

The Period Kits

(Disclaimer: I went to Superdrug to buy the supplies because I support their cruelty free ethic, and they are also slightly cheaper. Therefore, the following prices are a guide solely from Superdrug. Prices may differ between shops.)

Kit:

Quantity bought	Item	Price (£)
1	Box of 20 regular applicator tampons	1.49
1	Box of 20 plus size applicator tampons	1.49
1	Box of 10 light pads	0.89
1	Roll of 30 plastic bags for waste disposal	2
1	Pack of 12 tissues	1.50
1	Pack of baby wipes	1.05
1	See-through/ easy clean case	2.99
1	Bottle of hand sanitiser	0.61
	Total Cost	12.02

Table 1

Per Pack:

Quantity used	Item	Individual unit price (£)
1	See-through/ easy clean case	2.99
1	Pack of tissues	0.12
1	Hand sanitiser	0.61
1	Waste bag	0.06
1	Baby wipes	1.05
3	Regular tampons	0.22
3	Super tampons	0.22
3	Light pads	0.26
	Total cost of period pack	5.53

Table 2

Adding £6 therefore to a welfare budget in order to create a period first aid kit is a reasonable expenditure. The upfront cost (Table 1) is also minimal and contains supplies which will last a while. For example, the plastic case and the hand sanitiser.

Common questions and answers (genuinely asked by friends, colleagues and family)

1. What if people take the mickey and rely on them, causing the units to spend more?
 - a. No-one who menstruates takes the mickey. These kits are for anyone struggling to either afford their own items, or for anyone who has been caught out. There are plenty of examples in pub/ coffee shop toilets of spare period supplies. This is no different.
2. But who goes to buy the supplies?
 - a. Whoever is dealing with the welfare considerations and the budget for the site should be responsible for the period pack. This could be delegated to a P.O/ Supervisor/ Assistant if needs. Or they are bought in own time rather than work time and claimed back from the welfare budget.
3. But I'm a man! I don't want to be responsible for my colleague's periods!
 - a. Periods happen to men and gender non-binary as well. Also, you are not responsible for their periods, you are enabling your colleagues a safe clean, supportive and inclusive environment for a perfectly natural body function. No excuses.
4. So, where do we buy these products from?
 - a. Anywhere. Every supermarket, corner shop, toiletry store (Boots/ Superdrug) and pharmacist will supply period products.
5. But there is such a large range of brands, non-branded and types! I am so confused!
 - a. Within the guide there is a hygienic minimum. Using applicator tampons is cleaner, especially in locations without handwashing facilities, and wrapped pads too. It is wise to get the basic branded kit, so don't be afraid to go for the cheap, but hygienic brands.
6. But what if my colleagues don't use tampons/ pads?
 - a. Well that's ok, it is up to the individual how they manage their period and their choice of supplies. That's why the kit has a range, as you never know who may need to use it. Also, when an individual has been caught out, they are not going to be picky what they use in an emergency!
7. Are allergies a consideration?
 - a. Absolutely. Cotton is an allergen, as is the risk of Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS) from tampon use. However, within the site health and safety you should know about individuals with allergies and risks. They will not use the products if they are allergic.

8. But what if it is a small job and we don't need to have welfare as there is "other defined" toilet use?
 - a. Take the period kit along with the site first aid kit. If one of your colleagues is on a period, they will be able to sort themselves out within the provided welfare if it is an emergency, however, please be prepared to give them a lift to the nearest toilet.

9. What if we are working far away from the site compound where the toilet is?
 - a. This is a common problem in archaeology. MWAH recommends keeping the period kit in the designated site vehicle for anyone to access, or the nearest site hut. Be prepared to give anyone a lift off site to the nearest toilet if this is the case.

10. We haven't bothered to get welfare sorted for this job, as it's a local building recording. Do I still need a period kit?
 - a. Yes. If there is a designated site car, keep it with the first aid kit, or ensure that if your colleague is doing any solo work, that the company reimburses any period product expenditure they may have to purchase in lieu of taking a period kit.

11. How do we know when the kit needs re-stocking?
 - a. As with a first-aid kit, check the supplies prior to a site, and make a checklist for the kit. This document and the period guides can help.

12. Does this mean my colleagues have to be more open with me about their periods?
 - a. No. It is their body, their choice and their privacy. Your role is to enable a safe, supportive, inclusive space where colleagues don't have to take time off for a period, which benefits you and them.