

DU Learning Guide

Government Services

"It saves queuing at the Post Office!"

What's it all about?

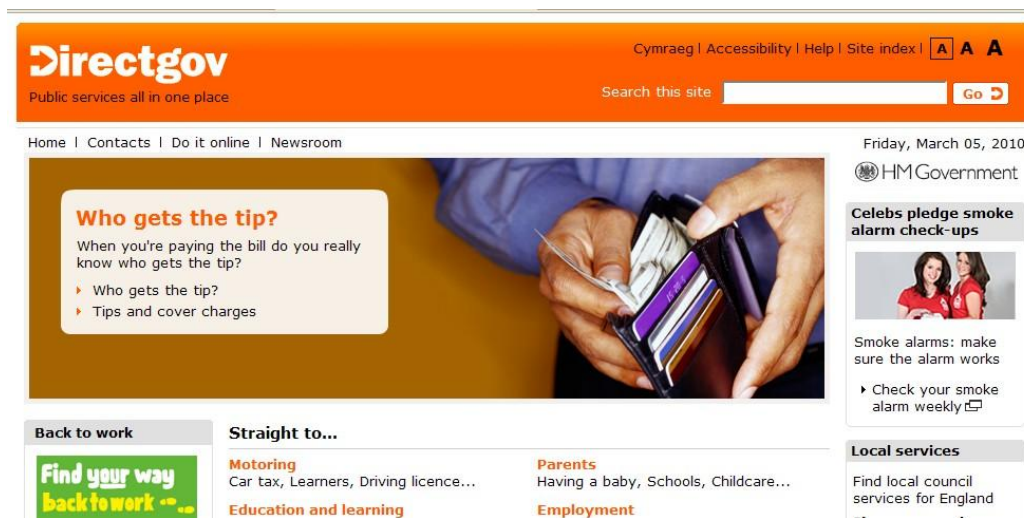
The Government wants people to use the Internet as much as possible for dealing with its various departments and agencies, and also with the devolved administrations of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and with local councils. It's cheaper, which is good news for taxpayers, and it's easier for both sides.

There is a single website, Directgov, www.direct.gov.uk that links you to all public services. You can use it to find information, but the most useful part is the ability to deal with central and local government online, whether claiming benefits, or paying taxes, or applying for a passport, or renewing your TV or Road Fund licence.

Try this

There are so many things that you can do via the Directgov website that it is impossible to suggest an exercise other than to go to the site and look for the service you want.

- Type www.direct.gov.uk into the address bar of your browser
- Press **Enter** to display the Directgov home page.
(Note that the coloured items change frequently so it will not look exactly like this.)



The screenshot shows the Directgov website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Directgov logo, the tagline 'Public services all in one place', and a search bar. Below the navigation bar, there are several sections: a main content area with a featured article 'Who gets the tip?', a sidebar with a 'Celebs pledge smoke alarm check-ups' article, and a bottom section with 'Back to work', 'Straight to...' (containing links for Motoring, Education and learning, Parents, and Employment), and 'Local services'.

- If you move your mouse pointer over the page you will see that it changes to a hand as you move it over most of the words. They are all links to other pages.
- Place the mouse pointer on the one that you want to find out more about and click once with the left mouse button.

Local authorities

All local authorities have their own websites. To find yours:

- Go to www.direct.gov.uk and click on **Contacts** at the top of the page.
- On the next page, click on **Local councils**.

Local councils

Find principal local councils throughout the UK. Browse the A to Z lists, or browse by region or country. Includes county, city, borough and district councils and unitary authorities.



Search for your local council in England
Search for a local council by postcode, street name, town or clickable map. This is for England only.

▶ [Search for your local council in England \(opens new window\)](#)

- Click on **Search for your local council in England**.
- A new window will be displayed.
- Type your postcode in the box.
- Click on **Go**.
- If you are in Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales, click the appropriate link here to see the links to your local authorities.

Find your local authority

To identify the appropriate local authority, please choose from the options below, enter your details and click 'Go'. This service is only available in **England**.

Search by:
Postcode Street, Town Local Authority

Please enter the postcode in the following style, including capital letters and a space: SW1A 1AA

▶ [Alternatively use a map to find your local authority](#)

Please use the links below to find a local authority in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland.

- ▶ [Find a local authority in Wales](#)
- ▶ [Find a local authority in Scotland](#)
- ▶ [Find a local authority in Northern Ireland](#)

More websites to explore

Pensions & Retirement Planning

www.direct.gov.uk/en/Pensionsandretirementplanning/index.htm

Information on benefits and services for pensioners.

The Pension Service

www.thepensionsservice.gov.uk

Detailed guides and forms to claim benefits.

Age UK

www.helptheaged.org.uk

To supplement the government sites, use the Help the Aged guide to claiming the benefits you are due.

See also **Claim your Benefits**.

NHS Choices

www.nhs.uk

NHS medical advice and services.

Carers Direct

www.nhs.uk/carersdirect/Pages/CarersDirectHome.aspx

Information, advice and support for carers.