

# The reputation game

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START

FINISH

## 1 WELCOME

You have just arrived in London. That makes you an arriviste.  
**MISS A TURN** while you work out how to translate riches into respectability

## 2 LEGAL SERVICES

Top-flight yet discreet lawyers and accountants should be your first port of call, to ensure a tax-efficient residency status. Put £1m down and you could land an immediate visa and a passport in eight years.  
*Mishcon de Reya is the law firm to sort out investor visas. The two top private client firms are Allen & Overy and Baker & McKenzie. Maples and Calder does offshore asset structuring*

## 3 TOWN HOUSE

The task in finding a central London address is to balance opposing desires for lavish public ostentation and fiercely protected privacy. For the Middle East oil-moneyed, Belgravia was the main stamping ground. Russians broadened the prime market to take in St John's Wood, Kensington and Mayfair. Top agents include Beauchamp Estate and Glentree, who vie with Knight Frank

## 4 COUNTRY HOUSE

Wentworth estate, near Virginia Water in Surrey, is a favoured retreat for rich Russians. Other locations are Ascot and Sunningdale as well as St George's Hill estate near Esher.  
*As far as agents go, Savills are rated among the best for buying a country estate*

## 5 MONEY MATTERS

Private banks and hedge funds will make sure your assets not only grow but are properly pukka. Start with C. Hoare & Co, run by the 10th and 11th generation of the Hoare banking family. Specialists in investing include names such as Stonehage and Sand Aire. The Family Office Exchange, a membership group, provides a network of other rich families to share advice

## 6 EDUCATION

Public schools are the best route to a top university, aiding a family's transition to the establishment. You may never make it beyond a brush-up round the edges but at least your kids will become 'one of us'. The American School in St John's Wood is a good way to mingle with the US banking set. The Knightsbridge School first, perhaps, for children aged 3-13

## 7 REPUTATIONAL MANAGEMENT

A fancy way of saying public relations. Sign up with the likes of Bell Pottinger or Portland, whose job it will be to make sure your name is in the papers for only the right reasons. Others include Freud Communications and Brown Lloyd James. Alternatively, just buy a media outlet

## 8 PROTECTION

Not that type (which you probably sorted out long ago) but the more sophisticated legal kind that, combined with English libel law, ensures that pesky journalists and enemies (wherever they may be) are cowed. London is also the world's divorce destination. Schillings and Carter Ruck are the libel bigwigs

## 9 PATRONAGE

As much as people on the inside will deny it, money can buy you into society. What better way than to donate money to 'good works' such as schools or the arts. Thankfully London has centuries of experience in managing this process. For Russians, the Raisa Gorbachev Foundation's summer event has established itself as a place to see and be seen. To gain you gravitas, Anthony Gordon-Lennox can sort public speaking engagements

## 12 REGAL TOUCH

Though other cities may also offer business and social services, few are able to combine these with the glamour of a living and breathing monarchy. Access is strictly limited, but not impossible. Charity, sports and business all offer ways to secure the prestige associated with rubbing shoulders with royalty.  
*The Duke of York, aka Handy Andy, may soon have more time on his hands*

## 11 HIGH SOCIETY

Being seen at the right events with the right people will burnish your exclusive image. Sports offer endless opportunities to latch on to society: buy a grouse shoot, join the polo set or – for a more popular touch – invest in a football club. London is brimming with smart establishment types – ex-diplomats, spooks and all-round schmoozers – who are on hire to provide not only advice but introductions

## 10 RETAIL

Concierge services and advisers are on hand to ensure you are turned out just right to fit in at all events. But sometimes you just want to do it yourself. For a kit to fit with the country set, Farlows is the upmarket fishing shop that will provide everything from rods to tweeds. James Purdey & Sons is the poshest name in shooting. Jack Barclay is a popular pit stop for procuring trophy transport

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## Rules of enhancement

Playing the reputation game is easy – once you know the rules. The starting point is money, lots of it. Armed with that, roll the dice and begin your progress along a dozen well-trodden steps that together offer the route to personal, financial and social advance. The challenge is to make sure you make the right choice at each stage, drawing

on the best advice London's formidable services sector has to offer. Make the right choice, roll again; the wrong choice – miss a turn. There are also other potential pitfalls: a coup back home, a crash in the markets, or a scandal in the press mean even the savviest player must move back two places – or quit altogether

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