(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 17 May 2021
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In this easy read document, difficult words are in **bold**. We explain what these words mean in the sentence after they have been used.

Some words are **blue and underlined**. These are links which will go to another website which has more information.
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, 17 May 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 17 May

On Monday 17 May, some of the rules changed.

You should carry on working from home if you can.

When you travel in the UK, you should stay safe and plan your journey beforehand.

Get a test
You should get a test if you think you might have COVID-19.

If you test positive you should follow the guidance about staying at home.
Meeting people
You can now meet:

- up to 30 people outdoors
- up to 6 people, or 1 other household, indoors.

Meeting family and friends
You don’t have to stay 2 metres apart when you meet family and friends.

It is up to you how close you get, but you should still be careful to keep yourself and others safe.

Many places can open
Cinemas, theatres, concert halls, bowling alleys, casinos, amusement arcades, museums and children’s indoor play areas can now open.

You can now go to indoor and outdoor events including performances, sporting events and business events.

Restaurants, pubs, bars and cafes can open up indoors again.
Sport
You can go to organised indoor sports.

This includes gym classes.

They must be organised by a proper organisation and follow the rules to keep people safe.

Funerals and weddings
There is now no limit to the number of people who can go to a funeral. But it will depend on how many people can be safe where the funeral is taking place.

You can have up to 30 people at:
- weddings
- events to remember someone
- important life events like bar/bat mitzvahs and christenings.
Care homes
You can have up to 5 regular visitors, with up to 2 visitors at one time.

People who visit you must have had a test for COVID-19.

Universities and Colleges
Students can go to classes at university or college.

Support groups
You can have up to 30 people at a support group or a parent and child group.

Children under 5 are not included in this number.
Be careful in certain parts of England

A new type of COVID-19 is spreading fast in some areas in the UK.

If you live in one of these areas, you should take extra care.

In areas where the new type of COVID-19 is spreading fast, you should:

- meet outside rather than inside if you can
- keep 2 metres away from people you don’t live with
- you should try not to travel in and out of your local area unless you have to
• carry on working from home if you can

• get the **vaccine** when you can

The **vaccine** is a jab which helps to stop you getting very ill with COVID-19.

• get tested for COVID-19 twice a week, using a **lateral flow test**.

A **lateral flow test** is a way of checking if you have COVID-19 quickly, within 30 minutes.

If the test says you have COVID-19 you should:

• stay indoors away from other people for 10 days

• arrange to have a **PCR** test.

**PCR** stands for polymerase chain reaction. A PCR test is sent to a laboratory to be checked, so you can get a better result.
Keeping yourself and other people safe

You can now meet:

- up to 30 people outdoors

- up to 6 people, or 1 other household, indoors.

Your household can include anyone in your **support bubble**.

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.
Meeting family and friends
You don’t have to stay 2 metres apart when you meet family and friends.

It is up to you how close you get, but you should still be careful to keep yourself and others safe.

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 COVID-19, you should:

- get a PCR test to make sure

- stay indoors away from other people for 10 days.

If you test yourself 2 times a week, it will help to stop COVID-19 from spreading.
Meeting with other people

You can now meet up to 30 people outdoors.

You can meet up with more if it is for:

- work or volunteering
- to provide care to someone.

It’s up to you if you want to get closer than 2 metres from people. But remember to be careful because some people are likely to get very seriously ill if they catch COVID-19.
Meeting people indoors

You can meet up to 6 people or with 1 other household in indoor places, like:

- people’s homes
- shops
- restaurants, bars and cafes
- indoor sports places, like gyms and swimming pools
- places where you get personal care - like a massage
- museums, theatres and indoor play areas.

Remember to help stop the spread of COVID-19 by letting in lots of fresh air.
When can you meet with more people or meet indoors
You can only meet indoors with up to 6 people or with 1 other household, except for certain reasons, for example:

- an organised parent and child group
- an organised support group
- work
- volunteering
- providing care for someone.
Support and childcare bubbles

Your support bubble counts as 1 household, when we say 2 households can meet indoors.

You no longer need a support or childcare bubble in order to meet other people inside for childcare.

Up to 6 people from different households, or 2 households, can meet indoors without having to be in a bubble.
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 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 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

- have a job but cannot work.
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

All students can now go to classes in their university.
Childcare

You can meet up to 6 people, or with 1 other household indoors.

You don’t have to have a childcare bubble to look after children.

Parent and child groups can run indoors as well as outdoors.

But they cannot happen in a private home.

Meeting others for childcare

You can meet up with more than 6 people, or 1 other household 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 not have more than 30 people. Anyone working or volunteering is not counted in this number.

Children under 5 are 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.

They must be in groups of no more than 30 people.
Providing care or assistance

You can meet indoors with more than 6 people, or 1 other household if you need to:

- visit people in your support bubble

- give help in an emergency

- go to a support group of up to 30 people

- to help a disabled or vulnerable person.

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

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

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

Up to 30 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.

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 30 people.

When you are indoors you can exercise:

- on your own
- in a group of up to 6 people
- in a larger group of any size of people from up to 2 households.
You can take part in indoor or outdoor sports with any number of people, if it is properly organised by a business, charity or public body.

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

There is now no limit to the number of people who can go to a funeral.

But it will depend on how many people can be safe where the funeral is taking place.

Up to 30 people can go to events to remember someone who has died.
Weddings

Weddings and civil partnerships must only take place with up to 30 people. Anyone working or volunteering is not counted in this number.

Other events

You can have up to 30 people at other important life events, such as:

- christenings
- Bar/Bat Mitzvahs.
Places of worship

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

But you must not mix with more than 6 people or with 1 other household.

If the service is outside, you should not mix with more than 30 people.
Volunteering is where you work for no pay to help people or a community.

If you are volunteering or doing some charity work, if you need to you can:

- meet up with more than 30 people outdoors
- meet up with more than 6 people indoors.
Other times when you can meet up with more people

You can meet up in groups of more than 6 people, or 1 other household indoors if:

- you are helping someone in an emergency
- you need to be safe from danger
- 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 up to 30 people indoors or 50 people outdoors, you might have to pay a fine of £10,000.
Care homes and supported living

The rules are different depending on whether:

- you are visiting someone in a care home, or
- someone from a care home is coming out to visit someone.

Visiting people in a care home
You can have up to 5 regular visitors, with up to 2 visitors at one time.

People who visit you must have had a test for COVID-19.

Visiting people away from care homes
If you live in a care home, you can go out and meet with people outdoors. You don’t have to keep away from people when you come back.
You can stay overnight in a:
- hotel or bed and breakfast
- campsite
- caravan
- boat
- second home, or
- other places.

You can stay in a holiday place in groups of up to 6 people, or larger groups if you are from 2 households.
Travelling within England

You should plan ahead and travel safely.

You should:

- walk or cycle if you can
- 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.

You must not share a car with more than 6 people, or in a larger group of more than 2 households.
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
You should take a lateral flow test before you travel to or from Northern Ireland.

You should only travel if your test is negative.
When you come back home, you should do another lateral flow test on day 2 and day 8.

**Travelling to or from Scotland**
You can travel anywhere in Scotland.

**Travelling to or from Wales**
You can travel anywhere in Wales.
Travelling to other countries

You can travel to some other countries, but you should not travel to countries on the red or amber lists.

Countries on the red or amber lists have a higher risk of catching COVID-19.

If you do plan to travel you should check the travel advice on the Government website.
Travelling to England from outside the UK

What you do when you arrive in England depends on where you have been for the last 10 days.

You will have to follow the guidance when you come to the UK.

It will depend on which country you have travelled from, and which list that country is on.

You will have to follow the rules for that list.
Moving home

You can move home.

People who are not in your household or support bubble can 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.
A **venue** is a place where people meet up for food, drink and entertainment.

Indoor areas at venues like pubs, cafes and restaurants can open.

You can go to indoor venues in groups of up to 6 people, or with 1 other household.

You can go to outdoor venues in groups of up to 30.

If you are outside, you can go inside to the toilet or to pay.

If you are inside, you must eat and drink whilst seated.
Indoor places that can open

Indoor places can open, like bingo halls, bowling alleys, casinos, cinemas and theatres.

Places that must stay closed

There are some places that must stay closed, like nightclubs.
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 the Government website.

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