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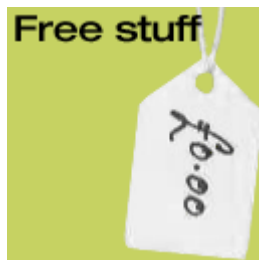


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From apples to Christmas trees

Fun working options at home and abroad

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Saturday January 6, 2007

[The Guardian](#)

At home

National Trust basecamps and bothies

[The National Trust](#) boasts more than 40,000 volunteers working in a range of different areas across the whole of the United Kingdom. One popular option is organised groups taking part in practical conservation work. Such groups often stay for free in basecamps, or "bothies" - purpose-built or converted buildings that provide simple self-catering accommodation in unspoilt and very remote parts of the countryside.

British Trust of Conservation Volunteers

Help out with conservation projects in your local area and learn new skills to boot with the [British Trust of Conservation](#)



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Join the Guardian's new healthy eating club

[Volunteers](#). Projects can be anything from dry stone walling to building a living willow structure. Activities usually take a full day (10am-5pm) and you'll probably have to bring a packed lunch - but there's no need to book in advance.

Harvest days

Working with apples and other crops can be huge fun for all the family. [The Shropshire Apple Trust](#) holds an annual "Apple Day" in October, inviting people from across the UK to bring as many home-grown apples as possible - in return they receive vouchers allowing them to drink the juices made by the trust's hand-operated apple presses dating back to the 19th century. Other orchards offer similar events - for an overview visit the [Common Ground](#) website. This also has details of community orchards around England where you can volunteer to help with picking fruit, cutting hay, staking, building fencing and pruning the trees.

Abroad

Pueblo Ingles

An intriguing initiative that allows you to stay free in a [Spanish village](#), meals included, in exchange for conversing with fellow Spanish residents in English. The drawback is you aren't allowed to speak any Spanish whatsoever! Now operating in three Spanish villages which, throughout, are inhabited by 50% English and 50% Spanish speakers.

Seasonal work

One good pan-European source is the [Danish Seasonal Work](#) website, offering camping facilities that are usually free for jordbærplukkere - strawberry pickers (summer) and Christmas tree pickers (winter) among many other jobs. You earn some money too, although the pay is modest and depends how much you pick: be sure what you are signing up to before committing.

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