
JUST LOVE.

A Just Love Guide to Living Below the Line



This guide is intended to be helpful for those who are organising a Live Below the Line effort for a Just Love group. There is a shorter guide available for those who are simply participating in the challenge.

What is Live Below the Line?

Live Below the Line is an international awareness and fundraising campaign, challenging people to live off just £1 a day for 5 days, which is the UK equivalent of the extreme poverty line (adjusted for Purchasing Power Parity). Right now, around 1.2 billion people in the world live in extreme poverty, below this line.

Live Below the Line is about raising awareness of the continued issue of global poverty, and raising money for charities engaged in reducing it. The challenge cannot hope to replicate the reality of extreme poverty but it gives a genuine insight into just how much we spend on food every day and how little others have.

People who live below the poverty line of course pay for **everything** with that money – we're barely getting a glimpse by just buying food with it. Education, essential health care, clothes... But we can make a real difference to these people by going the challenge nonetheless.

The challenge

The Live Below the Line challenge is to spend no more than £1 a day on food and drink for 5 days. The international challenge runs between the 27th April – 1st May, however **anyone is welcome to take the challenge at any other time – the online donation system stays up until July.**

- This means you have a total of £5 with which to buy all ingredients for your meals.
- The full cost of all the items you consume must be included in your budget. This means budgeting for whole packets of food items such as rice, pasta, noodles and eggs etc.
- For items such as salt, pepper, herbs and spices, simply work out the cost of each item per gram and budget your shopping proportionally. Separate your items before the challenge so there's no need to be digging around in your cupboards.
- You can share the cost of ingredients amongst a team, as long as no participant spends more than £1 a day or their total £5 budget. Working as a team will allow you to pool together funds and do more with your cooking.

- If you are cooking together as a team, make sure everyone joins in with planning the meals and cooking!
- You can't grab a cheeky snack from the cupboard unless you include the cost of buying the item new in your budget – **so everything you eat or drink you must be included in your budget.**
- You can use food sourced from your garden as long as you can account for the price of production!
- No combination of meals on any given day can exceed the £1 spending limit (however you can spread your ingredients across the whole week). Remember this is a challenge to eat creatively and be enjoyed – don't at any point deprive yourself of three meals a day.
- You cannot accept 'donated' food from family or friends, but monetary donations towards your fundraising goals are acceptable, and encouraged!
- **You are allowed to drink tap water** – remember you should try and drink at least 6-8 glasses of water each day. When you're not drinking anything else it's really important to remember this.

So they're the basic rules of the challenge! We love the idea of teams eating together every night, as it means you get better food (you can afford more flavour this way!), you support each other and most of all **people who aren't doing the challenge can come along and try it out.**

There are some important things to remember if you are planning to eat together:

- 1) Whoever is planning and cooking the meal each night **has to know in advance how many are coming so that they buy the right amount of food.** So each person will probably have about 30-40p left for dinner and you need to multiply that by the number of people there and that is your budget!
- 2) This means everyone has to keep that part of their budget aside for the evening meal too.
- 3) Try to ensure that everyone in your team is involved in **planning** and **cooking** at least one main meal, ideally more!

The best thing about eating together is sharing in the challenge, and you can invite others to come and try a 40p per person meal. They might be more willing to sponsor you, or even join you for the rest of the challenge. Raising awareness and support in this way is what the challenge is all about. However, the challenge can be completed just as successfully by cooking individually!

How do I sign up?

Fundraising for the Live Below the Line challenge all happens on the official website, <https://www.livebelowtheline.com/uk>. It has a simple donation system using Paypal (signup is not required to donate), whereby people can donate to individuals or to whole teams.

It is best if those of you who are organising the challenge sign up first – this is how (it's much quicker than it looks!)

- 1) Click sign up on the website.
- 2) **Choose a charity for you to sponsor individually** – there's a whole range of NGOs, big and small, to support. Take a moment to find a cause you are passionate about and support them! When someone donates to you as an individual, the money will go to this charity. It's not an easy choice as every single one is a good cause, but definitely have a good look and consider them!

- 3) Go through the signup system. **In the 'Network' box, please create a network in the form 'Just Love x' (i.e. Just Love Oxford, Just Love Bath etc).** (After the first person has created the network, subsequent sign-ups will have the option of joining that network – just write it in the 'network' box.)
- 4) Set an ambitious fundraising target – last year, several members of Just Love Oxford raised around £1000, and the average raised per person in the UK last year was £200. You can do it!
- 5) Once you've signed up, you will also have the option to create a team. The network is an opportunity to have everyone from your Just Love under one banner – the team can be a smaller group of people, such as your college/hall group/church small group.
- 6) Choose your team's joint charity. If anyone donates to your team as a whole, this is the charity that will receive the money (individual donations will still go towards your own chosen charities).
- 7) You can make a description for the team as well to explain why you're doing the challenge.

Getting others involved

This is the key to Live Below the Line. If more people take the challenge, more people will have their thinking about poverty challenged. If more people hear about the challenge, we will raise more money to help those alleviating poverty on the front lines.

- 1) **Talk about it early** – you don't give people several months' notice for a casual hangout at the pub, but you might do for a 21st birthday party. If people aren't told about something far in advance, they probably won't think it's especially important. If you are taking the challenge in the summer term, why not put it on people's radar before the Easter holidays?
- 2) **Make it a big deal** – students are bombarded with loads of events and initiatives, and given the level of commitment required to do Live Below the Line, it will benefit from standing out as *the* event to get involved with this term.
- 3) **Be clear on what is involved** – much of this information is in the previous sections. Communicate exactly what is required of those who sign up. It can often be helpful to share experiences of those who've done it before, to show that it isn't insurmountable, and shouldn't have a detrimental effect on work/other commitments.
- 4) **Be clear on how it helps** – find some statistics on how much of a difference raising £x will make. It feels more worthwhile to have a few dodgy meals if you're saving lives by doing so.
- 5) **Invite people to join a community** – if people know that people will be having meals together in the evening, and they will get to spend time with others who are passionate about ending poverty, they will be more likely to sign up. This is where it can be helpful to take the challenge in CU groups/church small groups/friendship groups etc.
- 6) **Bombard social media** – in the lead up to Live Below the Line, other students shouldn't be able to scroll down their news feed without seeing something about Live Below the Line. Again, this makes it into a big deal – an exciting, world-changing initiative that people will want to be a part of.
- 7) **Personal invites** – social media is great, but lacks a personal touch. Be sure to invite people personally to join you as you take on this challenge!

Awareness and money

Hopefully, you will get to a stage where a good group of you are taking on the Live Below the Line challenge. As you approach the challenge itself, the good awareness raising work you did while getting others involved can be built on as you try to raise awareness and funds.

- 1) **Start with the why** – why are you passionate about ending poverty? Why are you spending a week sacrificing normal meals? Why does all of this matter to you? Think about how to communicate the personal nature of your involvement.
- 2) **Talk about it early** – yes, we said this earlier. This time, we're thinking about it more from a fundraising perspective. Tell friends and family, in advance, how excited you are about the challenge, and they might be more likely to donate!
- 3) **Make it interesting** – particularly on social media, people will come across a lot of requests for sponsorship, and you will need to stand out. This might be through adding a personal story of why your doing it, or promoting the challenge in a funny/quirky way (while making clear that the focus should be on the injustice, not the humour).
- 4) **Invite people to meals** – if people haven't taken on the full challenge, they might still be up for joining you/your team for one meal, at which you could share a bit about the issue of poverty and how you're trying to address it.
- 5) **Host an event** – you might wish to take this a bit further and host a Just Love event with a 4op meal and a speaker as part of the Live Below the Line week. Anyone can come along and learn more about the challenge and the issue.

Ethical Concerns?

If you've got some ethical questions about challenges like Live Below the Line, then please do read this blog post which Josh, our Northern Coordinator, wrote last year:

<https://justlovedurhamblog.wordpress.com/2015/04/21/why-you-shouldnt-live-below-the-line-and-why-you-should/>

If that doesn't satisfy your thirst for knowledge then do get in touch with Josh directly via josh@justloveuk.com - he'd be very happy to hear from you!