The 2022 Quick Start Manual





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1 Welcome

Welcome to St. John's, 2022 Freshers! Congratulations on getting a place at objectively (wink wink) one of Oxford's best colleges ...

As a college, John's has a lot to offer but we won't go on about how rich we are too much here (we'll let you see for yourself as you navigate through college life)! The MCR is a very friendly community of graduate students like yourselves from a variety of backgrounds, involved in a variety of different disciplines and consisting of people possessing a variety of different, unique, interesting character traits: what we'll term as "cute quirks". We are all excited to welcome you to our little whimsical but "cool" family at John's and look forward to all the fun times coming up ahead! As your MCR committee, we are also here to help make the transition easier and make college feel more like home. To find out more about our current members or if you have any questions about anything/want to voice any concerns, feel free to contact whichever one of us looks most friendly to you and we can direct you to the person who may be able to help you best!

This guide just scratches the surface when it comes to providing an overview of what life in Oxford as a graduate student, or being part of the John's community is all about but we hope it is enough to help you settle in smoothly and start exploring what the place has to offer! See you kids around and happy moving!





2 Before You Arrive

2.1 Accounts, Mailing Lists, Social Media and Sign-Up

This part is a bit tedious but go somewhere nice, take a day and just get these out of the way. Here is a hopefully complete list of forms and accounts that you ideally should have completed before you get here.

- College Contract for Graduates Sign and save using the naming convention *surname.firstname.GRADSJCcontract2022* and upload it here.
- GP Registration (19 Beaumont Street) Click on St. John's College and follow the steps to registration. If this is confusing, this document walks you through the process.
- SSO Account, Bod Card, WiFi (Eduroam) and General IT You will get an email about your bod card. Just fill that in when the time comes but the other IT setup steps can be done prior by following the link above. For the SSO details, follow this link; you will need your student number or an activation code which you should receive an email about or should be in one of the many letters you have definitely received from the university with offer information.
- Disability Disclosure Form Sign and email: elaine.eastgate@sjc.ox.ac.uk
- Mailing Lists and Social Media
 - MCR Mailing list
 Send an email to sjc-mcr-subscribe@maillist.ox.ac.uk saying you wish
 to be part of the mailing list and you'll be added on!
 - MCR Facebook Page
 There will be a freshers' page too, make sure you also join that once it is up!
 - St. John's Facebook Page
 - MCR Instagram
 We are always looking for people to contribute or help run this!
 - Visit the University societies page and join the mailing lists for those you are interested in to get updates about freshers' week events - it is a great way to meet people! There is also a Freshers' fair during Freshers' week where you can meet representatives of all societies.
- Department-based forms

 Keep an eye out for emails from your department and just fill them in and
 get them out of the way as soon as possible!



2.2 Accommodation: What to Expect

One of the perks of being part of the richest college in Oxford is that they can usually house you for at least three years and the housing is pretty decent and centrally located. You of course have the option in subsequent years to look for private accommodation should you wish it but it's nice to know we have options! Here we summarise the freshers' accommodation for the 2022-2023 cohort.

Freshers this year will be allocated a room in one of the following properties.

• Blackhall Road (OX1 3QF)

Recently refurbished so what it looks like is a mystery but it should be sparkly and new! This road is right behind Kendrew and near the new gym and close to Kendrew cafe. Grab a permit from the lodge when you collect your keys and you can park on the double yellow lines while you move your things into your room! There are 18 rooms in two houses, ranging from $11 - 22 \ m^2$. All rooms are non-ensuite and occupied by graduate freshers.

• Kendrew (OX1 3JP)

Within college (one of the prettiest quads, near the new gym and Kendrew cafe), park on St. Giles or Blackhall road may be smarter (enter through the back entrance and make sure you grab a permit from the lodge to park). All Kendrew rooms will probably be on floor 2, with other graduate freshers, are $16 \ m^2$ and ensuite.

• Leckford Road (OX2 6HX/ OX2 6HY)

3 min by car, 15 min walk to main college, grab a 40 min permit from the porters' lodge when you arrive to collect your keys so you can park on the road outside and move everything in. These are houses with shared bathrooms, a common living room and kitchen and your own room other than that! The house will have a mixture of graduate freshers and older graduates!

• 14-15 St Giles (OX1 3JP)

Park on St. Giles (grab a permit from the lodge if you don't want to pay), 4 min from the porters' lodge, it is basically on college grounds too! You'll live in a building with 7 other graduates, mostly freshers, with ensuite rooms and a very spacious kitchen.

• Garden Quad (OX1 3JP)

Other side of college and maybe a bit difficult to get to in terms of car parks without having to trek a bit, but it is very beautiful and quiet here and right opposite the gardens and near the auditorium. Perhaps park on Museum road or St. Giles (with permit), then use the wheelbarrows in Thomas (Tommy) White Quad to transport your luggage. Garden quad is mostly populated by undergraduates, but staircase 6 is a designated graduate one and will house four grad students.



Rural Economy (OX1 3JP)
 By garden quad within college, see above. Has six graduate rooms, all non-ensuite. If you ever have an IT problem you're in luck as the IT offices are in the same building!

For some of the rooms, previous occupants/ MCR members have put together this google drive folder with photos of set rooms. Note that not all rooms come with photos but this there more for a reference so you know what you are walking into beforehand. These are also not exclusively freshers' blocks so you will be mixed and matched with DPhil/Masters students from other years and from different courses. In subsequent years, you will have the option to pick where you live (within the confines of a ballot system) and dedicated flats known as *couples accommodation* also open up as an option. The rooms also don't usually have double beds but if you notice that your bed is particularly *pokey* in terms of exposed springs, report it immediately to the accommodation office or porters, and they'll get it sorted!

• Did you end up with a worse room than your neighbours? Unfortunately there is a lot of variation in rooms (Kendrew are often considered the best fresher rooms). The good news is that in later ballots your room score is taken into account. Having a worse room will make you higher up on the room ballot in future years!



3 Hopefully Useful Information

3.1 When to Arrive

You can arrive at any point once your accommodation is available. As a general rule, you should arrive well before your department says you should be in Oxford, and before Freshers' Week (also known as 0^{th} week), which starts on Saturday 1^{st} October. If you need to arrive earlier or end up arriving later you can email the accommodation office about this or call them if you want a quicker reply (01865 277323).

3.2 Arriving, Moving in and Getting into your Room

3.2.1 How to Arrive

When you arrive, you should head straight to the Porters' Lodge on St. Giles.

By car

There are no college-owned car parks for people moving in but there are two more direct options for temporary parking. For longer stays see section 3.3.

Obtain a parking permit

When you arrive, the Porters can give you a 40 minute parking permit to park on any double yellow lines near whatever accommodation you have been assigned. You must collect it from the Porters' Lodge, fill it in, and then display it clearly in your car. Make sure you do this immediately because it is super easy to get a ticket around here!

There is a public car park actually on St Giles next to College run by the local council. You can park here for up to 2 hours at a charge between 08:00 and 18:30 on Mondays to Saturdays and between 10:00 and 18:30 on Sundays. Charges are £1 for up to 30 minutes, £2.50 for up to an hour, £4 for up to 2 hours with no return within an hour. Between 18:30 and 22:00 on all days you can park for as long as you want at a fixed charge of £2.50. A valid ticket extending beyond 18:30 allows parking until 22:00 with no further charge.

• By train

The nearest train station is Oxford Railway Station, which is a 15 minute walk from the Porters' Lodge. There are regular connections from London Paddington and London Marylebone. You can book tickets via trainline.

• By coach

The nearest coach station is Oxford Coach Station, also called Gloucester Green, which is a 10 minute walk from the Porters' Lodge. There is also a coach service called the Oxford tube which runs almost every 10 minutes and takes you into London. This costs $\sim \pounds 11$ for a one way trip from Gloucester Green and you can buy your ticket on the coach. If you do



buy prior, make sure you print your ticket otherwise they'll make you buy another ticket or send you back to print it out.

3.2.2 Getting into your Room

You can get the keys to your room from the Porters' Lodge. They will give you at least three keys:

- A key to your room
- A key fob (salto) to access the pidge room, MCR, other secret doors, gym, Kendrew, etc.

The Porters will give you directions to your room.

3.2.3 Moving Things to your Room

If you are unloading your belongings into a room on the college site, then you can borrow one of several very large wheelbarrows located in Thomas White Quad. Please return them here straight after you have used them!

3.3 The Nightmare that is Parking in Oxford: Some Hacks

If Section 3.2.1 doesn't cover your needs, you can get free parking in Oxford for longer periods of time but you'll have to park slightly further away and walk it. We don't recommend this for when you are moving in but if friends/ family are visiting this may be useful to know. Here are a few streets where you can get free road side parking:

- All of the listed are near Abingdon Road between $20 30 \ min$ walk from college. They are all parallel roads so if you find one, you can park anywhere along any of the streets that come along next.
 - Lake Street (the closest)
 - Vicarage Road
 - Norreys Avenue
 - Sunningwell Road
 - Lincoln Road
 - Monmouth Road
 - Northampton Road
 - Wytham Street
- Depending on where you are (if not living on-site), a full list of options can be found here.



3.4 Taxis

Note that Uber doesn't exist here. If you try to book a taxi via Uber it may still work, but it will just connect you to a different service provider and charge you extra so don't do it! If you must, here are a few numbers to call:

- 001 Taxis (01865 240000)
- Royal Cars (01865 777333)
- Oxford Taxis (07702 177047)

If neither of these three are responding (unlikely), then google more numbers.

3.5 The "St. John's Bubble"

As St. John's is so central, you'll notice that you probably won't have to travel very far for anything unless you're a medic and you are based at the hospital. Here we have outlined where you can go to cater for your basic/immediate day-to-day needs.

3.5.1 Groceries and Everyday Sustenance

Best place to get groceries:

- Tesco Metro (Cornmarket Street) Open 7 am till midnight every day apart from Sundays (closes at 4 pm. Make sure you get a club card (can get it via app store on your phone), makes things cheaper!
- Sainsbury's

There is one next door to Tesco, which is smaller or one in Westgate which is much bigger and cheaper in general too (particularly for meat and apart from eggs and sometimes bread).

- Gloucester Green Market (Wednesday and Friday Afternoons)
 Very nearby (within 5 minute walk from college). Fresh, amazing quality
 fruit and vegetables and generally great homely food! Would recommend
 buying from here but you'll need cash! There is also a Korean store nestled
 in the corner
- \bullet Cowley Slightly further away ($\sim 30~min$ walk) but a few good Asian, Polish, Turkish, etc. supermarkets dispersed along the road if you walk along you can't miss them!
- Olio App Sometimes people nearby give away free groceries and food here and there and you can go and collect it from them. This app tracks those who are



giving away things and how far away they are. You can also inherit non-food based items from this app as people looking to move away often sell furniture, bikes, etc. so may be useful for those looking for specific items and are on a tight budget/ are looking to save.

If you don't like to cook and are looking for affordable sources of meals, here are a few suggestions:

• Download the app *Too Good To Go*Instead of throwing away perfectly good food at the end of the day, some restaurants/ cafes/ bakeries make up these very generous bags of food to give away. Through this app you can check what is available and pick up whatever piques your interest usually for prices around £3 – 5!

• Hall

Hall is perhaps the easiest no-brainer option. The only drawback is that the hours are fixed. You can turn up for breakfast (8-9 am) and lunch (12-1.30 pm) without booking, but dinners you need to book via the meal booking system usually by latest 2 pm the same day for dinner (day before for Sunday brunch). Your meals are charged to your bod card, so make sure that this is topped up. You can check/ top up your card here.

• Kendrew Cafe

Like Hall, Kendrew also does lunch and cakes/ smoothies, etc during the day. The menu is slightly different so you have options. You don't have to book and can pay via card but it is cheaper to pay using your bod card. They don't do lunches during the weekend but the cafe is open for anyone to use throughout the day/night to study in (porters will only lock it up at night if no one is using the space).

3.5.2 Shopping

Just to the north of St. John's college is the main shopping area, including the new Westgate Shopping Centre. In general, it is perhaps better to shop online due to more options but in case you need to pick things up last minute, highlights include:

• Westgate Shopping Centre

The main shopping centre: it has a range of clothing stores, restaurants, a cinema, cafes, and others. The rooftop area is very pretty and also has a gym and escape room.

• Clarendon Shopping Centre

With entrances on Cornmarket Street and Queen Street, the Clarendon is five minutes from the Porters' Lodge. Shops include: Curry's PC World (tech store), clothes stores such as Zara and GAP, Card Factory, TK Maxx, etc.



• Queen Street

Located westbound from the south end of Cornmarket Street and is a six-minute walk from the Porter's Lodge. Shops include: Marks and Spencers (department store), Paperchase, Scribble (hidden gem for funny cards), etc.

• Cornmarket Street

The main shopping street in Oxford and a three-minute walk from the Porter's Lodge. Shops include: Tesco, Sainsbury's (supermarket), Boots, WHSmith, Flying Tiger, etc.

• High Street

More quirky shops, university merch/souvenir shops, cafes, Whittards, etc.

Make sure you ask if they do student discount when you are out shopping. Often most stores, including cafes and restaurants, do but don't willingly publicise it! You will just need your bod card as proof.

3.5.3 Laundry

Washing machines and dryers are located within College in the N3 basement, TW3, GQ, Middleton Hall, St John Street, Leckford Road, Kendrew, Bardwell Road and 111 Woodstock Road. All machines require a laundry card, which is available at the Porters' Lodge. Students are issued one card, and money may be placed on the card via the top-up machine and through the circuit laundry app.

Also note this machines don't usually have a drawer for conditioner/ liquid detergent (inconvenient, yes) so ideally buy tablets, scent booster pellets, powder or the kind of liquid conditioner that can go directly into the drum without needing diluting. Kendrew driers also have a notoriously bad reputation for being useless so maybe avoid unless you're feeling particularly optimistic!

3.5.4 Mail

Everything should be sent to the following address:

Your Name
St. John's College
St. Giles
Oxford
United Kingdom
OX1 3JP

The Porters will then put your items in your pidge (the pidge room is right behind the porters' lodge and you have fob access to it). They can also take care of packages that require signatures or more confidential packages and typically



you will receive an email about these items when they arrive so you know they have been delivered and dealt with securely.

3.5.5 Gym

St. John's has two gyms and a separate rowing room which are completely free and open for all members. You will need to gain fob access though which can be done by watching the gym induction video and signing a form, then contacting the porters. For more information, see this page and if you have any other questions, contact the sports officer (sports.officer@sjc.ox.ac.uk).

3.5.6 The MCR Building

Located near garden quad, this is like a common room area where we host socials here and there and is open at all times for you to use as and when you like. It has a kitchen, printing facilities and comfortable sofas, games room and TV room where you can come along and wind down but also use as a working space. You can also expect to come in here and often find free food-related items like cookies, cake and drinks from various welfare events/ lunches during the week!

3.5.7 GP and Pharmacy

Assuming you have registered, the GP is located on 19 Beaumont Street, a $\sim 10~min$ walk from college. A Boots Pharmacy is also just down the road on Cornmarket Street also around 10 mins in another direction. If this is too busy for you, there is also the Woodstock Road Chemist which is also a similar distance away in the opposite direction.

3.5.8 Nearby Libraries and "Work Cafes"

There are so many libraries in Oxford and work cafes (you guessed it, cafes where they are happy for you to sit there the whole day and work), sometimes it's hard to keep track of them. Here we list the very closest ones to John's (all walking distance)/ some nostalgia-inducing favourites:

- Taylor Institution (Library)
- Sackler (on St. John Street) (Library) Remember this for hot days: it's air-conditioned!
- Gail's Bakery (Cafe)
- Waterstones (Cafe) A classic!
- Kendrew Cafe (within John's and a pretty chill place to work)
- St. John's College Library/Study Centre

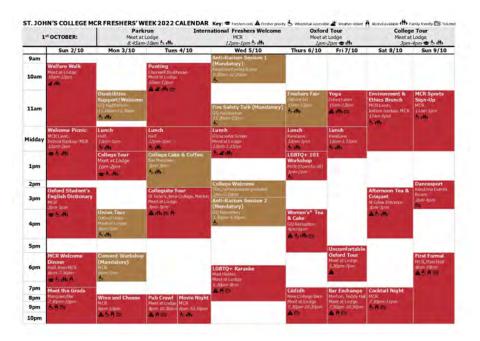


- St. John's College MCR
- Common Ground (Cafe)
 Amazing ambience, and also air-conditioned when hot
- Tree Artisan Cafe (Little Clarendon Street) Good coffee and quite quiet!
- Wine cafe Good drinks and work environment!

3.6 Freshers' Week

Starting a postgraduate degree is a huge new step and we all want you to feel comfortable in your new home! During freshers' week we have a bunch of college-internal and inter-college events planned that you can come along to and get to know fellow freshers and graduates alike, as well as more about St. John's as a college but also about what there is to do in Oxford too! Take a look at the freshers' week calendar for this year and don't be shy and come along! You will also receive an email with this calendar.

Any information about freshers week will be communicated via the mailing list, so please see how to sign up in Section 2.1!





3.7 Food

Arguably one of the most important things about living anywhere is knowing where to get good food when you don't feel like cooking or you want to go out with friends, or whatever other reason you may concoct to go and hit up some new restaurants. The list below is not exhaustive and summarises a few favourites, some well known, some less known but hopefully enough to get you started. If you do try out any of these places or discover any new spots of your own please do come back and add to this list!

3.7.1 Bubble Tea

There are a bunch of places that does bubble tea in Oxford. Here are a few:

- Chatime Gloucester Green (perhaps the closest to college)

 Their taro bubble tea is extra thick and creamy if that's how you like it!
- Yi Fang Queen Street

 Lots of options, they also have these coffee mudflips that are pretty cool!

 A bit more expensive though...
- Formosan, High Street Fewer options but very nice and tucked away!

There are others but these are just our 'go-to's!

3.7.2 Coffee

A few recommendations on where to pick up decent coffee (to drink) that isn't too far away!

- Columbia Coffee, Covered Market

 They also have a ton of options for hot chocolate and it's good!
- Gail's Bakery (Little Clarendon Street) They also do a pretty good chai latte
- Tree Artisan Cafe (Little Clarendon Street)
- Freshers Fair free one month Pret subsciption
 Free coffee 5 times a day for the first month is a scheme Pret typically
 rolls out around Freshers fair every year, so make sure you pick up their
 flyers

3.7.3 Brunch/ Breakfast

- George Street Social $\pounds 6-13$ and a great place to "chill" work as well!
- Handlebar £10 15



• Za'atar Bake

Affordable, slightly further out but great place to relax and wind down. They do an amazing mint tea, Arabic coffee and Kunafa (dessert).

- Oxford Brunch Bar On George Street and quite affordable < £15
- Vaults and Garden
 Aesthetic, near the Rad Cam and affordable $< \pounds 15$
- Opera, Jericho
 They do these really nice rolls/ naan-type wraps, the food has a bit of a south asian vibe

3.7.4 Thai

- Sasi's Thai (Covered Market)
 Good amount of food, options are good and tasty!
- Chiang Mai Kitchen

 They have a rice dish in a pineapple which is very cool, food in general is also good (if you pick well), good selection of non-alcoholic drinks
- Banana Tree

Has a few thai options here and there, just a solid restaurant in general for asian cuisine!

• Busaba, George Street

The food here is generally very good, the place is fairly quiet and they have a really chill aromatherapy vibe going on inside. Only place in Oxford that does the Thai green papaya salad right ...

3.7.5 Japanese

• Edamame

Popular lunch spot: very small and cute and homely (opposite New college), if you go you can't book, you just need to get in there quickly or be okay with queuing for a while

• Taberu In Cowley but very good!

3.7.6 Turkish/ Lebanese/ Arabic/ Moroccan/ North African

- Antep Kitchen, Cowley A bit more of a "formal" setting but the food is fabulous, good dinner spot if you want something fancier
- Za'atar bake, Cowley A favourite! Food is absolutely delicious and the ambience is really uplifting!



• Le Kesh, Cowley
Amazing chicken tagine (even more so than the lamb which they promote
more). Dishes are amazing in general and the vibe of the place is awesome!

3.7.7 South Asian

- Banana Tree, George Street
- Coconut Tree, St. Clement's
- Various food stalls in Gloucester Green Market

 Be sure to check out the market around lunch when it's open (Wednesdays/ Fridays for sure), really affordable and a not-really-that-hidden gem!

3.7.8 Italian

Gino's, Gloucester Green
 There are lots of places for pizza that are decent, this place has a lot of interesting pasta options that give you the warm and fuzzies every time!

3.7.9 Desserts, Donuts, Cookies, Pastries

- Kunafa: Za'atar Bake
- Doughnuts: Peloton (these are insane, especially the chocolate ones!)

Common Ground also on Thursday afternoons just at closing time gives away free doughnuts and they are good!! Also a great study space and air conditioned, perfect for hot days!

- Classic Diabetes-on-a-plate Waffles/ Cookie Dough Desserts: Kaspa's Gloucester Green, Sundaes Gelato, Cowley Road
- Pandan/ Coconut based desserts:
 - Banana Tree George Street: Coconut Stuffed Green Thai Pancakes
 - Banana Tree George Street: Balinese Pulut Hitam (this is amazing
 like a rice pudding)
 - Coconut Tree, St. Clement's: Coconut panna cotta
- Sticky Rice and Mango: Chiang Mai Kitchen
- Cookies: Ben's Cookies
 These are big boy cookies...
- Pastries: Gail's Bakery, Little Clarendon Street

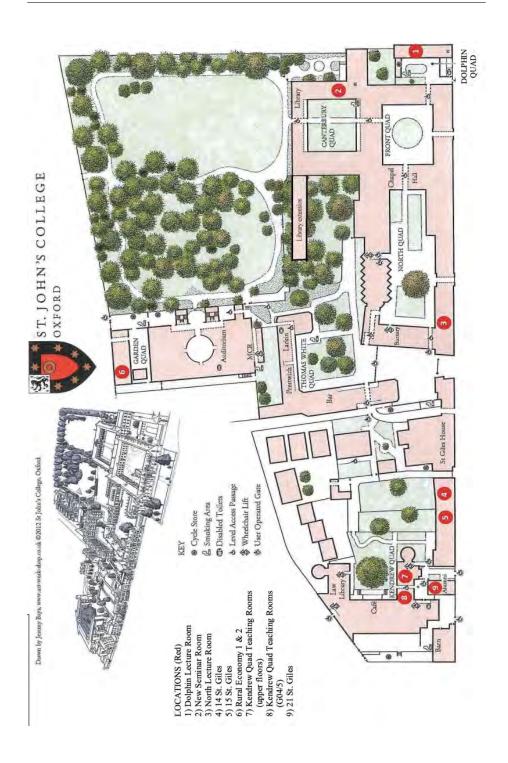
3.7.10 Street Food and Food Trucks

- Gloucester Green Market (on Wednesdays and Fridays)
- Najar's (pretty much right outside college main lodge, there is always a queue because this place is amazing)

3.8 Maps

The best, most fool-proof way to find your way around Oxford is google maps. Download the app if you don't have it and make it your best friend for life because it will take you everywhere. Within John's, here is a map that will help you find your accommodation to start off with. It is a big college but knowing your way around really doesn't take long. The same goes for Oxford as a whole in general!







4 More Information and Useful Quick Links

This document is just a brief guide to get you started so naturally a lot of things have been omitted. There is however a plethora of information available online and if you cannot find something you are looking for, please do feel free to get in touch with any member of the MCR team and they will be able to help you or at least put you in touch with someone who can! On that note, here are a few links to sites where you may find the answers to your deepest darkest questions.

- 1. Official SJC Graduate Freshers Page
- 2. SJC MCR Page
- 3. College Meal Booking and Card Top-Up
- 4. Laundry
- 5. University Societies Page

This is the best way to get involved with what goes on in the wider university community. If you are into anything weird and wonderful, we can pretty much guarantee you'll find others who are into similar things so we encourage you to explore and get involved (especially in freshers' week as many societies put on "meet and greet" events where they hand out freebies). Sign up to their mailing lists to get updates and if you decide you are done with the flood of emails later you can opt out but for the first week at least don't be shy and mingle as much as you can!

6. Online Solo Access

Your SSO account allows you access to many books, papers, etc. which may not be free to access otherwise (e.g. elsevier articles, and most things with a DOI should be available through SOLO if not directly from the publisher's website). Usually this is through your SSO details (username: sjohXXXX@ox.ac.uk and password of your choosing). Remember you need to have set up Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) as well but this process would have been outlined in the IT setup section (2.1) or this document. If you are still having trouble, just email IT services, they're super friendly and are quick to reply!

7. Google Maps is your friend!