

**My first impressions of life in the UK**

1	I felt my throat tighten with emotion. "I can't believe I'm here, in Scotland," I thought, smiling,
2	"It's just one of the most beautiful places I've ever seen." I felt so lucky. That was my very
3	first impression of the UK when I came to live in Inverness three years ago.
4	On the first day of my stay, the morning was beautiful. Suddenly, however, it started to rain,
5	and this was followed by snow and hailstones. After 30 minutes, it was sunny again. Did I
6	mention it was in May? The Scottish weather; what can I say about it? It is one of the
7	craziest I have ever seen - there are four seasons in a day!
8	In the beginning, my life in the UK wasn't easy, because I didn't speak English and I couldn't
9	understand a word. And the Scottish accent; well, now I think it is charming, but at first I
10	found it very difficult to understand. When I think of my first conversations in English I just
11	laugh at myself. It was more like a pantomime show - very few words with a lot of bodily
12	movements! I honestly never thought that speaking could be so tiring.
13	My first visit to a pub wasn't the luckiest one. By the time I got ready and went into town, all
14	the pubs were closed. It is really shocking how early pubs close – 'last call' is at eleven
15	o'clock, whereas in Poland they stay open until two or three in the morning.
16	When I arrived in Inverness, one particular thing struck me: no matter where I went, there
17	was a group of Polish people nearby. I also discovered some Polish delicatessens in town
18	and even Polish beer served in pubs - that was more than I had expected before I came
19	here. I just felt at home.
20	I like being here. I love the beautiful landscapes, the friendly and helpful people, the stone
21	castles, the double-decker buses, the long days in the summer and the men wearing kilts -
22	you won't see it anywhere else. On a final note, I believe that home is where you make it -
23	and I made Inverness my second home.

Malgorzata - Polish lady living in Scotland