COVID-19 Coronavirus restrictions: what you can and cannot do

Coronavirus restrictions remain in place across the country. Find out what you can and cannot do.

Updated 12 April 2021
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Introduction

The Government is working 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.

We have all had to stop doing some things to help keep everyone safe from COVID-19.

From Monday, 12 April 2021 the Government has changed what you can do.

There are still things you cannot do.

This information explains the new rules that will help to keep people safe.
Changes from 12 April

On Monday 12 April, some of the rules changed.

Many places can open
Shops can open.
Hairdressers and nail salons can open.
Public buildings like libraries and community centres can open.
Places that serve food and drink like pubs, bars, cafés and restaurants can open for people sitting at tables outdoors.
Outdoor attractions like zoos, theme parks and drive-in shows can open.
Some smaller outdoor events like fetes, fairs and fairgrounds can take place.
Indoor leisure, sports centres and sports clubs can open for people to exercise on their own or with their household or support bubble.

Childcare

All childcare and organised activities for children are allowed indoors and outdoors.

Parent and child groups can take place indoors and outdoors for up to 15 people. Under 5s are not counted in this number.

Weddings and funerals

Weddings, civil partnership ceremonies and events to remember someone who has died can take place for up to 15 people, not including people who are working. These can be indoors in a place that is allowed to be open.

Wedding receptions can take place for up to 15 people, but they must be outside in a place that is open and allowed to have a wedding, not in a private garden.
Places to stay
You can stay overnight in England with your household or support bubble. The place you stay must be self-contained.

Self-contained means you don’t share any part of the place with anyone else. It’s like a holiday house, caravan or flat.

Care homes
People who are living in a care home can choose 2 people who can come and visit them indoors. Visitors will have to have a test for COVID-19.

Work
You should carry on working from home if you can.

You should travel as little as possible.
Keeping yourself and other people safe

You should try and stay 2 metres away from anyone you do not live with or who is not in your support bubble.

If you can’t stay 2 metres apart, you should keep 1 metre apart and wear a face covering.

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.
Face coverings

The law says you must wear a face covering in many indoor places, like:

- shops

- places of worship

- on public transport.

Some people don’t have to wear a face covering if they have a good reason, like:

- you have a disability or illness that means you cannot wear one
• wearing a face covering would make you upset

• you are travelling with someone who uses lip reading

• you are travelling to get away from some danger

• you need to eat, drink, or take medication

• you are asked to remove your face covering by a police officer or other official.
If you are clinically extremely vulnerable

Clinically extremely vulnerable means you are likely to be seriously ill if you catch COVID-19.

People who are clinically extremely vulnerable don’t have to **shield** themselves anymore.

**Shield** means you have to stay indoors away from other people.

But you should still do extra things to keep yourself safe.

The Government has separate guidance for people who are clinically extremely vulnerable.
You should:

- meet up with as few people as possible

- spend as little time as possible in places where there are lots of other people.
If you have had the vaccine

The vaccine is a jab. It helps to stop you being seriously ill with COVID-19.

If you have had the vaccine, you should carry on keeping yourself and other people safe by following this guidance.
Testing for COVID-19

You can get a free test from:

- pharmacies
- testing centres
- your boss
- schools, colleges and universities.

If the test says you have caught COVID-19, you should get a PCR test to check. The PCR test is a more accurate test.

If you test yourself 2 times a week it will help to stop COVID-19 from spreading.
Meeting friends and family

Meeting people indoors
You must not meet indoors with anyone you do not live with unless you are in a support bubble with them.

Meeting people outdoors - the rule of 6
You can meet up outdoors with friends and family you do not live with either:

- in a group of up to 6 people from any number of households, or
- with any number of people from up to 2 households.
If you’re in a support bubble
You and your support bubble count as 1 household when we say that 2 households can meet up outdoors.

2 households can meet together outdoors, even if the number of people comes to more than 6.

Where you can meet
You can meet people in outdoor places that are open, like:

- parks, beaches, countryside and forests that are open to the public
- public or botanical gardens, whether or not you have to pay to get in
- the grounds of a historical place or outdoor sculpture park
- allotments - these are patches of land for growing vegetables or flowers
- public playgrounds
- outdoor sports centres and sports grounds
- outdoor places where people go for food or drink
- outdoor places that are open for people to go for leisure or for interest
- in someone’s garden.
If you need to go through a house to get to a garden you should:

- wear a face covering

- wash your hands when you go in the house, then go straight to the outside space.

You should keep 2 metres apart from anyone who is not in your household or support bubble.

**When can you meet with more people or meet indoors**

Outdoors, you can only meet with more than 6 people or in groups larger than 2 households, for one of the reasons that is mentioned in the guidance.
You can only meet indoors with people you do not live with or are not in your support bubble for one of these reasons:

- 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 39

• 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 and childcare bubbles

Support bubbles
There are separate rules about forming a support bubble.

You can see them here: [www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household)

Childcare bubble
A childcare bubble is where 2 households join up to look after children aged under 14.

You can only use a childcare bubble for childcare.

There are separate rules about forming a childcare bubble. You can see them here: [www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-childcare-bubble-with-another-household](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-childcare-bubble-with-another-household)
Going to work

You should continue to work from home if you can.

If you cannot work from home you should travel to your workplace.

Your boss should talk with you about how to help you work from home.

If you can’t work from home, your boss should do things to make your workplace safe from COVID-19.

Meeting people for work

You can meet with larger groups of people or meet inside, if you need to for your work.
Working in other people’s homes

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

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

There is guidance about work in other people’s homes. You can see it here: www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/homes

You shouldn’t work in someone else’s home if you don’t have to.
People who are clinically extremely vulnerable who work

People who are clinically extremely vulnerable should work from home if they can.

If you can’t work from home, you can go to your workplace.

Your boss should do things to keep you safe from catching COVID-19.
If you are worried about going in to work or if you cannot work

There is separate guidance if:

- you need to self-isolate or cannot go to work because of COVID-19: www.gov.uk/guidance/if-you-need-to-self-isolate-or-cannot-attend-work-due-to-coronavirus

Schools, colleges and universities

Going to school or college
All school children and students should go to school and college.

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

Children who are clinically extremely vulnerable should go to school or college.

All secondary school and college children, their families and staff should have a regular test for COVID-19.
Going to university

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

Otherwise, students should carry on learning online.

Students should not go back and forth between university and their usual home until the university holidays.

Students should take a test for COVID-19, before they travel.
Childcare

All children can go to childcare and organised activities indoors or outdoors.

Meeting others for childcare

You can meet people indoors or outdoors:

- for teaching children or childcare

- where children do not live with both parents

- to see children who are being looked after by the local council

- to meet a child you may want to adopt

- to look after children who are part of your childcare bubble.
Parent and child groups

Parent and child groups can meet indoors and outdoors if they are to help children aged under 5 and are properly organised by a business, charity or a public service.

Parent and child groups must have no more than 15 people aged over 5. Children under 5 and anyone working or volunteering is not counted in this number.

Support groups for parents, carers and their children

Support groups for parents, carers and their children can meet indoors, like other support groups mentioned on page 34.
Providing care or assistance

You can meet in larger groups, or indoors if you need to:

- visit people in your support bubble

- look after children under 14 as part of your childcare bubble

- give help in an emergency

- go to a support group of up to 15 people
• so that a carer of a disabled person, **vulnerable person** or looked-after child can have a short break from caring

A **vulnerable person** is someone who needs care or support to live.

• to help a disabled or vulnerable person.

You can provide care or assistance to a vulnerable or disabled person in their home.

But you cannot meet with a disabled or vulnerable person indoors just to be sociable.
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. Children under 5 and anyone working or volunteering does not count in this number.

Support groups cannot meet up in people’s homes or private gardens.

Support groups must be organised by a business, charity or public organisation.
Your support group might help people who are:

- victims of crime
- getting better after being addicted to alcohol or drugs
- caring for people with a long term illness
- having issues with their gender or sexuality
- suffering because someone has died
- young and vulnerable
- disabled or a carer.
Exercise, sport and physical activity

You can do as much exercise as you want outdoors, but you can only do it on your own or:

- in a group of up to 6 people

- in a larger group if they all come from just 2 households.

You can take part in outdoor sports with any number of people, if it is properly organised by a business, charity or public body.

You can exercise indoors on your own or with your household or support bubble.
You can only meet indoors for sport if it is:

- disability sport

- sport with your household or support bubble

- a school or college activity

- proper organised sport for children and young people under age 18.

The very best sports people can meet in larger groups or indoors to train or take part in competitions.
Funerals

Funerals are allowed with up to 30 people. Anyone working or volunteering is not counted in this number.

Funerals should only happen in places that are safe from COVID-19.

You must say 2 metres apart from anyone not in household or support bubble.

Up to 15 people can go to events to remember someone who has died. Anyone working or volunteering is not counted in this number.
Weddings

Weddings and civil partnerships must only take place with up to 15 people. Anyone working or volunteering is not counted in this number.

You must say 2 metres apart from anyone not in household or support bubble.

There is guidance for weddings and civil partnerships which you can see here:
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.

You should keep 2 metres away from anyone not in your household or support bubble, all the time.
Volunteering

Volunteering is where you work for no pay to help people or a community.

If you are volunteering or doing some charity work you can:

- meet up with more than 6 people outdoors
- meet up with more than 2 households outdoors
- meet up indoors.

You can get more information about volunteering at: www.gov.uk/coronavirus-volunteering
Other times when you can meet up with more people

You can meet up in groups of more than 6 or more than 2 households, or meet up with people indoors if:

- you have to be with someone who is giving birth
- you are helping someone in an emergency
- you need to be safe from danger
- you are with someone who is dying
- you are visiting someone in a care home
• you are going with a friend or family member to a medical appointment

• the law says you have to

• you are moving house

• you are protesting in a way that keeps everyone safe from catching COVID-19

• campaigning or sharing information about an event

• you are helping people to vote in an election.
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 £800 for private indoor 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.
Care homes and supported living

Visiting people in a care home
There is some separate guidance about visiting people in a care home:

Supported living
Supported living is where you have help to live independently.

There is some separate guidance for people who live in supported living:
Staying away from home overnight

You can stay overnight in a:

- campsite
- caravan
- boat
- second home, or
- other places that are self-contained.
Self-contained holiday homes can open up again.

You must not stay overnight with anyone not in your household or support bubble, unless the law allows you to do this.
Travelling within England

You should travel as little as possible.

If you do have to travel:

- you should walk or cycle if you can

- don’t share a private car with anyone outside your household or bubble

- you should avoid travelling when it is busy
• wash or sanitise your hands often

• you must wear a face covering on all public transport, like buses and trains, unless you have a reason not to

• stay 2 metres apart from people you don’t live with if you can. If you can’t, you must stay 1 metre away and wear a face covering.
Travelling within the UK, the Republic of Ireland and the Channel Islands

**Travelling to England**
You should check the rules in the different parts of the UK before you travel.

You can travel to England from other parts of the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

**Travelling from England**
You should check the rules in the different parts of the UK before you travel.

**Travelling to or from Northern Ireland**
At the moment in Northern Ireland it is against the law to leave home without a good reason.
If you go to Northern Ireland, you have to stay inside away from other people for 10 days.

**Travelling to or from Scotland**
At the moment you must not go to or from Scotland unless you have a good reason.

**Travelling to or from Wales**
You should travel between England and Wales as little as possible.
Travelling to other countries from England

You can only travel to other countries if you have a good reason.

You are not allowed to go to other countries for a holiday.

With some jobs you can travel without getting a test or staying indoors for a period of time.

If you do travel to other countries you have to fill in a form.

You should look at the rules in the countries that you are going to.
Travelling to England from other countries

If you are travelling from another country, you will have to follow the rules in the UK.

You must:

- fill in a travel form

- provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test

- quarantine - this means you have to go straight to the place where you are staying and stay there for 10 days. Depending where you have travelled from this may be in a hotel, or at home.

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 can find out more about travelling from these countries here: www.gov.uk/guidance/transport-measures-to-protect-the-uk-from-variant-strains-of-covid-19
Moving home

You can move home.

People who are not in your household or support bubble should not help you to move.

Estate agents and removal firms can carry on working.
Help with money

You can get help with money if you are off work because of COVID-19. You can get more information here:

Businesses and venues

A venue is a place where people meet up for food, drink and entertainment.

Outdoor areas at venues like pubs, cafés and restaurants can open.

You can go inside to the toilet or to pay.

If you are dining in, you must eat and drink whilst seated.

Outdoor attractions

Outdoor attractions like zoos, theme parks and skating rinks can open.

Outdoor cinemas, theatres and other outdoor performance events cannot open, except for drive-in.
Indoor places that can open

Some indoor places can open, like:
- hairdressers and nail salons
- indoor sports
- community centres and libraries
- shops.

Places that must stay closed

There are some places that must stay closed, like:
- indoor areas in cafés, pubs and restaurants. You can still pick up food and drink but have to take this away
• theatres, concert halls, cinemas, nightclubs, museums and art galleries

• historical places except for gardens and grounds

• 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.
Healthcare and public services

The NHS and medical services are open, including:

- dentists
- opticians
- services for people with hearing problems
- chiropody - services that help people with their feet
- chiropractors and osteopaths - services that help people with bones and muscles
- mental health services.
Most other public services will carry on, including:

- Jobcentre Plus offices
- courts
- registration offices - to register births and deaths
- passport offices
- services for the victims of crime
- waste or recycling centres
- getting a MOT - this is a check on your car to make sure it is safe to go on the road.
Learning to drive

Driving lessons and driving tests can start again.
For more information

If you need more information, please go to: