YOUR GUIDE TO CAREER BREAKS
WHAT IS A CAREER BREAK?

A Career Break is an opportunity for experienced employees to interrupt their careers for a year or so to concentrate on something else. You get the chance to give up work temporarily, without giving up your career.

By granting a Career Break, we promise to do our best to find you another position, at the same grade as the one you left, when you are ready to return.

Of course, it isn’t always easy to find a suitable position for people who have been away from work for a long time. This is why we do not guarantee to find you a suitable position when you return to work - although we promise to do our best.
WHY TAKE A CAREER BREAK?

If you’re considering leaving Tesco, but not thinking of taking up employment somewhere else, it may be possible for you to take a Career Break.

For example, you might be thinking of taking a few years off work to bring up your children. Or you might need to give up work temporarily to look after a sick or elderly relative. Alternatively, you might want the time to study fulltime, or take a year out to travel abroad.

If you’ve been with Tesco for two years or more, you probably have mixed feelings about leaving. You want to pursue your interests outside the Company, but you’re reluctant to give up a career you enjoy. With a Career Break you can have the best of both worlds.

AM I ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

Tesco offers two schemes: the General Career Break and the Enhanced Career Break.

You can apply if you meet the following conditions:

THE GENERAL CAREER BREAK

The General Career Break is open to anyone - at any grade or level in the Company. However, if you have special knowledge or skills that you would need to keep regularly updated, you should apply for the Enhanced Career Break. To be considered for a General Career Break you must:

- have completed two years’ continuous service when you apply;
- have achieved satisfactory gradings in the previous two years’ appraisals;
THE ENHANCED CAREER BREAK

The Enhanced Career Break is a scheme designed for employees whose experience of skills need to be regularly updated.

To be considered for an Enhanced Career Break you must:
- be employed in a senior position such as a Senior Team or above (Retail);
  or;
- have reached work level 2 or above (Head Office/ Distribution);
  and;
- have completed two years’ continuous service when you apply;
- have achieved satisfactory gradings in the previous two years’ appraisals;
- be available for a minimum of 4 weeks per year to work in your previous department to update skills.

WILL MY APPLICATION BE AUTOMATICALLY ACCEPTED?

Not necessarily - applications for Career Breaks are assessed by your Senior Manager.

HOW LONG DOES A CAREER BREAK LAST?

You choose the length of your Career Break, but you must leave Tesco for at least 3 months (13 weeks) and return within five years. In addition, you must inform us of the length of your Career Break before you leave. A Lifestyle Break is available for someone looking to take a break of between 4 and 12 weeks.

CAN I HAVE MORE THAN ONE CAREER BREAK?

You may take up to two breaks but the total period out of employment must not exceed five years.

CAN I RETURN TO WORK AT TESCO DURING MY CAREER BREAK?

You may like to return for a short period during your absence, to do some seasonal or temporary work. Although we cannot guarantee to provide this sort of work, if you apply to us in plenty of time, we will do our best to find a temporary position for you. If you decide to take temporary or seasonal employment, you must work at least four weeks but no more than 12 weeks during any one year. You will only be allowed to undertake one period of temporary or seasonal employment during any one year.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I TAKE A CAREER BREAK?

If you chose to take a career break you are resigning from Tesco, however we will do what we can to find you a position to return to.
Employees on the Enhanced Career Break will be expected to return for a short period each year. For further details see page 6.

**CAN I COME BACK TO WORK BEFORE THE END OF MY CAREER BREAK?**

If you decide you do not want to be away from work as long as you expected, you can ask to come back to work earlier. We will do our best to find you a position of the same grade as the one which you left, but we cannot guarantee to do so.

**AM I ALLOWED TO WORK FOR ANYONE ELSE DURING MY CAREER BREAK?**

We would not expect you to take up permanent employment with anyone else during your Career Break because this would not be in the spirit of the scheme. However, if you need to do temporary work, please contact us first.

**WHEN CAN I RETURN TO WORK ON A PERMANENT BASIS?**

When you apply for your Career Break, you will be asked to tell us when you expect to return to work. In order to give us the best chance of finding a suitable position for you, you must give us as much notice of your return as possible. We will invite you to apply for any suitable vacancies as they occur. Bear in mind that it might take us up to six months to find a suitable position for you, and even after that time unfortunately, there is no guarantee that we will find one for you.

Similarly, we will make every attempt to provide employment for you starting on the date you wish to return, but it may be necessary for us to postpone your return for up to four weeks.

If you are unable to return to work, for example because of sickness, you may delay your return for up to four weeks.

**WHAT IS THE POINT OF TAKING A CAREER BREAK WHEN A RETURN TO WORK IS NOT GUARANTEED?**

One of the main reasons for taking a Career Break, is that when you return you will retain your previous service related benefits. This is because we ‘link’ your first period of service to your second, when calculating your period of continuous service.

For example, if you worked for us for two years before taking a Career Break, on your return, we will immediately class you as having two years’ continuous service.
WILL I LOSE OUT ON ANY SERVICE RELATED BENEFITS?

**SAYE (SAVE AS YOU EARN) SHARE OPTION SCHEME**
If you have chosen a 5 year SAYE scheme and you have saved for between 3 and 5 years, you will get your savings back, plus interest or you can use your savings to date, plus interest, to buy shares at the option price (you must do so within 6 months of starting your Career Break). If you have saved for less than 3 years, you will forfeit your right to buy Tesco Shares at the option price. You can either withdraw all your savings and any interest to date (i.e. closing your Account), or you can continue to make regular savings into your Account, in order to collect your bonus at the end of your Contract.

If you are a member of the Executive Share Options scheme then you must exercise your “live” options before starting your career break, otherwise you will lose the right to take those options.

**STAFF PRIVILEGECARD**
You will have to give up your Staff Privilegecard before leaving on your Career Break. However, as soon as you return, you will be entitled to a Staff Privilegecard straight away.

**ELIGIBILITY FOR SICK LEAVE, MATERNITY, PATERNITY & ADOPTION LEAVE**
Your length of service is linked back to your previous period of employment, so you will be eligible for leave and pay on the same basis as before. However, any statutory payments are dependant on your earnings over a specific period, so you may not qualify for statutory pay immediately.

**SHARES IN SUCCESS**
As soon as you start your Career Break you will lose any rights to Shares in Success. Upon your return, you will need to complete one full financial year’s service and you must have returned to work by the ‘appropriation date’ (the day when shares are normally allocated - usually in May), before you will be eligible to receive shares In Success again. Any shares in Success held for less than 1 year will be forfeited. Any Shares in Success held for at least 1 year, will be released from the Trust and transferred into your name.

When you come to sell your shares, the tax position depends on the period of time you held the shares in Trust for. If they were held for between 1 and 3 years, they would be subject to income tax and National Insurance on the market value of the shares on the date they were withdrawn from the Trust.

If they were held for between 3 and 5 years, they would be subject to income tax and National Insurance on the lower of the market value of the shares on the date they were awarded. If the shares have been held for more than 5 years, they will be free from income tax and National Insurance.
HOW DOES THE ENHANCED CAREER BREAK SCHEME DIFFER FROM THE GENERAL ONE?

The main difference is that people leaving on the Enhanced scheme will be given a certain amount of work and/or training during their Career Break in order to update their skills.

Your Manager will contact you at six monthly intervals throughout your break and ask you to attend a Career Update Interview. During this interview you’ll be kept up to date with changes at work and asked how you’re getting on at home.

Your Manager will also provide you with a minimum of four weeks’ work every year. You will discuss the nature of the work together and agree when and how it is to be completed. Wherever possible, we will arrange for you to complete this work at the pay rate for the grade/size of job you left but on the basis of a temporary contract. Work carried out during Career Breaks does not count towards overall length of service.

You will also be obliged to attend any formal training sessions which your Manager provides for you. In exceptional circumstances – for example if you have taken a Career Break in order to study overseas - it may be impractical for you to return to enhance or update your skills. Similarly, in some instances, it may be inappropriate for us to provide you with suitable work.

In either event, you and your Manager will have to agree how to update your skills. This must be authorised by your Senior Manager. If, during your Career Break, your Manager changes jobs, someone in the Personnel Department will arrange for you to meet his or her successor, who will continue to maintain contact with you and arrange assignments for you.

In all other aspects, an Enhanced Career Break works in the same way as a General Career Break.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR A CAREER BREAK?

If you would like to take a Career Break, make an appointment to see your Manager. During this meeting, your Manager will help you decide whether you need to apply for a General or an Enhanced Career Break, and tell you to whom you send your written application. You will need to make your application at least 4 weeks before you would like to take your Career Break, but obviously it will help us to make the necessary arrangements if you can give more notice.

You may either use the form provided at the back of this booklet, or write a personal letter.
Please ensure you include the following details:

Name:

Date of joining and length of service
Present position.
Details of any previous positions with the company.
Scheme applied for (General or Enhanced).
Desired start date for the break.
Expected break period required (minimum 3 months, maximum five years).
Reason for requesting the break and any other relevant information.

WHO DECIDES WHETHER OR NOT I CAN TAKE A CAREER BREAK?

This will depend upon the position you are in: your Personnel Manager will let you know once they are in receipt of your application.

HOW WILL MY APPLICATION BE ASSESSED?

Once the Senior Manager has received your written application, he or she will arrange to meet you, and your Personnel Representative, to discuss your request. You will be told whether or not your application has been successful within a week of this meeting. If your application has been successful, you will be given the name of someone who will arrange your break and keep in contact with you until you return.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I’M READY TO RETURN TO WORK?

As soon as you’re ready to come back, write to your Manager. If your Manager has moved on to another job during your absence, the Personnel Department will have given you the name of his or her successor. Unfortunately the Company may not be able to provide you with a particular position on an exact date, so please state the latest possible date on which you would like to return. Wherever possible, you should give at least six months’ written notice of this date.

Please also send a copy of your letter to the person in the Personnel Department who was in contact with you during your break.

Once we have received your letter, your Manager and Personnel Representative will do their best to find a suitable position for you, either in the department you left, or in another part of the Company. If they don’t find something suitable, they will continue to look until your ‘latest possible date for returning’.
If a suitable position has not been found by that date, we will have no alternative but to advise you to start looking for a position with another company.

If we do have a vacancy, we will ask you whether or not you wish to apply for it. If you do, your Personnel Representative will arrange an interview for you.

If your application is successful, and you are offered the position, you are free either to accept it or turn it down. However, you should be aware that if you turn down what we regard as a suitable offer, we may not be able to find you suitable employment with us within your deadline.

As soon as you accept a job offer, your Personnel Representative will liaise with you until you re-join the Company.

**WHAT IF I DECIDE NOT TO RETURN TO WORK AFTER MY CAREER BREAK?**

If you decide not to return to work after your Career Break you should write to your Manager or Personnel Representative informing him or her of your decision.

**ELIGIBILITY FOR ORIGINAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS ON RETURN TO WORK**

You will receive whatever benefits and payments are still available from your original date of joining. This means if a payment, benefit or policy has ceased it won't be available on your return to work.

The exception is protection payments: these will not be re-instated regardless of whether they are still available to other employees.

This will also not apply to an old holiday scheme such as Accrued holiday or Frozen holiday, as these will have been paid up at the point you left to go on to your Career Break.
APPLICATION FOR A CAREER BREAK

FULL NAME: 

EMPLOYEE NUMBER: 

DATE YOU JOINED TESCO: 

YOUR LENGTH OF SERVICE: 

PRESENT POSITION AND DEPARTMENT: 

PREVIOUS POSITIONS HELD WITHIN TESCO: 

CAREER BREAK APPLIED FOR:

Please tick appropriate box General Enhanced 

I would like to start my Career Break on and would like it to last for 

years months.

MY REASON FOR REQUESTING THE BREAK IS 

Signed Date 

NOTE: Please send this form to your Line Manager as well as a copy to your Personnel Manager.
Further Information
If you do not understand anything in this booklet, or you need more information about a Career Break, please contact your Personnel Manager.