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## **ONE IN TWO HOMES EMPLOYING DOMESTIC STAFF**

*- Record spend on domestic bliss as Brits fork out £20bn a year  
to outsource their household chores -*

Britain has become a nation of hard-working hedonists forking out £20 billion a year on domestic help for household chores rather than facing it themselves, research out today reveals.

No longer a luxury afforded only by the rich, research by Gumtree.com, the UK's busiest job site, reveals that almost one in two (48%) time-squeezed Brits – from young professionals to parents – now employ an average of three outside helpers, paying out £1,924 a year or £160 a month on average for the privilege.

On average, British households contract domestic help for six hours a week to ensure the smooth running of their household - from childminding and cleaning, through to the more whimsical tasks of walking the dog, shopping for food and house sitting! Almost a third (30%) of Brits admit that 'nothing would get done around the house' if they didn't outsource day-to-day jobs.

The findings, released as part of Gumtree's annual 'Domestic Staff Index'\*, reveals a boom in Britain's domestic staff sector, with almost a fifth more households now hiring outside help than the previous year. In line with this, the cost of hiring staff has also risen by 10%.

A genuine 'hatred' of tackling mundane household chores (21%), followed by a lack of time because of long working hours (19%) and avoiding arguments with others in the house (13%) are the main reasons behind why most Brits hire in outside help. Asked how they'd rather spend their time than doing chores, 34% would rather read a good book, one in four (24%) would rather chill out with a film while almost one in five (19%) of men and women would rather have sex than clean the kitchen floor!

Almost a third (30%) of Brits admit that 'nothing would get done around the house' if they didn't outsource day-to-day jobs around the home, while 13% of parents say they'd sooner spend quality time with their kids than slave over domestic chores!

### **Outsourcing Jeeves**

The most popular domestic staff positions are window cleaners, gardeners, cleaners and odd job men who are hired on a regular basis by Brits. However it's personal chauffeurs, personal assistants and specialist Doulas (Mother's nurse) who are paid the most for their services, with 12% of those who hire help for their baby forking out £500+ per week for the support.

Incidentally, men pay out the most money on hired help, spending twice as much as women on average (£46 Vs £29 a week) and employing staff to work for longer hours (9 hours Vs 7 hours).

Commenting on the research Sophy Silver of Gumtree.com said:

"Despite rising interest rates and an uncertain property market, Brits are clearly refusing to sacrifice the home comforts provided by their domestic staff. More Brits than ever can now afford to employ several domestic workers for different household jobs.

"No longer a luxury affordable only by the landed gentry, domestic staff are now considered a lifestyle essential by almost half the population which is a far cry from the Upstairs Downstairs generation."

### **The top 10 most popular domestic staff jobs:**

1. Window Cleaner
2. Gardener
3. House cleaner
4. Odd-job man
5. Babysitter
6. House sitter
7. Ironer
8. Private caterer
9. Dog walker
10. Personal shopper

### **The top 10 most expensive hired staff are:**

1. Chauffeur - £181 a week
2. Personal Assistants - £161 a week
3. Nannies - £115 a week
4. Personal Chef - £69 a week
5. House-sitter - £53 a week
6. Carer - £49 a week
7. Home Security - £46 a week
8. Pool Cleaner - £41 a week
9. Private cater for parties - £41 a week
10. Personal trainer - £23 a week

“It’s the classic time Vs money dilemma, but the good news is that for every conceivable job you want done, there’s always someone out there willing to do it, for a fee. With 100,000 job listings on Gumtree every day, the supply and demand for domestic staff continues to grow at a phenomenal pace as more and more service-orientated Brits contract out the time-consuming drudgery of domestic chores!”, adds Silver.

### **Other research highlights**

- Households in the South East are most likely to hire domestic staff, and pay out the most, hiring in help for on average 8 hours a week at an above-average cost of £56 per week
- Single men are the biggest employers, hiring domestic staff for up to eight hours per week (compared to women at 7%)
- Happy marriages are cleaning up too, with 8% of couples living together outsourcing the household chores to avoid arguments about who cleans the floor
- If money wasn't an object men would hire someone to do the ironing (47%), a maid (27%) and 10% would like their very own Butler like P Diddy. Women would also love someone to do the ironing (53%) but are also keen for personal chef (24%) and 22% would like a personal masseuse
- Women clearly don't trust their men's DIY around the house and are almost twice as likely to hire in a handyman (9% v 5%)
- When it comes to hiring staff the most important traits to both sexes is someone who is reliable, honest and with reasonable wage demands. 25% of women are concerned with gossiping to the neighbours and so hire discreet staff (20% for men)

Almost a third (29%) of Brits treat their helpers like part of their extended family and trust them with the keys to the house and all their worldly belongings.

**- Ends -**

**For more information or case studies please contact the Gumtree press office at Lexis Public Relations on 020 7908 6589 or email [gumtree@lexispr.com](mailto:gumtree@lexispr.com)**

**Notes to editors:**

- \* Based on average spend on staff of £1,924 a year, multiplied by 42% of all British households (25,046,000) equaling 10,519,320 households
- \*\* Research carried out by Tickbox, surveying 1050 adults across the UK in July
- \*\*\*Research conducted in July 2006 revealed a total household spend of £18bn on domestic staff in Britain

**About Gumtree.com**

- Gumtree.com was created in London in March 2000 and now covers 60 cities across 6 countries - the UK, Ireland, Poland, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa
- It is the UK's biggest website for local community classifieds including flat share, flat rentals and jobs
- Some Fast Facts
  - 20,000 new ads in a day
  - 100,000 new ads in a week
  - Half a million new ads in a month
  - Three quarters of a million ads live on the site at any one time
  - 150 million page impressions every month
  - Around 3 million visitors a month
  - Gumtree.com users spend 5,360,000 minutes on the website each month
- Gumtree is your local community online. Home to all the things you'd expect from your local community; a place to find and advertise rooms, flats and houses, a notice board for selling and buying stuff, somewhere to find job or a date even just to chat with friends

