



Debit Cards in the United Kingdom

January 2026

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INDUSTRY PERFORMANCE

Experiences underpin personal credit card growth, with 2025 momentum steady and ticket sizes higher

BNPL usage remains widespread at checkouts, with regulatory oversight ahead

WHAT'S NEXT?

BNPL regulations expected to encourage card-funded instalments and steadier e-commerce volumes and value

Card rails to remain spine of UK payments, but PSR remedies on scheme and processing fees could reshape pricing and acceptance

Future opportunities cluster around wallets and tokenised card credentials rather than displacement

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Growth for the category across metrics in 2025

INDUSTRY PERFORMANCE

Debit cards strengthen their dominance in the UK

Cash and cheque usage continues to fade as electronic options hold sway

AI-based acceleration behind debit card innovations

WHAT'S NEXT?

Soft POS and tap-to-pay to unlock the long tail for debit

Regulatory dynamics set to play a key role in growth of segment

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Open loop pre-paid grows on “controlled-exposure” safety and wallet integration

Closed loop pre-paid sees growth thanks to gift cards

Youth and family propositions scale pre-paid with bite-sized literacy

WHAT'S NEXT?

Financial inclusion and gift card momentum will underpin growth, especially in digital formats

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INDUSTRY PERFORMANCE

Retailer credit consolidates as store cards migrate to digital credit under looming BNPL rules

Debit card issuers offer auto-earn rewards

Gift cards cement their lead over store cards as pre-paid, digital-first budgets rule

WHAT'S NEXT?

Store cards set to decline steeply as digital credit and BNPL dominate

BNPL will continue to present further threat

Consolidation will deepen as store card issuers retreat and retailers pivot towards digital credit

COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE

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[Financial Cards and Payments in the United Kingdom - Industry Overview](#)

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Contactless and mobile wallets cement their dominance

BNPL faces regulatory challenges amid explosive growth

AI and sustainability redefine card innovation

WHAT'S NEXT?

Growth set to be driven by increased transactions for everyday purchases

UK policy will shape the direction of the category

Steady outlook for the years ahead

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