COVID-19 Guidance

National lockdown: Stay at Home

COVID-19 is spreading quickly across the country. Find out what you can and cannot do.

Updated 8 March 2021
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Introduction

From Monday, 8 March the Government has changed what you can and cannot do in the national lockdown.

A national lockdown means that everyone in the country should stay at home and away from other people.

This information explains the new rules of the lockdown that will help to keep people safe from COVID-19.

COVID-19 is a new illness that is spreading around the world. It can affect your lungs and breathing.
Changes from 8 March

These are the main changes from Monday, 8 March 2021.

Meeting people outdoors

As well as going outside to exercise, you can spend time outdoors with:

- anyone from your household, or
- 1 other person.

A household means people who live together in the same house.

You can sit down for a drink or a picnic with them.

You must keep 2 metres apart from anyone who is not in your household or support bubble. This is more information about support bubbles on page 9.
Schools and colleges
Pupils and students should go back to face-to-face lessons.

Childcare
All children can go to nursery.

Other children’s activities can start for the children of parents who need to work, go to college or get some medical help.

University
Some students can return to university if they need to use special equipment for their course, that they can’t do at home.

Otherwise they should carry on learning online.
Holidays abroad
You are still not allowed to go on holiday abroad.

Going abroad
If you need to leave the UK, you must fill in a declaration to travel form.

Declaration to travel means explaining your reasons for travelling.

Care homes
People in care homes can now have 1 visitor indoors.
Stay at home

You must stay at home

You must not be outside your home unless you have to.

Leaving your home

You are allowed to leave home to:

- go to buy food and the things you need or for a vulnerable person
- go to work or be a volunteer
- get some exercise or spend time outside
• meet people from your bubble

• get medical help

• go to school, college or university

• take a child to childcare

• go to a place of worship such as a church or mosque.
Support bubbles

A support bubble is where certain people join up with another household.

You can join with another household to form a support bubble if:

- you live on your own
- you live with a child under 1
- you live with a child under 5 who is disabled
- you live on your own with a child or children
• you are aged 16 or 17 living with no adults

• every other adult in your house needs care and support.

Stay local
If you do go outside, you should stay in your local area.

People who are shielding
Shielding is when you stay indoors and away from other people because you are likely to be seriously ill if you catch COVID-19.

People who are shielding should only go outside if they have to, like for medical help and for exercise.
Exercise

You can leave your home to exercise in an public place, outdoors.

You can do this:
- by yourself
- with the people you live with
- with your support bubble
- with 1 person from another household.
A public outdoor place is:

- parks, beaches, countryside and forests that are open to the public

- public or botanical gardens, whether or not you pay for them

- the grounds of a historical place or outdoor sculpture park

- allotments

- public playgrounds.

You can take your children to play in public playgrounds.
Outdoor sports courts, outdoor gyms, golf courses, outdoor swimming pools, riding centres, archery, driving and shooting ranges must stay closed.

Gyms and sports centres will stay closed, but disabled people can still use them for exercise.
Meeting in larger groups

You are not allowed to meet in larger groups except for:

- work
- volunteering
- looking after children in a childcare bubble
  
  A childcare bubble is where 2 families join up to look after their children.

- going to school or college
- making arrangements for children with separated parents or children in care
• helping someone who is giving birth

• helping in an emergency

• visiting someone who is dying

• doing something the law says you must do - like going to court

• caring for someone who needs support
• weddings or civil partnerships in special circumstances - up to 6 people. There is more information about this on page 32

• funerals - up to 30 people

• gatherings after a funeral - up to 6 people

• professional sports people and those training for the Olympics and Paralympics

• moving house.
Support groups

A support group is a group of people who meet up to help each other cope with a particular problem.

Up to 15 people can meet up if they are an organised support group.
Work

You can only leave your home to go to work if you can’t work from home.

If you can’t work from home, you can travel to your place of work.

If you work in other people’s homes, you can do this. This includes:

- nannies
- cleaners
- people who repair things
care workers.

If your work does not need to be inside - you should do it outside. For example, a personal trainer.

Personal training should only take place in a public outdoor place.

Your boss should help you to work from home.

People who would be seriously ill if they catch COVID-19 should not go to work if they can’t work from home.
**Going to school or college**

From 8 March all school children and students should go to school and college.

All schools and colleges will be open for face-to-face teaching.

Secondary school pupils will be offered a test to see if they have COVID-19.
University

Some students can go to university to do the parts of their work that can’t be done online.

They should carry on doing most of their learning and university work online.

Students going into university should be tested twice a week to see if they have COVID-19.
Childcare

Nurseries and childminders are open.

Nannies can come to your home to look after your children.

You can form a childcare bubble.
Travel

You must not leave your home unless you have a good reason.

If you do have to travel:

- you should stay local
- you should walk or cycle if you can
- you should not travel when it is busy
• don’t share a car with anyone outside your household or bubble

• wear a face covering on all public transport, like buses and trains.
Travelling to another country

You must not go abroad for a holiday.

If you do have to travel abroad you will have to fill in a ‘declaration to travel form’ where you explain why you have to travel.
Travelling to the UK from another country

If you are travelling from another country, you will have to follow the lockdown rules in the UK. You may have to fill in a travel form.

You cannot come to the UK from a country where travel to the UK is banned, unless you are British, Irish or you are allowed to live in the UK.

You may have to quarantine when you arrive in the UK.

*Quarantine* means you have to go straight to the place where you are staying and stay there for 10 days.

You will have to take a test to see if you have COVID-19 on day 2 and day 8 of your quarantine.
Staying away from home overnight

You must not leave your home and go and stay somewhere else unless you have a good reason.

You are allowed to stay somewhere else:

- to visit your support bubble
- if you can’t get home
- if you are moving home
- if you are going to a funeral or an event to remember someone
• for work

• if you are a child going to school

• if you are homeless

• if you need to be safe from danger
• you need to use key services, like social services or **asylum**

**Asylum** is protection for someone who has left their own country because it wasn’t safe.

• if you are taking part in a sports competition or training.
Visiting a care home

People who live in care homes will be asked for the name of 1 person they want to have as a visitor.

Visitors have to take a test for COVID-19 before they can come in.

Visitors should:

- wear face coverings and plastic aprons to keep everyone safe from COVID-19
- not hug the person.

Care homes may help you to meet with other visitors behind screens, through windows or in a special meeting area.
Funerals

Funerals are allowed with up to 30 people.

Up to 6 people can go to events to remember someone who has died.
Weddings

Weddings and civil partnerships must only take place with up to 6 people.

Weddings should only take place if there is an urgent reason. For example, where someone might die.

Weddings should only happen indoors, in places that are safe from COVID-19. They can also take place outdoors.
Places of worship

You can go to a place of worship for a service.

But you must not mix with people who are not in your household or bubble.
Businesses and venues

A *venue* is a place where people meet to do something.

**Businesses and venues which must close**

- shops, except food shops, corner shops and pharmacies. You can still pick up things you have ordered at closed shops, but have to do this without going inside the shop

- cafés, pubs and restaurants. You can still pick up food and drink but have to take this away

- hotels, guest houses and campsites except where you are allowed to stay overnight for things like work
• leisure and sports centres. But still available for disabled people

• theatres, concert halls, cinemas, museums and art galleries

• historical places except for gardens and grounds

• hairdressers and nail and beauty salons

• tattoo, tanning and piercing services
• zoos, funfairs and theme parks

• casinos, bowling alleys and bingo halls

• community centres and halls, except for having weddings and funerals, support groups, or childcare

• libraries except for collecting books, accessing a computer, or having support groups.
Businesses and venues which can stay open

- food shops and pharmacies

- market stalls selling food and other essentials - this means things you need to live

- businesses that repair things

- petrol stations, bicycle shops, taxis and automatic car washes

- banks and post offices
• funeral directors

• laundrettes and dry cleaners

• vets and pet shops

• animal rescue centres

• mobility and disability support shops

• building supplies, garden centres and farm supply shops
• outdoor playgrounds

• outdoor gyms, sports, golf courses and pools are closed but still available to disabled people

• places of worship

• crematoriums and burial grounds.
Health and public services

The NHS and health services are open. These include:

- dentists
- opticians
- services to help you hear
- chiropody - services that look after the health of your feet
- chiropractors - services that look after the health of your bones and muscles
• osteopaths - services that look after the health of your bones

• mental health services.

Most other public services are open. These include:

• job centres

• courts

• civil registration offices, where you register births and deaths
• passport offices

• services that help people who have been the victim of a crime

• waste and recycling centres

• MOT centres - that check that your car is safe to drive on the road.
If you break the rules

The police can take action against you if you break the rules.

You might have to pay a fine of £200 for the first time that you break the rules.

This could rise to £6,400 if you carry on breaking the rules.

You can be fined up to £800 for gatherings of more than 15 people.

If you help to organise a gathering of more than 30 people, you might have to pay a fine of £10,000.
If you think you might have COVID-19

If you think you might have COVID-19 you should stay at home and keep away from other people straight away.

This is to stop you spreading COVID-19 to other people.

**Hands. Face. Space.**

About 1 in every 3 people who have COVID-19 don’t realise that they have it.

They are spreading it around without realising.
It is important to remember:

- **Hands:** wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds.

- **Face:** wear a face covering in indoor places where you meet people you don’t live with.

- **Space:** stay 2 metres apart from people you don’t live with.
Vaccine

Vaccines are injections that help to stop you getting very poorly from an illness.

We are offering a vaccine against COVID-19 to people who are more likely to be very ill if they catch it.

We don’t know if the vaccine stops COVID-19 from spreading.

So people who have had the vaccine must carry on following these rules and staying at home.

Keeping safe at home

COVID-19 spreads in tiny droplets that come out of your mouth and nose. The droplets land on surfaces that people touch.
You can stay safer at home if you:

- wash your hands often
- clean surfaces that people touch
- let plenty of fresh air into your home.
For more information

If you need more information, please go to:

www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home