A Guide to finding and completing Work Experience:

Finding a placement:

It can be tough to find work placements, especially if you don't live in a big city. Instead of looking for the perfect role, try to find one where you can build **useful skills**.

Think about the career **sector** rather than a specific job. For example, if you want to be an anaesthetist but can't find a placement in that role, look at other healthcare jobs. You could work at a dentist, nursing home, or GP clinic to gain similar experience.

Use your contacts:

- Could you work with a family member, a friend's parent, or a family friend
- Do your contacts have any contacts (friend's) in the sector you're interested in
- Ask your friends where their older siblings went on their work experience as if a placement has taken work experience students before, they'll be more likely to take them again

Looking for work experience placements is similar to looking for a job, don't just contact 1 or 2 companies, message as many as possible to increase your chances of gaining a placement.

For ideas on work placements specific to each sector, take a look at the Unifrog Get on the ladder series.

You can also focus on skills that apply across different fields. If you want to be a flight attendant but can't find experience, try customer service roles, since both jobs require strong people skills.

Or you can look for experience related to the school subjects you enjoy. Here are some ideas:

- **History/Classics:** museums, archive offices, historic sites

- **Art/Design:** galleries, workshops, branding firms

- **Drama:** theatres, talent agencies, event spaces

- **English/Languages:** newspapers, publishing, libraries

- **Science/Engineering:** research labs, energy companies, science museums

- **Medicine/Biology:** pharmacies, hospitals, dental offices

- **Computer Science:** IT companies, tech startups, school IT departments

- **Maths:** banks, accounting firms, insurance companies

- **All subjects:** schools, local blogs, supermarkets, libraries

Using online search engines is a great way to find companies. For example, if you are interested in engineering, you can search for **"engineering companies in Fareham"**. This will show a list of engineering companies in the local area.

Visit each company's website to learn more about what they do and decide if it is somewhere you would like to work. Once you have chosen a few companies, you can email them directly to ask whether they would be willing to offer you a work experience placement.

Information collated from Unifrog January 2026.

Finding and messaging contacts:

Be realistic about where you apply. Don't just think about big business, also look for small businesses or people you know. Family, friends, or teachers may have helpful contacts.

Once you find a placement, contact them yourself – don't ask your parents, caregivers, or teachers to do it for you (it's good to have someone proof check your email but better to come from you directly as you'll be the one going on the work experience). Write a polite, professional email or letter. Have someone check it before you send it.

Use a professional email address – your school email is a good option.

You can use AI to help you write the email if you're unsure on the words to use. For example, I asked AI to "Please write me an email to a company asking if they would take me for a work experience placement. Says I'm in year 10 at school and it will be for June 29th - July 3rd 2026"

This was their example:

Dear Sir or Madam,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is [Your Name], and I am currently a Year 10 student at [Your School Name].

As part of my school's work experience programme, I am required to complete a one-week placement. I am writing to ask whether you would be willing to offer me a work experience placement at your company from **Monday 29th June to Friday 3rd July 2026**.

I am very interested in learning more about your company and gaining experience in a real working environment. I am keen to develop my skills, learn from professionals, and understand more about this type of career.

If you require any further information, such as a CV or a letter from my school, I would be happy to provide it.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read my email. I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Kind regards,
[Your Full Name]
[Your Email Address]
[Your Phone Number]

Getting ready for your placement:
Once your placement is confirmed, get organised:
- add the dates to your calendar
- plan how you'll get there
- email a week before to confirm
- check details like dress code, start time, and who to ask for on arrival
- make sure you have any documents they've asked for (passport, DBS check, and so on)

Information collated from Unifrog January 2026.

Do some research about the company. Find out:
- what they do
- their values and goals
- what your department does

Prepare some questions to ask the people who work there:
- What do you like most about your job?
- What challenges do you face?
- Why did you choose this company?
- How did you get into this career?
- Do you have advice for someone starting out?

This will help you feel more prepared on your first day.

Not sure what to expect once you're there? Check out Unifrog's guide 'Work experience: busting myths'.

During your placement:

Make a good first impression:
- arrive on time
- dress appropriately
- be polite and friendly
- thank anyone who helps you

Take your tasks seriously, even if they seem small, and behave professionally. Use our series on being professional in the workplace to help.

To help, you can use the Unifrog placement journal before your placement starts to record things like what you need to wear, and then carry on using it during the placement.
- download it as a word doc here
- and as a pdf here

Avoid just listing your duties – instead, write down what your learned or found out. This will help when applying for jobs, apprenticeships, or university.
When you're done, upload it to your Locker.

After your placement

Even if you didn't love the experience, send a thank-you email to the person who supervised you. A good impression can lead to more opportunities later!
Take time to reflect:
- What did you enjoy?
- What was challenging?
- What skills did you learn?
- What do you want to learn more about?
- Has this experience changed your career plans?

Write down your thoughts and save them somewhere safe, like your Unifrog locker. Then, you can use them when you apply for a job, apprenticeship, or uni.

Information collated from Unifrog January 2026.