spending the weekends at home, especially after Christmas. Again, this will pass.

Am I the only one who feels like this?

Definitely not! Research has shown that 35% of new students at university feel homesick. Talk to your friends, they might just be feeling this way too.

How long will I feel like this?

There is no way of knowing when your homesickness will pass, but it almost always does. Some students feel better quite quickly, whilst it takes others a little while longer. It won’t happen overnight, so give yourself time to adjust. You might have days where you feel less homesick and then surprisingly, you are missing home again. Don’t feel bad about it, going away to university involves a lot of change and upheaval, so remind yourself about all that you have achieved to get here.

What can I do to help myself?

- **Talk to someone**
  
  Talk to friends and family, you never know, some friends might be feeling homesick too. If you don’t feel comfortable discussing it with someone close to you, contact the Student’s Union. We have staff that can support you. You can also speak to a tutor, chaplain or counsellor. (see useful contacts section)

- **Keep in touch**
  
  Stay in contact with people at home and plan time to go back, but give yourself time to get involved at university.
Get involved
Get involved in university life as much as possible. The more things you get involved with, the less homesick you will feel and the more friends you meet, the more fun you will have. Try the following:

- Check out [www.sunderlandsu.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandsu.co.uk) for events and activities or call in and see us on the Ground floor of Edinburgh Building at City Campus or SU at St Peter’s in the Reg Vardy Building.

- Join some university clubs and societies. Visit [www.unisportsunderland.com](http://www.unisportsunderland.com) for more details.

- Go to the Globe Cafe – a great place to meet other students. Please note, the Globe Cafe welcomes all students, not just international students. Visit [www.theglobecafe.org.uk](http://www.theglobecafe.org.uk) for more information.

- Check out notice boards and plasma screens in your faculty for information on what’s on.

- Apply for an [SU Buddy](http://www.sunderlandsu.co.uk). SU Buddies are current students who are fully trained to help adjust to university life. They understand what it’s like to meet new friends, attend that first lecture, and settle into a new environment.

- Join [CONNECT](http://www.sunderlandsu.co.uk) which has been set up to provide opportunities to meet new people, make friends and have great fun. There are many events and activities within [CONNECT](http://www.sunderlandsu.co.uk) like bowling, cinema nights, sports afternoons, museum visits etc.

- [Volunteer](http://www.sunderlandsu.co.uk)! There are lots of opportunities at the SU to volunteer your time to benefit the community, or simply to be involved in something that you are passionate about. Volunteering is a great way of meeting people, developing a new interest and making friends.

Peer coaching is a great way of talking through a problem and finding a solution that suits you. Call the SU on 0191 515 3030 or visit [www.sunderlandsu.co.uk/peersupport](http://www.sunderlandsu.co.uk/peersupport) for more information.