Card Spending Update

December 2025

Release date : 17 March 2026

UK Finance: Card Spending Update for December 2025

Key data highlights:

Card transactions by UK cardholders both in the UK and overseas:

- There were 2.4 billion debit card transactions in December, 0.5 per cent more than than in December 2024. The total spend of £70.6 billion was 0.3 per cent lower than in December 2024.
- There were 451 million credit card transactions in December, 7.9 per cent more than in December 2024. The total spend of £23.8 billion was 8.2 per cent higher than December 2024.
- Outstanding balances on credit card accounts have grown by 8.9 per cent over the twelve months to December and 47.6 per cent of outstanding balances incurred interest compared to 48.6 per cent in December 2024.

Card transactions made in the UK by cardholders from both the UK and from overseas countries:

- There were 2.18 billion debit and credit card transactions in the UK in December, 1 per cent fewer than in December 2024. The total spend of £74 billion was 0.8 per cent lower than December 2024.
- Contactless payments accounted for 67 per cent of all credit card and 76 per cent of all debit card transactions.
- There were 1.616 billion contactless card transactions in December, 0.6 per cent less than the 1.625 billion in December 2024. The total value of contactless transactions was £28.9 billion in December, a 1.4 per cent increase on £28.5 billion in December 2024.
- The number of contactless credit card transactions was 7.7 per cent higher than December 2024. The number of contactless debit card transactions was 2 per cent lower than December 2024.

UK Residents cards in issue - December 2025

109 million	DEBIT CARDS	99 million of which are contactless
60 million	CREDIT CARDS	59 million of which are contactless
55 million	CREDIT CARD ACCOUNTS	39 million of which are active

Notes to Editors

1 For more information please call the UK Finance Press Office on 020 7416 6750 or e-mail press@ukfinance.org.uk.

2 UK Finance is the collective voice for the banking and finance industry. Representing around 300 firms across the industry, we act to enhance competitiveness, support customers and facilitate innovation.

3 Please note that data on UK cardholders is different to data on card activity in the UK. Data on UK cardholders refers to transactions made either inside the UK or overseas on cards issued to UK residents and reported by card issuers. Data on card activity in the UK refers to transactions made in the UK only, both on UK-issued cards and cards issued overseas, this data is provided by acquirers.

4 A summary of our annual UK Payment Markets Report containing detailed analysis of the use of all types of payments in the UK, can be found here: https://www.ukfinance.org.uk/policy-and-guidance/reports-and-publications/uk-payment-statistics-2025

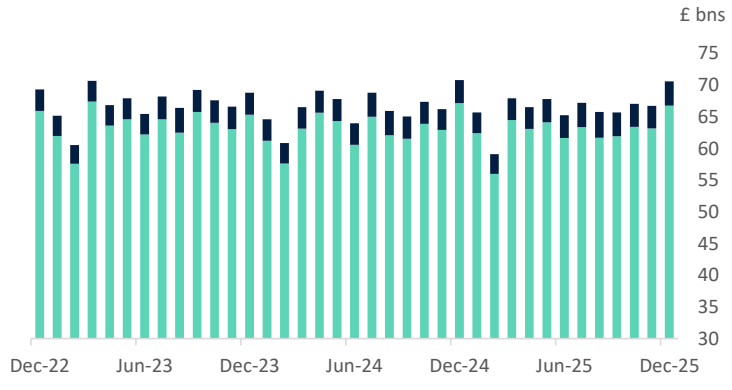
5 The quarterly Household Finance Review containing analysis and economic commentary on household finance in the UK, can be found here: https://www.ukfinance.org.uk/data-and-research/data/household-finance/household-finance-review.

Next update: 20 April 2026

Debit cards (UK card holders)

Value of transactions

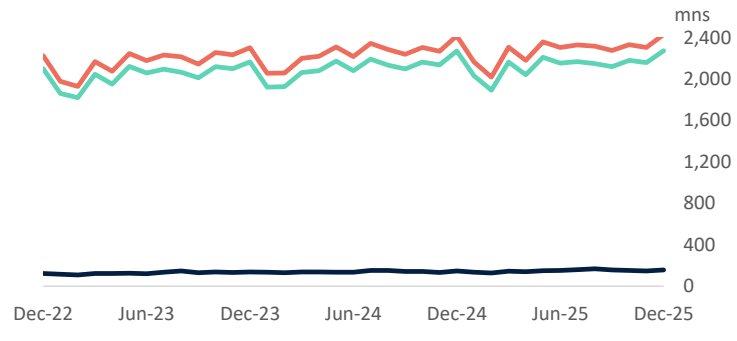
value of debit card purchases in the UK and overseas by UK cardholders



	Latest (December 2025)	Y-o-Y Comparison
outside the UK	£3.8 bn	5.2%
inside the UK	£66.8 bn	-0.6%

Number of transactions

volume of debit card purchases in the UK and overseas by UK cardholders

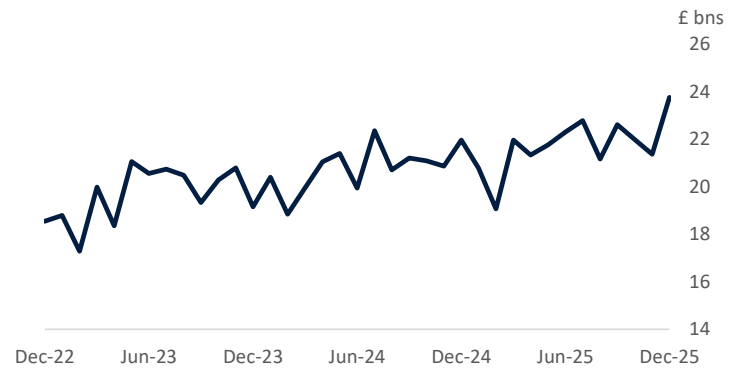


	Latest (December 2025)	Y-o-Y Comparison
total transactions	2,429 mn	0.5%
inside the UK	2,272 mn	0.1%
outside the UK	157 mn	6.8%

Credit cards (UK card holders)

Value of transactions

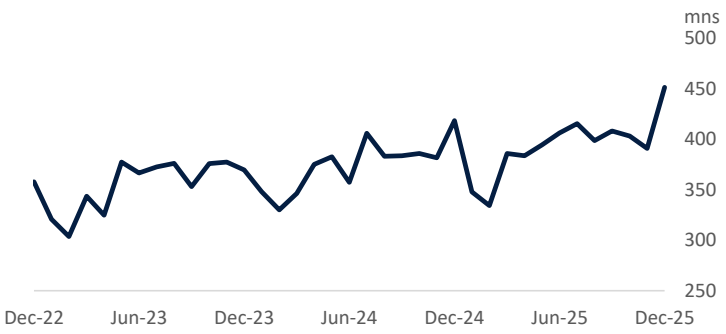
value of transactions in the month including purchases, cash withdrawals and balance transfers by UK cardholders



Latest (December 2025)	Y-o-Y Comparison
£23.8 bn	8.2%

Number of transactions

volume of transactions in the month including purchases, cash withdrawals and balance transfers by UK cardholders



Latest (December 2025)	Y-o-Y Comparison
451 mn	7.9%

Credit card growth rate

annual growth rate in credit card balances outstanding for UK cardholders

Latest (December 2025)
8.9%

Credit card balances bearing interest [(a)]

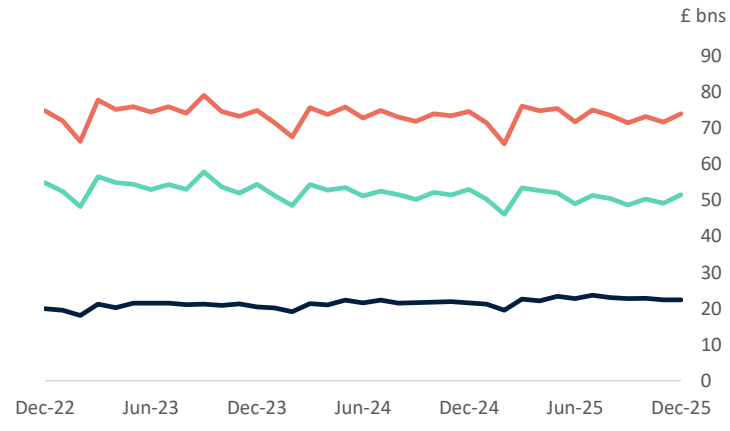
percentage of total balances outstanding that incur interest

Latest (December 2025)
47.6%

Card activity in the UK

Value of transactions in the UK

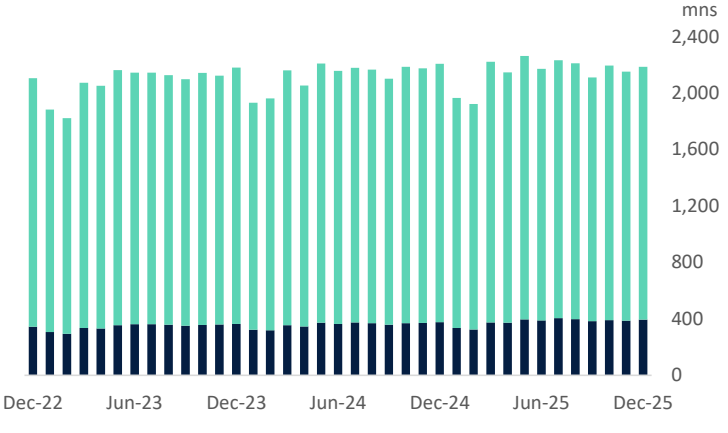
value of all debit and credit card transactions in the UK including overseas-issued cards



	Latest (December 2025)	Y-o-Y comparison
total cards	£74.0 bn	-0.8%
debit cards	£51.6 bn	-2.7%
credit cards	£22.4 bn	3.7%

Number of transactions in the UK

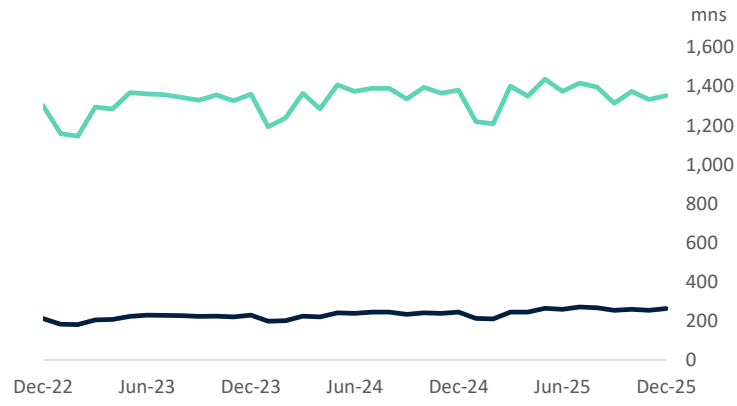
volume of all debit and credit card transactions in the UK including overseas-issued cards



	Latest (December 2025)	Y-o-Y comparison
debit cards	1,790 mn	-2.2%
credit cards	394 mn	4.6%

Contactless card transactions

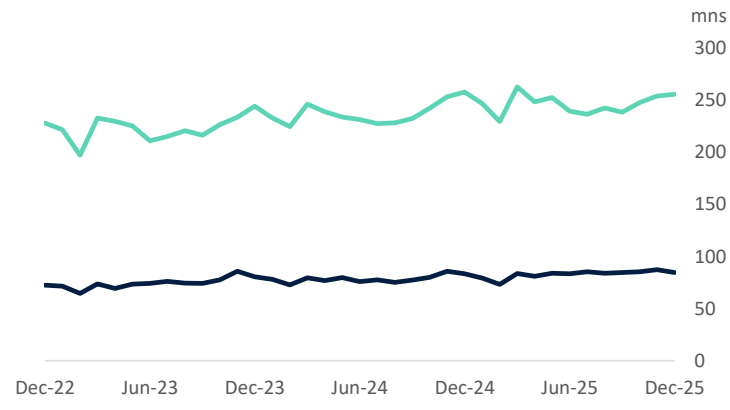
volume of all contactless debit and credit card transactions in the UK including overseas-issued cards



	Latest (December 2025)	Y-o-Y comparison
debit cards	1,352 mn	-2.0%
credit cards	263 mn	7.7%

Online card transactions

volume of all online debit and credit card transactions in the UK including overseas-issued cards



	Latest (December 2025)	Y-o-Y comparison
debit cards	256 mn	-0.9%
credit cards	85 mn	1.5%

UK card holders

		Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25
Cards in issue with UK residents (000's)	debit cards	104,498	104,448	104,516	104,897	105,273	105,089	105,950	106,233	106,936	107,564	108,415	108,479	108,804
	credit cards	58,891	58,841	58,866	58,981	59,253	59,581	59,249	59,511	59,636	59,639	59,776	60,156	60,355
	total	163,388	163,290	163,383	163,878	164,526	164,670	165,199	165,744	166,572	167,203	168,191	168,635	169,160
of which have contactless functionality (000's)	debit cards	97,089	96,933	97,445	97,446	97,704	97,890	97,537	98,868	98,771	99,130	99,285	99,301	98,682
	credit cards	56,265	56,562	56,427	56,518	56,820	57,140	57,131	57,448	57,646	57,740	58,198	58,569	58,763
	total	153,354	153,495	153,872	153,964	154,524	155,030	154,668	156,316	156,418	156,870	157,483	157,870	157,445

UK Debit card holders

		Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25
value of purchases	£ mns	70,812	65,691	59,101	67,936	66,527	67,809	65,260	67,205	65,784	65,684	67,050	66,743	70,606
of which inside the UK	£ mns	67,192	62,409	56,002	64,492	63,096	64,157	61,679	63,376	61,696	61,957	63,419	63,188	66,796
of which outside the UK	£ mns	3,620	3,281	3,098	3,444	3,430	3,652	3,581	3,828	4,088	3,728	3,631	3,555	3,810
volume of purchases	mns	2,416	2,166	2,019	2,307	2,181	2,359	2,304	2,327	2,315	2,276	2,332	2,305	2,429
of which inside the UK	mns	2,269	2,030	1,891	2,163	2,040	2,209	2,152	2,167	2,147	2,120	2,180	2,158	2,272
of which outside the UK	mns	147	136	127	144	141	150	152	160	168	156	151	147	157

UK Credit card holders

		Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25
number of accounts	000's	53,277	53,230	53,098	53,383	53,638	53,941	53,612	53,837	54,112	54,078	54,285	54,559	54,711
of which active accounts (those with balances outstanding at the end of the calendar month)	000's	37,285	37,296	37,226	37,654	37,711	37,848	38,046	38,215	38,782	38,975	38,913	39,138	39,188
value of transactions	£ mns	21,963	20,780	19,075	21,962	21,334	21,764	22,308	22,783	21,163	22,612	21,991	21,372	23,763
of which purchases	£ mns	20,222	18,387	17,272	20,123	19,562	19,925	20,457	20,860	19,388	20,535	20,049	19,608	21,941
of which cash advances	£ mns	218	202	194	225	236	239	242	251	247	252	234	203	235
of which balance transfers	£ mns	1,524	2,190	1,608	1,614	1,536	1,599	1,608	1,672	1,528	1,826	1,708	1,561	1,586
volume of transactions	000's	418,441	347,689	334,315	385,939	383,474	394,418	406,011	415,306	398,482	408,145	403,063	390,749	451,308
of which purchases	000's	416,125	345,254	332,244	383,675	381,170	392,063	403,619	412,856	396,134	405,648	400,703	388,626	448,964
of which cash advances	000's	1,578	1,450	1,396	1,572	1,635	1,658	1,688	1,715	1,678	1,711	1,623	1,446	1,641
of which balance transfers	000's	738	984	675	692	668	697	704	735	671	786	737	677	702
credit card balances outstanding	£ mns	67,648	66,897	67,189	67,540	68,167	68,546	69,378	69,837	70,371	70,696	70,621	71,911	72,381
percentage bearing interest [(a)]		48.6%	49.4%	48.8%	48.6%	48.4%	47.5%	47.8%	47.9%	47.9%	48.4%	48.1%	47.8%	47.6%
net change on month	£ mns	153	-751	293	351	628	378	832	460	534	325	-75	1,290	470
annual growth rate		5.6%	5.7%	5.6%	5.6%	6.5%	6.3%	6.5%	7.4%	7.4%	7.4%	8.0%	8.5%	8.9%

Card activity in the UK

on both UK and overseas issued cards

		Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25
Debit & credit card value of transactions (£ mns)	total	74,676	71,549	65,701	76,131	74,858	75,518	71,810	75,085	73,607	71,534	73,273	71,696	74,044
	of which online £ mns	24,397	28,387	23,994	27,532	27,217	26,038	24,535	25,836	25,043	25,056	25,504	24,738	24,573
	of which contactless £ mns	28,484	22,633	22,381	26,140	25,781	27,335	26,210	27,132	27,303	25,152	26,174	26,351	28,886
Debit cards	total	53,054	50,343	46,152	53,484	52,710	52,084	49,054	51,374	50,573	48,723	50,439	49,243	51,627
	of which online £ mns	15,959	18,837	15,544	17,775	17,873	16,250	15,072	16,138	15,593	15,564	16,147	15,418	15,664
	of which contactless £ mns	22,601	18,071	17,870	20,849	20,362	21,507	20,513	21,186	21,355	19,545	20,420	20,557	22,564
Credit cards	total	21,622	21,206	19,549	22,647	22,148	23,434	22,756	23,710	23,033	22,810	22,834	22,454	22,416
	of which online £ mns	8,437	9,550	8,450	9,756	9,343	9,788	9,463	9,698	9,450	9,492	9,357	9,320	8,909
	of which contactless £ mns	5,883	4,562	4,511	5,291	5,419	5,827	5,698	5,946	5,948	5,607	5,754	5,793	6,321
Debit & credit card volume of transactions (mns)	total	2,207	1,966	1,923	2,221	2,146	2,263	2,172	2,232	2,210	2,111	2,193	2,151	2,185
	of which online mns	341	326	303	346	329	336	323	322	326	323	333	341	340
	of which contactless mns	1,625	1,432	1,420	1,646	1,595	1,702	1,634	1,689	1,664	1,567	1,634	1,588	1,616
Debit cards	total	1,830	1,631	1,599	1,847	1,774	1,867	1,783	1,828	1,812	1,727	1,802	1,764	1,790
	of which online mns	258	247	229	263	248	252	239	237	242	238	248	254	256
	of which contactless mns	1,380	1,219	1,209	1,402	1,349	1,437	1,374	1,418	1,397	1,313	1,374	1,334	1,352
Credit cards	total	377	335	324	374	372	396	389	404	397	384	391	386	394
	of which online mns	83	79	73	84	81	84	83	85	84	85	85	87	85
	of which contactless mns	244	213	210	244	245	264	260	271	268	254	260	254	263

Annual growth rates are adjusted to exclude the effects of population changes, data revisions, write-offs and sales/purchases of loan books, to reflect underlying business trends where appropriate and are based on non-seasonally adjusted.

Year-on-year percentage changes compare the latest month's figure with the same month's figure in the previous year.

Please note data on UK cardholders is separate to data on card activity in the UK. Data on UK cardholders refers to transactions on cards issued to UK residents, both overseas and inside the UK. Data on card activity in the UK refers to transactions in the UK only, but on both UK-issued cards and cards issued overseas this data is provided by acquirers.

We estimate data covers over 92 per cent of the total credit card market.

Active accounts are defined as those with balances outstanding at the end of the calendar month.

(a) Please note this figure refers to the percentage of total credit card balances outstanding that incurred interest at the end of the month i.e. excluding spending in the interest-free period or with balances on a zero per cent rate.

Debit card transactions outside the UK include foreign POS transactions as well as online purchases and subscriptions acquired outside the UK. No further breakdown of this data is availble to identify the split between foreign transactions and UK transactions acquired outside the UK.

Data series are subject to restatement, based on corrections or the receipt of additional information.

The contactless limit on credit and debit cards was raised to £30 in September 2015, £45 in April 2020 and £100 in mid-October 2021.

For more information please call the UK Finance Press Office on 020 7416 6750 or e-mail press@ukfinance.org.uk