

## About these notes

These notes will help you decide whether you want to pay voluntary National Insurance contributions. Please read these notes before you fill in the application form on pages 3 and 4.

## Why pay voluntary National Insurance contributions?

Gaps in your National Insurance contributions record could reduce the amount of State Pension you receive when you reach State Pension age. Voluntary National Insurance contributions can be paid by people who have not paid enough through their employment, or are not liable to pay any other class of National Insurance contributions and count towards:

- State Pension
- Widowed Parent's Allowance
- Bereavement Payment
- Bereavement Allowance

For 2014-15 Voluntary National Insurance contributions are £13.90 a week.

### Voluntary National Insurance contributions do not count towards:

- Jobseeker's Allowance
- the earnings-related part of State Pension or of Widowed Parent's Allowance
- Employment and Support Allowance
- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit

You can pay voluntary National Insurance contributions if you are:

- over 16
- not working
- not liable to pay Class 1 and/or Class 2 National Insurance contributions as a self-employed person
- a woman who revokes her married woman's or widow's reduced rate election part way through a tax year
- exempt from paying Class 2 National Insurance contributions as a self-employed person

You may also be able to pay for periods where you have been abroad.

You cannot pay voluntary National Insurance contributions:

- if you are a married woman or widow who opted to pay reduced rate National Insurance contributions during the whole tax year
- for the tax year in which you reach State Pension age, or for any following tax year
- if you are self-employed and not exempt from paying Class 2 National Insurance contributions
- for any week that you are entitled to National Insurance credits

## Protecting your State Pension

The amount of State Pension you receive depends on the National Insurance contributions you have paid, or are treated as having paid, or have been credited with, which make up a qualifying year.

The government is changing the State Pension from April 2016.

This new State Pension will be for:

- men born on or after 6 April 1951
- women born on or after 6 April 1953

The changes will replace the current system of basic State Pension with a single system - the new State Pension. You will need a minimum of 10 qualifying years to receive any State Pension from 6 April 2016. National Insurance contributions paid before 6 April 2016 will be recognised in the new system.

Changes are also being made to the State Pension age. You may wish to consider how these changes affect your decision to pay Class 3 National Insurance contributions. For more information go to [www.gov.uk/changes-state-pension](http://www.gov.uk/changes-state-pension)

## Getting credits towards your State Pension

Before you consider paying voluntary National Insurance contributions you should consider whether you might be entitled to National Insurance credits instead.

Sometimes you may not pay National Insurance contributions if you:

- are ill
- are unemployed
- don't work or don't work many hours because you are caring for someone and you have claimed a benefit as a parent or carer
- don't earn enough to pay National Insurance contributions

In many cases the government may give you credits towards your State Pension for these periods. National Insurance credits can help maintain your National Insurance contributions record for some social security benefits and help protect your entitlement to the State Pension.

For more information go to

[www.gov.uk/national-insurance-credits](http://www.gov.uk/national-insurance-credits)

## Deciding to pay

Before you decide to pay voluntary National Insurance contributions, you should get information about your State Pension entitlement, including the number of qualifying years you have to date.

To do this:

- go to Working, Jobs and Pensions at [www.gov.uk/browse/working/state-pension](http://www.gov.uk/browse/working/state-pension)
- if you live in the UK phone the Pension Service on **0845 3000 168**, textphone **0845 3000 169**
- if you live outside the UK phone **+44 191 218 3600**

For the Pension Service opening hours

go to [www.gov.uk/contact-pension-service](http://www.gov.uk/contact-pension-service)

The information will be provided on a Pension Statement and based on the current pension system. If you reach State Pension age after April 2016 you should wait until Pension Statements for the new State Pension become available before you decide whether to pay voluntary National Insurance contributions.

## Time limits and higher rates for late payment

You must normally pay voluntary National Insurance contributions before the end of the sixth tax year following the tax year you are paying for, for them to count towards State Pension and bereavement benefits. If you pay more than 2 years after the end of the tax year for which you are paying, you may have to pay at a higher rate.

Due to the changes to the current State Pension for those who retire after 5 April 2016, HMRC has extended the time limits for payment to ensure you have enough time to decide if you would like to pay. For more information go to

[www.hmrc.gov.uk/ni/volcontr/whentop-up.htm#1](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/ni/volcontr/whentop-up.htm#1)

To allow for possible delays in bank processing (for which HMRC is not responsible) please allow at least 5 bank working days for your payment to reach us. Bank working days are Monday to Friday excluding bank holidays.

## What payments can I make?

If you want to check which years you can pay for or the time limits for paying, you should:

- write to us at  
HM Revenue & Customs  
National Insurance Contributions & Employer Office  
Individuals Caseworker  
Benton Park View  
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE  
NE98 1ZZ
- call the National Insurance helpline on **0300 200 3500**

## Additional Class 3 National Insurance contributions

If you reach State Pension age between 6 April 2008 and 5 April 2015 you will be able, if you want, to pay Class 3 National Insurance contributions for up to an additional 6 non-qualifying years going back to the 1975-76 tax year if you:

- already have 20 qualifying years (which may include full years of credits) and
- reached State Pension age before 6 April 2010 and you have 1 qualifying year made up from contributions paid, or treated as paid

Payment(s) for the additional years can be made up to 6 years after the date you reach State Pension age.

Married women or widows cannot pay additional Class 3 National Insurance contributions for any whole tax year which has a valid reduced rate election in force. A woman who formally cancels, or has cancelled, her election with HMRC part way through a tax year may be entitled to pay additional Class 3 National Insurance contributions for the whole of that tax year.

For more information go to

[www.hmrc.gov.uk/ni/reducedrate/marriedwomen.htm](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/ni/reducedrate/marriedwomen.htm)

This does not affect any Class 3 National Insurance contributions you may be able to pay under the usual time limits.

If you are unsure if it will be beneficial to pay voluntary National Insurance contributions, you should seek advice from the Department for Work and Pensions before making any payments. For more information go to

[www.gov.uk/browse/working/state-pension](http://www.gov.uk/browse/working/state-pension)

## Refund of voluntary National Insurance contributions

There is no automatic right to a refund of voluntary National Insurance contributions. We can only refund National Insurance contributions if:

- you were not entitled to pay them
- you paid insufficient Class 3 National Insurance contributions to make the year count for State Pension and certain bereavement benefits
- they were paid in error

## What to do if you want to pay voluntary National Insurance contributions

If you decide you want to pay voluntary National Insurance contributions read the 'How to Pay' section below, fill in the application form, including the preferred method of payment declaration. If you choose to pay by Direct Debit, also fill in the 'Instruction to your bank or building society to pay by Direct Debit'. Keep these notes and return pages 3 and 4 to Individuals Caseworker at the address opposite.

You can tell us about any changes to your circumstances, for example name and address, online. Go to

[www.hmrc.gov.uk/report-changes](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/report-changes)

## How to pay

You can pay voluntary National Insurance contributions by:

**Direct Debit** – we will collect National Insurance contributions from your bank or building society once a month. It can take at least 21 days to set up a Direct Debit with your bank or building society. We will write to you to confirm the date of the first payment.

Payments are made monthly in arrears and will cover National Insurance contributions for 4 or 5 weeks, subject to the number of Sundays in the preceding tax month. Depending on the date you have chosen to start paying National Insurance contributions, the first payment could be higher as it may cover more than 1 month. We will continue to collect payments by Direct Debit from your account, on or up to 3 working days after the second Friday of each month. Please make sure you have enough funds in your account.

**Quarterly bill** – If you choose to pay quarterly we will send you a bill every 13 weeks, in July, October, January and April each year. You can pay your bill at any Post Office and you will not be charged for the transaction.

There are special arrangements for people who are abroad, or are going abroad. This is dependent on your circumstances before you leave the UK, the country you are going to and the class of contribution you want to pay.

For more information on paying HMRC, go to

[www.hmrc.gov.uk/payinghmrc/class3nics.htm](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/payinghmrc/class3nics.htm)

## Your rights and obligations

'Your Charter' explains what you can expect from us and what we expect from you. For more information, go to [www.gov.uk/hmrc/your-charter](http://www.gov.uk/hmrc/your-charter)

This guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer



### The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit HM Revenue & Customs will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request HM Revenue & Customs to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by HM Revenue & Customs or your bank or building society you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society.
  - If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when HM Revenue & Customs asks you to.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.

Please use capital letters and write clearly in black ballpoint pen.



**Instruction to your bank or building society to pay by Direct Debit** - at 'Reference', please enter your National Insurance number.

Send us pages 3 and 4. Keep the notes on pages 1 and 2. When we receive your reply we will update your National Insurance account.

## Your details

<p><b>1 Surname</b></p> <input type="text"/>	<p><b>7 Phone numbers</b></p> <p>Home <input type="text"/></p> <p>Mobile <input type="text"/></p>
<p><b>2 First name(s)</b></p> <input type="text"/>	<p><b>8 Marital or civil partnership status</b></p> <input type="text"/>
<p><b>3 Title - Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms or other</b></p> <input type="text"/>	<p><b>9 From what date do you wish to start paying voluntary National Insurance contributions? See 'How to pay' on page 2 for more information about payments</b> DD MM YYYY</p> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<p><b>4 National Insurance number</b></p> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
<p><b>5 Date of birth DD MM YYYY</b></p> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
<p><b>6 Address</b></p> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Postcode	

— Do not detach —

 <p><b>Instruction to your bank or building society to pay by Direct Debit</b></p> <p>Please fill in this form in capital letters using a black ballpoint pen and send it to HM Revenue &amp; Customs, NIC&amp;EO, Individuals Caseworker, Benton Park View, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE, NE98 1ZZ.</p>	 <p><b>Service user number</b></p> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>												
<p><b>Name(s) of account holder(s)</b></p> <input type="text"/>	<p><b>Reference</b></p> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>												
<p><b>Bank/building society account number</b></p> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<p><b>Instruction to your bank or building society</b></p> <p>Please pay HM Revenue &amp; Customs Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction, subject to the safeguards assured by The Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with HM Revenue &amp; Customs and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank/building society.</p>												
<p><b>Branch sort code</b></p> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> - <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> - <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<p><b>Signature</b></p> <input type="text"/>												
<p><b>Name and full postal address of your bank or building society</b></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>To: The Manager</td> <td style="text-align: right;">Bank/building society</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Address</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><input type="text"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><input type="text"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Postcode</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"><input type="text"/></td> </tr> </table>	To: The Manager	Bank/building society	Address		<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>		Postcode		<input type="text"/>		<p><b>Date DD MM YYYY</b></p> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
To: The Manager	Bank/building society												
Address													
<input type="text"/>													
<input type="text"/>													
Postcode													
<input type="text"/>													

Banks and building societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of account

10 Tell us about the work you do or have done before the date you wish to start paying voluntary National Insurance contributions.

Please tick the appropriate box(es)?

**Employed?**

from DD MM YYYY

to DD MM YYYY

**Self-employed?**

from DD MM YYYY

to DD MM YYYY

**Unemployed?**

from DD MM YYYY

to DD MM YYYY

**Non-employed?**

from DD MM YYYY

to DD MM YYYY

## How to pay

I wish to pay by Quarterly bill  **Go to Declaration**

I wish to pay by Direct Debit

Please fill in the Direct Debit instruction on page 3. Banks and building societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of account.

## Declaration

This is my application to pay voluntary National Insurance contributions. I would like to pay by the method selected above. I have read and understand the following:

- voluntary National Insurance contributions cannot help me to qualify for Jobseeker's Allowance, the earnings-related part of the State Pension, the earnings-related part of bereavement benefits, Maternity Allowance, Incapacity Benefit and/or Employment and Support Allowance and Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit. They do count towards State Pension, Widowed Parent's Allowance, Bereavement Allowance and Bereavement Payment
- I am under no legal obligation to make voluntary National Insurance contributions.
- if I pay less than 52 weeks of voluntary National Insurance contributions, in any 1 tax year, you may automatically stop sending me quarterly bills
- if I do not pay 2 quarterly bills in succession you may automatically stop sending me quarterly bills

Tick this box if you receive or have received Child Benefit, otherwise leave blank.

Signature(s)

Date DD MM YYYY

## What to do now

Detach your completed form on pages 3 and 4 and send it to: HM Revenue & Customs, National Insurance Contributions & Employer Office, Individuals Caseworker, Benton Park View, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE, NE98 1ZZ.