



**Students be 'Smart', paying by Direct Debit can save money!**  
Research from Bacs reveals discounts available for paying by Direct Debit plus meet  
Becky Smart at [www.thesmartwaytopay.co.uk/student-life](http://www.thesmartwaytopay.co.uk/student-life).



Latest research from Bacs Payment Schemes Limited (Bacs), the industry body behind Direct Debit in the UK, suggests that student households could save up to £158\* per year and individuals more than £100\*\* a year, just by choosing to pay regular household and personal bills by Direct Debit.

The savings span a whole heap of bills including mobile phone, gym and magazine subscriptions gas, electricity, broadband and landline telephone. They also highlight just one of the benefits of paying by Direct Debit – that it can actually help save money!

**Handy student hints and tips to save money from Becky Smart:**

- Talk to friends online or via email to save money on your phone bill
- Do a weekly food shop instead of buying snack foods or eating out
- Buy your books second hand or study in the library
- Look at online forums where past students often give great money saving advice and tell you what scams to avoid!
- Annual magazine subscriptions ultimately save money and it's always great to get post!
- Look into annual payments such as gym, society and club membership fees and see if you can spread the cost by Direct Debit. You may even get a discount!

In addition, a brand new student character, Becky Smart has been created to illustrate how Direct Debit can help improve financial management. She empathises with students who have just got their A-Level results because like them she has left home and is getting used to taking control of her own finances. Over the next year, Becky will be trying out her independence in a room in halls of residence and is set to go through the financial trials and tribulations of being a student.

To find out what she is up to throughout the year and for handy hints and tips on student finances visit [www.thesmartwaytopay.co.uk/student-life](http://www.thesmartwaytopay.co.uk/student-life).

Direct Debit can also make the cost of university more manageable. Students or parents can spread the cost of regular payments such as tuition, accommodation and monthly living expenses

by paying in instalments. All that's needed is five minutes to set the transaction up and an additional five minutes each month to check that you are happy with the collection date and money due to be deducted.

For further information regarding Direct Debit please visit [www.thesmartwaytopay.co.uk](http://www.thesmartwaytopay.co.uk).

**About Bacs:**

Selected as a 2007 Business Superbrand, Bacs is a not-for-profit, membership-based industry body, owned by 13 of the leading banks and building societies in the UK and Europe. For almost 40 years, Bacs has been at the heart of the payments industry. It is responsible for the schemes behind the clearing and settlement of automated payments in the UK and maintaining the integrity of payment related services.

Almost 5.5 billion payments a year are made through Bacs' principle schemes, Direct Debit and Bacs Direct Credit, equating to approximately £3.4 trillion in 2006. In June 2007, the number of transactions processed in one day hit an all time high of more than 83 million.

For further information please visit [www.bacs.co.uk](http://www.bacs.co.uk) or go to [www.thesmartwaytopay.co.uk](http://www.thesmartwaytopay.co.uk), the home of The Smarts, an animated family who use automated payments to help improve financial management and control.

**More about Direct Debit:**

A Direct Debit is an instruction from a customer to their bank or building society authorising an organisation to collect varying amounts from their account. This can be used to ensure regular, safe and efficient payments of anything from household bills to charitable donations. Over 2.8 billion Direct Debit payments are processed by Bacs a year and 75 per cent of adults now have at least one Direct Debit commitment. For further information on how to set up a Direct Debit to help keep accounts in order, please contact your bank or building society.

**More about Bacs Direct Credit:**

Bacs Direct Credit is mainly used for paying wages and salaries - in fact over 90 per cent of the UK workforce is paid via Bacs Direct Credit. In total, Bacs Direct Credit is used for paying four million wages every week and nearly 25 million salaries a month.

\*Student household savings:

<b>Student household bill savings</b>	<b>Saving (£)</b>
Combined gas and electricity (npower)	80.00
Broadband/Digital TV (Virgin media)	60.00
Landline telephone (BT)	18.00
Total	£158

References to Direct Debit discounts can be found on the following sites:

npower duel fuel:

Taken from - <http://www.npower.com/stoppres/>

Our discount has just been increased to £80 when you take both fuels from npower. Take your electricity and gas from npower, paying by monthly Direct Debit throughout the year and you'll receive our recently improved £80 annual discount.

Broadband/digital:

Taken from - <http://allyours.virginmedia.com/html/existingcustomers/billingfaq.html>

*What are my options for paying my bill?*

Direct Debit - The cheapest and easiest way to pay for your Virgin Media services is Direct Debit. You'll save money as other methods of payment are subject to a separate payment handling charge of £5 per month by Virgin Media Payments Ltd. You will still receive your monthly bill five working days in advance of the payment being requested from your bank. This means that you can check your monthly statements prior to your payment going out. Our Direct Debit guarantee promises you a full refund if Virgin Media Payments Ltd makes a mistake.

Landline telephone:

Taken from - [www2.bt.com/static/i/microsite/help\\_and\\_tips/payments/fag/about\\_payments.html#faq11](http://www2.bt.com/static/i/microsite/help_and_tips/payments/fag/about_payments.html#faq11)

***What is a Payment Processing Fee?***

From 1 May 2007, BT Payment Services Ltd, a separate BT Group company, is introducing a payment processing fee for customers who do not pay their telephone bills by Direct Debit or Monthly Payment Plan as all other methods of payment cost BT more to process. Customers not on a Direct Debit or Monthly Payment Plan by the time of their next bill will be charged a discrete payment processing fee of £1.50 (for monthly billed customers) or £4.50 (for quarterly billed customers). You can avoid the new payment processing fee if you sign up to Direct Debit or Monthly Payment Plan. Visit [www.bt.com/payments](http://www.bt.com/payments). Please note: These changes dont apply to customers on a special scheme such as In Contact Plus, the Light Use Scheme and Pay & Call

**\*\*Individual student savings:**

<b>Individual regular bill savings</b>	<b>Saving (£)</b>
Mobile phone	36.00
University gym subscription	60.00
IPC magazine subscription to Now Magazine	14.08
National Trust membership	4.87
Total	£114.97

References to Direct Debit discounts can be found on the following sites:

Mobile phone:

Based on T-Mobile £3 monthly charge for not using Direct Debit = £36

<http://www.t-mobile.co.uk/personal/pages.do/our-services/internet-on-the-move/what-it-costs>

University gym subscription:

Example used is a discount for students using Hull County Council facilities further information can be found at:

[http://www.hullcc.gov.uk/portal/page?\\_pageid=221.89152&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL](http://www.hullcc.gov.uk/portal/page?_pageid=221.89152&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL). Students should enquire at their universities regarding payment for gym fees by Direct Debit.

IPC magazine subscription:

IPC Media offer a discount of £3.52 for paying for a subscription to Now Magazine by Direct Debit over three months.

Therefore annually a household can save up to £14.08. Please log on to

<http://www.magazinesubscriptionsipc.com/ipc/ipcshop/trolley.asp>.

National Trust membership:

Student membership paid annually by Direct Debit is £14.65 compared to £19.50 by other payments methods. Please visit: [//www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk).