

Inside Prep 4 — Navigating the System

INSIDE KNOWLEDGE | FREE SUPPORT RESOURCE | LOU MYX

This module is all about learning how to function inside the system without losing your mind—or your privileges. Whether it's getting on a course, making the phone work, or knowing who not to piss off, this guide gives you the basics.

Key Tips for Navigating the System

Learn the routine: meal times, roll checks, association hours—knowing these will make your life easier, but expect it to change with no notice.

Get to know the officers, but don't try to be their mate. Be polite, brief, and firm.

Apply for jobs and courses early—they fill up fast.

Each prison has its own system for sharing information—some use electronic pods, others still rely on noticeboards. Ask someone when and where updates are posted, and check regularly.

Use apps like Email a Prisoner or Purple Visits if available—they're quicker than waiting on post or booking.

Respect the people who've been there longer—they know how it works.

Don't get involved in other people's beef. It's never worth it.

Use the complaints procedure if needed, but know that subtle diplomacy often works faster.

Essential Systems Inside

- Phone credit – managed through your private account or top-ups from family.
- Canteen – the system varies by prison. Some use a weekly paper order sheet, while others (like Bronzefield and Peterborough) use electronic pods. Ask someone on your wing how it works where you are.
- Appointments – see the nurse, dentist, or mental health team by submitting a request via pod or an app (application form), depending on the prison.
- Visits – book in advance, and tell your visitors exactly what ID they'll need.
- Library – often overlooked. Use it. It's quiet, warm, and full of sanity-saving books.

Personal experience and general support only. Prison rules, entitlements, procedures and available services vary and may change. Check current arrangements with the relevant prison or official guidance before relying on practical details.