

## What I got up to this summer

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### Quick writer's profile:



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Summer Highs: Seeing Happy Mondays, The Stone Roses, and local band The Velvet Texas Cannonball (if you haven't heard them, check them out now!)

Summer Lows: A concerning amount of time spent playing Skyrim...

To me, I think the most noteworthy thing about my summer this year is how long it was! Having just finished my first year of University, I had never had anything like 4 months summer holiday, and after a stressful exam period, it seemed like exactly what I needed. However, once you actually try and spend 4 months doing nothing but playing PS3 and watching Breaking Bad, it becomes apparent that some kind of routine might actually be desirable.

In my defence, I spent a good few months at the beginning of the year seeking out summer internships, but in the current job market found that very few organisations will even consider hiring a first year undergraduate. I was lucky enough to secure an interview with the Royal Society of Chemistry for a publishing internship, which was gratifying in itself, but I was not at all surprised when I received an email telling me I had been unsuccessful – some of the other candidates were already doing PhDs! So, with a little wiser for having applied for so many internships, I settled for a temporary job in a call centre in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter, where I spend 7 hours a day calling up Welsh farmers and interviewing them on agricultural policy. Not the most challenging of work, but you certainly get to speak to some interesting characters.

Summer wasn't all work for me, though. Staying in Birmingham over the summer had its upsides. I was able to move into my new flat in July, meaning that by now it already feels like home (in that it's already full of clutter and I've managed to lose a number of important things, but I'm confident that they are in here somewhere). Being so close to New Street Station had allowed me to travel a lot over the summer, and I've taken full advantage of this – I've visited family in Somerset, Sussex and Swindon, gone to see a couple of plays at the RSC in Stratford-Upon-Avon, spent a week in the Lake District, and braved London on a couple of occasions. The highlight of my summer is probably seeing the Stone Roses at Finsbury Park, a late night that ended with me and my brother-in-law driving round central London very lost.

All in all, it's been a much busier summer than expected – if I'm honest, I'm looking forward to getting back to the stability of my Chemistry course!

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