

1. Home (<https://www.gov.uk/>)
2. Coronavirus (COVID-19) (<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-taxon>)

Guidance

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

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

From:

Cabinet Office (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/cabinet-office>)

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Applies to:

England (see guidance for Wales (<https://gov.wales/coronavirus>), Scotland (<https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>), and Northern Ireland (<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/coronavirus-covid-19>))

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17 May: What's changed:

Restrictions have been eased following the move to step 3. However we must continue to exercise caution. You should follow this guidance on what you can and cannot do. It is underpinned by law and applies across England (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2021/364/contents/made>).

You should also follow the guidance on how to stop the spread of coronavirus at all times (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-stop-the-spread-of-coronavirus-covid-19/how-to-stop-the-spread-of-coronavirus-covid-19>), including if you have been vaccinated against COVID-19.

You should continue to work from home if you can. When travelling within the UK, you should aim to do so safely and plan your journey in advance.

You should get a test (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/get-tested-for-coronavirus/>) and follow the stay at home guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>) if you have COVID-19 symptoms.

- Gathering limits have been eased. Outdoor gatherings are limited to 30 people and indoor gatherings are limited to 6 people or 2 households (each household can include a support bubble, if eligible).
- New guidance on meeting friends and family (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-friends-and-family-covid-19>) emphasises personal responsibility rather than government rules. Instead of instructing you to stay 2m apart from anyone you don't live with, you are encouraged to exercise caution and consider the guidance on risks associated with COVID-19 and actions you can take (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-stop-the-spread-of-coronavirus-covid-19/how-to-stop-the-spread-of-coronavirus-covid-19>) to help keep you and your loved ones safe. Remember that the risks

of close contact may be greater for some people than others and in some settings and circumstances, there will be specific guidance that you will need to follow even when you are with friends and family (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>).

- Indoor entertainment and attractions such as cinemas, theatres, concert halls, bowling alleys, casinos, amusement arcades, museums and children's indoor play areas are permitted to open with COVID-secure measures in place.
- People can attend indoor and outdoor events, including live performances, sporting events and business events. Attendance at these events is capped according to venue type, and attendees should follow the COVID-secure measures set out by those venues.
- Indoor hospitality venues such as restaurants, pubs, bars and cafes can reopen.
- Organised indoor sport can take place for all. This includes gym classes. It must be organised by a business, charity or public body and the organiser must take reasonable measures to reduce the risk of transmission.
- All holiday accommodation can open, including hotels and B&Bs. This can be used by groups of up to 6 or 2 households (each household can include a support bubble, if eligible).
- Funeral attendance is no longer be limited to 30 people, but will be determined by how many people the COVID-secure venue can safely accommodate with social distancing. Limits at weddings, wakes and other commemorative events have been increased to 30 people. Other significant life events, such as bar/bat mitzvahs and christenings, will also be able to take place with 30 people.
- The rules for care home residents visiting out and receiving visitors have changed, allowing up to five named visitors (two at any one time), provided visitors test negative for COVID-19.
- All higher education students are able to access in-person teaching.
- Support groups and parent and child group gathering limits have been increased to 30 people (not including under 5s)
- There is no longer a legal restriction or permitted reason required to travel internationally. A traffic light system for international travel has been introduced, and you must follow the rules when returning to England depending on whether you return from a red, amber or green list country (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-amber-and-green-list-rules-for-entering-england>).

If you're in an area where the new COVID-19 variant is spreading

This new variant is sometimes referred to as the variant first identified in India. It is spreading fastest in:

- Bedford Borough Council (<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-health-and-community/public-health/coronavirus/>)
- Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council (<https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/coronavirus>)
- Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council (<https://www.bolton.gov.uk/news/article/1164/how-bolton-is-responding-to-rising-covid-rates-and-what-we-can-all-do-to-help>)
- Burnley Borough Council (<https://www.burnley.gov.uk/covid19>)

- Kirklees Council (<https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/health-and-well-being/coronavirus.aspx>)
- Leicester City Council (<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/coronavirus/>)
- London Borough of Hounslow (<https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/coronavirus>)
- North Tyneside Council (<https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/1429/coronavirus-covid-19>)

The new COVID-19 variant spreads more easily from person to person. To help stop the spread, you should take particular caution when meeting anyone outside your household or support bubble.

In the areas listed above, wherever possible, you should try to:

- meet outside rather than inside where possible
- keep 2 metres apart from people that you don't live with (unless you have formed a support bubble (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household>) with them), this includes friends and family you don't live with
- minimise travel in and out of affected areas

You should also:

- Get tested twice a week for free and isolate if you are positive
- Continue to work from home if you can
- Get vaccinated (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/>) when you are offered it, and encourage others to do so as well
- Refer to local health advice for your area (linked above)

You should get tested for COVID-19. This includes:

- Arranging to have a PCR test (<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>) if you have symptoms of COVID-19
- Participating in surge testing in your local area (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/surge-testing-for-new-coronavirus-covid-19-variants>)
- Getting regular rapid tests (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/regular-rapid-coronavirus-tests-if-you-do-not-have-symptoms/>) if you do not have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Arranging a testing or managed quarantine package if you plan to travel to red or amber list countries. See further details (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-amber-and-green-list-rules-for-entering-england>)

You should self-isolate immediately if you have symptoms (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection#symptoms>) or a positive test result for COVID-19 (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/test-results/positive-test-result/#:~:text=A%20positive%20result%20means%20it%27s,type%20of%20test%20you%20had.>). There is financial support if you're off work because of coronavirus (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-what-to-do-if-youre-employed-and-cannot-work>).

Keeping yourself and others safe

Face coverings

You must wear a face covering in many indoor settings, such as shops and places of worship, and on public transport, unless you are exempt or have a reasonable excuse. This is the law. Read guidance on face coverings (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>).

If you are clinically extremely vulnerable

If you are clinically extremely vulnerable, you could be at higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus.

If you are clinically extremely vulnerable, you are no longer advised to shield. However, you should continue to follow the guidance for people who are clinically extremely vulnerable (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>) and are advised to continue taking extra precautions to protect yourself, such as limiting close contacts, shopping or travelling at quieter times of the day, keeping rooms ventilated and washing your hands regularly. Your employer is required to take steps to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace.

If you have been vaccinated against COVID-19

To help protect yourself and your friends, family, and community you should continue to follow all of the guidance on this page even if you've been vaccinated against COVID-19 (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/?priority-taxon=774cee22-d896-44c1-a611-e3109cce8eae>).

The vaccines have been shown to reduce the likelihood of severe illness in most people. Like all medicines, no vaccine is completely effective, so those who have received the vaccine should continue to take recommended precautions to avoid infection.

Whilst emerging evidence suggests vaccines are having an impact on transmission, we do not know by how much the vaccine stops COVID-19 from spreading. Even if you have been vaccinated, you could still spread COVID-19 to others, even if you do not display symptoms.

Getting tested for COVID-19

Rapid lateral flow testing is now available free to anybody without symptoms. You can get your tests from pharmacies, testing sites, employers, schools, colleges and universities.

Find out more about how to get rapid lateral flow tests (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/regular-rapid-coronavirus-tests-if-you-do-not-have-symptoms/>)

Testing twice a week will help make sure you don't have COVID-19, reducing the risk to those around you.

If you have symptoms you should continue to get a PCR test (<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>). If you're not sure, you can find out which coronavirus test you should get (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/get-tested-for-coronavirus/>).

You must self isolate if you test positive. Do not meet up with others and follow the stay at home guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>).

Meeting family and friends outdoors

You should continue to minimise the number of people you meet within a short period of time to limit the risk of spreading coronavirus (COVID-19). Most restrictions on meeting people outdoors have been lifted, but gatherings must not exceed 30 people unless covered by a legal exemption, such as:

- for the purposes of work or volunteering
- to provide care or assistance for disabled or vulnerable people

If you are meeting friends and family, you can make a personal choice on whether to keep your distance from them, but you should still be cautious. You should read the guidance on meeting friends and family (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-friends-and-family-covid-19>).

Meeting friends and family indoors (rule of 6)

It is safer to meet people outdoors. This is because COVID-19 spreads much more easily indoors. However, you can meet up indoors with friends and family you do not live with, either:

- in a group of up to 6 from any number of households (children of all ages count towards the limit of 6)
- in a group of any size from up to two households (each household can include an existing support bubble, if eligible)

If you are meeting friends and family, you can make a personal choice on whether to keep your distance from them, but you should still be cautious. You should read the guidance on meeting friends and family (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-friends-and-family-covid-19>).

If you're in a support bubble

If you are eligible to form a support bubble (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household>), you and your support bubble count as one household towards the limit of 2 households when meeting others indoors. This means, for example, that you and your support bubble can meet with another household, even if the total group size is more than 6 people.

Where you can meet indoors

You can meet in a group of 6 or a larger group of any size from up to 2 households (including their support bubbles) indoors in places such as:

- private homes
- retail
- indoor hospitality venues, such as restaurants, bars and cafes
- indoor sports and leisure facilities, such as gyms, sports courts, and swimming pools
- personal care, such as spas
- indoor entertainment and visitor attractions, such as museums, theatres, and indoor play areas

Remember to follow guidance on how to stop the spread of COVID-19, such as letting in fresh air (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-stop-the-spread-of-coronavirus-covid-19/how-to-stop-the-spread-of-coronavirus-covid-19>).

When you can meet with more people

Gatherings above the limit of 6 people or 2 households indoors can only take place if they are covered by a legal exemption, such as:

- organised parent and child groups or support groups which can be attended by up to 30 people
- for the purposes of work or volunteering. This means, for example, a tradesperson can go into a household without breaking the limit if they are there for work
- to provide care or assistance for disabled or vulnerable people, including shopping for essential items and accessing services on their behalf.

Support bubbles

Up to 6 people from different households or a larger group of up to 2 households can meet indoors without the need for a formal childcare arrangement such as a childcare bubble (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-childcare-bubble-with-another-household>).

If you are eligible to form a support bubble (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household>), you and your support bubble count as one household towards the limit of 2 households when meeting others indoors. See the separate guidance on support bubbles (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household>).

Going to work

You should continue to work from home where you can.

If you cannot work from home you should continue to travel to your workplace. You do not need to be classed as a critical worker to go to work if you cannot work from home.

Employers and employees should discuss their working arrangements, and employers should take every possible step to facilitate their employees working from home, including providing suitable IT and equipment to enable remote working. Where people cannot work from home, employers should take steps to make their workplaces COVID-19 secure and help employees avoid busy times and routes on public transport. Extra consideration should be given to those people at higher risk.

COVID-secure rules, including social distancing requirements, continue to apply in the workplace. COVID-secure guidelines (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>) are available for sectors across the economy to substantially reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.

See guidance for restrictions on businesses and venues in England (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reopening-businesses-and-venues-in-england/reopening-businesses-and-venues>)

Meeting others for work

You can gather in a group larger than six people or two households indoors or in a group larger than 30 people outdoors where it is necessary for your work. When working, you should remain 2 metres from anyone you do not live with, or at least 1m with additional mitigations.

Working in other people's homes

Where it is reasonably necessary for you to work in other people's homes you can continue to do so, for example if you're a:

- nanny
- cleaner
- tradesperson
- social care worker providing support to children and families

You should follow the guidance on working in other people's homes (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/homes>).

Where a work meeting does not need to take place in a private home or garden, it should not.

If you are clinically extremely vulnerable or live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable

If you have been identified as clinically extremely vulnerable (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>) then you should continue to work from home where possible. If you cannot work from home, you can go to your workplace. Your employer is required to take steps to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace and should be able to explain to you the measures they have put in place to keep you safe at work. Some employers may introduce regular testing of employees as part of these measures. You may also want to consider how you get to and from work, for example, if it is possible to avoid using public transport during rush hour.

If you live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable then you can continue to go to work if you are unable to work from home. As an employer, you should make sure suitable arrangements are in place so that they can work safely. You should consider whether clinically extremely vulnerable individuals can take on an alternative role or change their working patterns temporarily to avoid travelling during busy periods.

You should follow the guidance on how to stop the spread of coronavirus (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-stop-the-spread-of-coronavirus-covid-19/how-to-stop-the-spread-of-coronavirus-covid-19>), including what to do to reduce your risk of catching or passing on the virus at home.

If you are worried about going in to work or you cannot work

There is guidance if you need to self-isolate or cannot go to work due to coronavirus (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/if-you-need-to-self-isolate-or-cannot-attend-work-due-to-coronavirus>) and what to do if you're employed and cannot work (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-what-to-do-if-youre-employed-and-cannot-work?priority-taxon=5ebf285a-9165-476c-be90-66b9729f50da>).

Citizens Advice has advice if you're worried about working (<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/work/coronavirus-if-youre-worried-about-working>), including what to do if you think your workplace is not safe, or if you live with someone vulnerable.

Support is available if you cannot work (<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/worker-support>), for example if you need to care for someone or you have less work.

There is further advice for employers and employees from ACAS (<https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>) (the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service).

Going to school or college

School pupils and students in further education should go to school and college.

All schools, colleges and other further education settings are open for face-to-face teaching during term time. It remains very important for children and young people to attend, to support their wellbeing and education and to help working parents and guardians.

Clinically extremely vulnerable pupils and students should go to school or college.

There is further guidance on what parents need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges during COVID-19 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/what-parents-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-covid-19>).

Rapid lateral flow testing is now available for free for everyone in England. It is recommended for all secondary school pupils and college students, their families and all school and college staff.

See the guidance on how you can get regular rapid tests if you do not have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/regular-rapid-coronavirus-tests-if-you-do-not-have-symptoms/>).

Universities and higher education

All students are now able to resume in-person teaching and learning. Students should take a test before they travel to a non-term residence.

There is guidance for universities and students starting and returning to higher education (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-reopening-buildings-and-campus>).

Students should follow the guidance on how to stop the spread of COVID-19 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-stop-the-spread-of-coronavirus-covid-19/how-to-stop-the-spread-of-coronavirus-covid-19>) at all times.

Childcare

Up to 6 people from different households or a larger number of no more than 2 households can meet indoors without the need for a formal childcare arrangement. All children can go to registered childcare, childminders, wraparound care and other supervised children's activities indoors and outdoors.

Parent and child groups can take place indoors as well as outdoors, with up to 30 people. Children under 5 who are accompanying a parent or guardian do not count towards this limit. See the parent and child groups section of this guidance.

Meeting others for childcare

Gatherings above the limit of 6 people or 2 households indoors, or above 30 outdoors can take place for the following purposes:

- for education, registered childcare, and supervised activities for children - see further information on education and childcare (<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare>)
- for arrangements where children do not live in the same household as both their parents or guardians
- to allow contact between birth parents and children in care, as well as between siblings in care
- to place or facilitate the placing of a child or children in the care of another by social services

Parent and child groups

Parent and child groups can take place indoors as well as outdoors (but not in private homes or gardens) if they are for the benefit of children aged under 5 and organised by a business, charity or public body.

Parent and child groups must be limited to no more than 30 people. Children under five and anyone working or volunteering as part of the group, such as a group leader, are not counted in this number.

Providing care or assistance

Gatherings above the limit of 6 people or 2 households indoors can take place for the purposes of providing care or assistance, such as:

- to visit people in your support bubble (if you are legally permitted to form one)
- to provide emergency assistance
- to go to a support group of up to 30 participants. The limit of 30 does not include children under 5 who are accompanying a parent or guardian
- to provide care or assistance for disabled or vulnerable people, including shopping for essential items and accessing services on their behalf

You can also provide care or assistance for disabled or vulnerable people inside someone's home, where necessary.

You should follow the guidance on how to stop the spread of coronavirus (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-stop-the-spread-of-coronavirus-covid-19/how-to-stop-the-spread-of-coronavirus-covid-19>) at all times. There is further guidance for those who provide unpaid care to friends or family (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-providing-unpaid-care/guidance-for-those-who-provide-unpaid-care-to-friends-or-family>).

Support groups

Support groups can take place with up to 30 participants where officially organised to provide mutual aid, therapy or any other form of support. Support groups must be organised by a business, charity or public body and if taking place indoors, must not take place in a private home.

There is further guidance on how to run or attend a support group safely within the guidance for the safe use of multi-purpose community facilities (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-multi-purpose-community-facilities/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-multi-purpose-community-facilities>).

Examples of support groups include those that provide support to:

- victims of crime (including domestic abuse)
- those with, or recovering from, addictions (including alcohol, narcotics or other substance addictions) or addictive patterns of behaviour
- those with, or caring for people with, any long-term illness or terminal condition or who are vulnerable (including those with a mental health condition)
- those facing issues related to their sexuality or identity (including those living as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender)
- those who have suffered bereavement
- vulnerable young people (including to enable them to meet youth workers)
- disabled people and their carers

The limit of 30 does not include children under 5 who are accompanying a parent or guardian. Where a person has a clear and formal role (paid or voluntary) to run the group or help it operate, rather than only attending as a member of the group to obtain support, they do not have to be counted as part of the gatherings limit.

Exercise, sport and physical activity

You can do unlimited exercise but there are limits on the number of people you can exercise with. You can exercise in a group of up to 30 people when outdoors. When indoors, you can exercise:

- on your own
- in a group of up to 6 people
- in a larger group of any size from up to 2 households (and their support bubbles, if eligible)

You can also take part in formally organised indoor and outdoor sports or licensed physical activity with any number of people. This must be organised by a business, charity or public body and the organiser must take the required precautions, including the completion of a risk assessment. You should avoid contact in training and, for some sports, avoid contact in all activities. Read the guidance on what avoiding contact means for your sport (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-grassroots-sports-guidance-for-the-public-and-sport-providers#how-to-participate-safely>).

Indoor leisure facilities may open for you to exercise on your own, in groups of up to 6 people or in a group of any size from up to 2 households.

You should follow the guidance:

- on grassroots sport and recreation in England (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-grassroots-sports-guidance-for-the-public-and-sport-providers>)
- for providers of grassroots sports and gym and leisure facilities (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/providers-of-grassroots-sport-and-gym-leisure-facilities>)

Elite sportspeople

Elite sportspeople (or those on an official elite sports pathway) can meet in larger groups, including indoors, to compete and train. They can be joined by their coaches if necessary, or their parents and guardians if they're under 18.

Funerals and linked commemorative events

There is no longer a maximum limit of 30 attendees at funerals. The number of people who can attend a funeral will be determined by how many people the venue can safely accommodate with social distancing measures in place.

Funerals are especially important events to the family and friends of the deceased and this is reflected in the fact that throughout the pandemic, funerals have had higher numerical limits than other life events.

Linked religious or belief-based commemorative events, such as wakes, stone settings and ash scatterings can be attended by a maximum of 30 people, not including anyone working. Commemorative events can take place in a COVID-19 Secure indoor venue, or outdoors including private gardens.

There is guidance for arranging or going to a funeral during the coronavirus pandemic (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-a-funeral-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-a-funeral-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic>).

Weddings and civil partnership ceremonies and receptions

Up to 30 people can be at a wedding, civil partnership ceremony or reception. Anyone working is not counted in these limits.

There is further guidance for small marriages and civil partnerships (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-wedding-and-civil-partnership-ceremonies-receptions-and-celebrations>).

Significant life events

Significant life events such as christenings or Bar/Bat Mitzvahs can also be attended by a maximum of 30 people. Anyone working is not counted in these limits.

Places of worship

You can go to places of worship for a service. When a service is taking place indoors you must not mingle in groups larger than 6, except when everyone present is from no more than 2 households (including support bubbles). You should maintain social distancing between groups at all times.

When a service is taking place outdoors, you must not mingle in groups larger than 30. You should follow the national guidance on the safe use of places of worship (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july>).

Volunteering and charitable services

Gatherings above the limit of 6 people or 2 households indoors, or above 30 people outdoors can take place for the purposes of providing voluntary or charitable services.

You should follow the guidance on Volunteering during coronavirus (COVID-19) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-how-to-help-safely--2/coronavirus-how-to-help-safely>).

Other circumstances where you can gather in larger groups

Larger gatherings mean they are above the limit of 6 people or 2 households indoors, or above 30 people outdoors.

You may gather in larger groups:

- to provide emergency assistance, and to avoid injury or illness, or to escape a risk of harm (including domestic abuse)
- to fulfil legal obligations
- to carry out activities related to buying, selling or moving house
- for the purpose of COVID-secure protests or picketing where the organiser has taken the required precautions, including completing a risk assessment
- where it is reasonably necessary to support voting in an election or referendum (such as vote counting or for legal observers).

Those who are campaigning for a specific outcome in elections or referendums can carry out door-to-door campaigning activity in accordance with guidance on elections and referendums during COVID-19 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-governments-approach-to-elections-and-referendums-during-covid-19/the-governments-approach-to-elections-and-referendums-during-covid-19>).

You can gather in larger groups within criminal justice accommodation or immigration detention centres.

If you break the rules

The police can take action against you if you meet in larger groups. This includes breaking up illegal gatherings and issuing fines (fixed penalty notices).

You can be given a fixed penalty notice of £200 for the first offence, doubling for further offences up to a maximum of £6,400.

You can be fined £800 if you go to a private indoor gathering such as a house party of over 15 people from outside your household, which will double for each repeat offence to a maximum level of £6,400.

If you hold, or are involved in holding, an illegal gathering of over 30 people indoors or 50 people outdoors, the police can fine you £10,000.

Care home visits

The rules are different depending on whether you are visiting someone in a care home or a resident is having a visit out of the home.

Visiting a care home

Residents can have up to five regular visitors, with up to 2 visitors at one time or in a single day. People visiting will need to have tested negative for COVID-19 before they come inside and follow the rules on how to prevent infection from spreading. There is guidance on visiting care homes during COVID-19 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/visiting-care-homes-during-coronavirus>).

Low risk visits out of care homes

Care home residents leaving the home for a low risk visit, such as a walk in the park, will no longer have to self-isolate for 14 days when they return. There is guidance on visits out of the care home during COVID-19 for residents and care homes (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/arrangements-for-visiting-out-of-the-care-home/visits-out-of-care-homes>).

There is separate guidance for people in supported living (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supported-living-services-during-coronavirus-covid-19/covid-19-guidance-for-supported-living>).

Staying away from home overnight

All holiday accommodation may reopen. You can stay overnight in a:

- hotel / Bed & Breakfast
- campsite
- caravan
- boat
- second home
- other accommodation.

You may stay overnight in holiday accommodation in groups of up to 6, or larger groups if everyone present is from 2 households (including support bubbles) unless a legal exemption applies.

Further guidance on hotels and other guest accommodation (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/hotels-and-other-guest-accommodation>) is available

Travelling within England

You should continue to plan ahead and travel safely where possible.

You can plan ahead and travel safely by taking the following precautions:

- walk or cycle where possible
- plan ahead and avoid busy times and routes on public transport

- regularly wash or sanitise your hands
- wear a face covering on public transport, unless you're exempt
- make sure the space is well ventilated. Open windows or take other actions to let in plenty of fresh air

You must not share a private vehicle in groups larger than 6 people (except when everyone present is from no more than 2 households), unless your journey is made for an exempt reason.

There is additional guidance on safer travel (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>), including on the safe use of public transport.

Travelling within the UK, the Republic of Ireland and the Channel Islands

Travelling to England

Across the different parts of the Common Travel Area (the UK, the Republic of Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man), there may be rules in place that restrict travel to England.

You should check the restrictions in place where you intend to travel from before making arrangements to travel.

Provided you are permitted to travel from another part of the Common Travel Area (the UK, the Republic of Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man), you may enter England and are not required to quarantine on arrival. If you do travel to England, you must follow the restrictions on what you can and cannot do.

Travelling from England

Across the different parts of the Common Travel Area (the UK, the Republic of Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man), there may be rules in place that restrict travel from England. You do not need a reasonable excuse to leave England to travel to other parts of the UK, Jersey, Guernsey, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland. You should check the restrictions in place where you intend to travel to before making arrangements to travel.

Travelling to or from Northern Ireland

Currently in Northern Ireland it is against the law to leave home without a reasonable excuse (<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-what-restrictions-mean-you>). Those arriving into Northern Ireland from another part of the Common Travel Area are asked to self-isolate for 10 days upon arrival. There are a number of exemptions (<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-within-common-travel-area>) to this request.

Travelling to or from Scotland

Scottish Coronavirus regulations permit unrestricted travel within Scotland and between Scotland and England, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands, or the Isle of Man. Travel restrictions remain in place for travel between Scotland and the rest of the world. There is further guidance on travelling to and from Scotland (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-travel-and-transport/#travellingaroundscotland>).

Travelling to or from Wales

There are no restrictions in place for travel into or out of Wales as long as you are travelling within the UK or wider Common Travel Area (the Republic of Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man). Across the different parts of the Common Travel Area, there may be rules in place that restrict travel from Wales. You do not need a reasonable excuse to leave Wales to travel to other parts of the UK, Jersey, Guernsey, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland. You should check the restrictions in place where you intend to travel to before making arrangements to travel. This guidance provides advice on travelling to and from Wales (<https://gov.wales/current-restrictions-frequently-asked-questions#section-67271>).

International travel

Travelling internationally from England

There are no longer any restrictions on leaving England to travel internationally, however to protect public health in the UK and the vaccine rollout, you should not travel to countries or territories on the red or amber lists (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-amber-and-green-list-rules-for-entering-england>).

If you travel to one of these countries or territories, you should look at the rules in place at your destination and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) travel advice (<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>). You should do this even if you are returning to a place you've visited before.

Travelling to England from outside the UK

All visitors travelling to England are subject to the coronavirus restriction rules.

What you must do when you arrive in England from abroad depends on where you have been in the last 10 days before you arrive.

People planning to travel to England should follow the guidance on entering the UK (<https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control?priority-taxon=774cee22-d896-44c1-a611-e3109cce8eae>).

Find out what list the country you are travelling from is on and what you need to do. (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-amber-and-green-list-rules-for-entering-england>)

Advice for visitors and foreign nationals in England

Foreign nationals are subject to the national restrictions.

If you are visiting the UK, you may return home. You should check whether there are any restrictions in place at your destination.

Moving home

You can move home.

Estate and letting agents and removals firms can continue to work. If you are looking to move, you can go to property viewings.

Follow the national guidance on moving home safely (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/government-advice-on-home-moving-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>), which includes advice on social distancing, letting fresh air in, and wearing a face covering (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>).

Financial support

Wherever you live, you may be able to get financial help.

See further information on business support (<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-support>) and financial support if you're off work because of coronavirus (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-what-to-do-if-youre-employed-and-cannot-work>).

Businesses and venues

Further venues are permitted to open. You can visit indoor venues in a group of up to 6 people from different households or a larger group of any size from up to 2 households including support bubbles.

COVID-secure rules, including social distancing requirements, continue to apply in the workplace, and in businesses and public venues.

Businesses and venues which can reopen

Indoor areas at hospitality venues (cafes, restaurants, bars, pubs, social clubs, including members' clubs) can reopen. At any premises serving alcohol, customers will be required to order, be served and eat/drink while seated ("table service"). Venues are prohibited from providing smoking equipment such as shisha pipes, for use on the premises.

Indoor entertainment venues such as bingo halls, bowling alleys, and casinos may also reopen, as can indoor parts of outdoor attractions such as theme parks and animal attractions. Outdoor and indoor performance venues such as cinemas and theatres are also permitted to reopen.

Businesses eligible to host childcare and supervised activities for children are able to host these activities (including sport) for all children, regardless of circumstances. Indoor play centres and areas may also reopen.

Businesses and venues which must remain closed

To reduce social contact, some businesses, such as nightclubs, must remain closed or follow restrictions on how they provide goods and services.

There is further guidance on restrictions on businesses and venues in England (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reopening-businesses-and-venues-in-england/reopening-businesses-and-venues>) which explains which restrictions we will seek to ease at Step 4, subject to the outcome of the events research programme, social distancing and COVID-status certification reviews.

Healthcare and public services

The NHS and medical services remain open, including:

- dental services

- opticians
- audiology services
- chiropody
- chiropractors
- osteopaths
- other medical or health services, including services relating to mental health

The NHS continues to carry out urgent and non-urgent services safely. It is vital anyone who thinks they need any kind of medical care comes forward and gets help.

The majority of public services will continue. These include:

- Jobcentre Plus sites
- courts and probation services
- civil registrations offices
- passport and visa services
- services provided to victims of crime
- waste or recycling centres
- getting an MOT

Driving lessons and learning to drive

Driving tests and driving lessons may resume. Further guidance on learning to drive during coronavirus (<https://www.gov.uk/driving-lessons-learning-to-drive>) is available.

You will be able to restart:

- car driving lessons
- car and trailer driving lessons
- large goods vehicle (LGV) training
- driving instructor training

The following types of tests will restart:

- theory tests
- motorcycle tests
- LGV driving tests
- car and trailer driving tests

Translations

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

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988568/2021-05-17-coronavirus-main-page-arabic.pdf)

.PDF, 280KB, 29 pages

(COVID-19) Coronavirus restrictions: what you can and cannot do (Bengali)
(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988569/2021-05-17-coronavirus-main-page-bengali-bangladesh.pdf)

.PDF, 349KB, 37 pages

(COVID-19) Coronavirus restrictions: what you can and cannot do (Farsi)
(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988570/2021-05-17-coronavirus-main-page-farsi.pdf)

.PDF, 290KB, 31 pages

(COVID-19) Coronavirus restrictions: what you can and cannot do (Gujarati)
(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988572/2021-05-17-coronavirus-main-page-gujarati.pdf)

.PDF, 324KB, 35 pages

(COVID-19) Coronavirus restrictions: what you can and cannot do (Hindi)
(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988573/2021-05-17-coronavirus-main-page-hindi.pdf)

.PDF, 332KB, 34 pages

(COVID-19) Coronavirus restrictions: what you can and cannot do (Polish)
(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988574/2021-05-17-coronavirus-main-page-polish.pdf)

.PDF, 278KB, 35 pages

(COVID-19) Coronavirus restrictions: what you can and cannot do (Punjabi Gurmukhi)
(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988575/2021-05-17-coronavirus-main-page-panjabi-gurmukhi.pdf)

.PDF, 297KB, 31 pages

(COVID-19) Coronavirus restrictions: what you can and cannot do (Punjabi Shahmukhi)
(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988576/2021-05-17-coronavirus-main-page-punjabi-shahmukhi.pdf)

.PDF, 287KB, 31 pages

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

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988577/2021-05-17-coronavirus-main-page-slovak.pdf)

.PDF, 261KB, 32 pages

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

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988578/2021-05-17-coronavirus-main-page-somali.pdf)

.PDF, 219KB, 34 pages

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

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988579/2021-05-17-coronavirus-main-page-urdu.pdf)

.PDF, 284KB, 31 pages

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

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988580/2021-05-17-coronavirus-main-page-welsh.pdf)

.PDF, 221KB, 31 pages

Published 29 March 2021

Last updated 25 May 2021 + show all updates

1. 25 May 2021

The guidance for areas where the new COVID-19 variant is spreading has been updated to make it clearer we are not imposing local restrictions

2. 21 May 2021

Updated guidance for areas where the new COVID-19 variant is spreading

3. 17 May 2021

Step 3 guidance updates

4. 14 May 2021

Added additional guidance on new variant

5. 10 May 2021

Updated with new summary: "How the rules will change on 17 May".

6. 26 April 2021

Scottish Government travel restrictions updated.

7. 16 April 2021

Updated translated versions of guidance in accordance with 12 April changes.

8. 14 April 2021
Updated guidance on in-person teaching at universities and higher education.
9. 12 April 2021
Updated in line with the latest government guidance.
10. 6 April 2021
Updated with additional information on travelling within the Common Travel Area (CTA).
11. 5 April 2021
Updated to include how coronavirus restrictions will change from April 12th.
12. 2 April 2021
Added full translations to guidance.
13. 1 April 2021
Updated to clarify the rules on indoor mixing with members of your support bubble.
14. 1 April 2021
Updated with new advice for people who are clinically extremely vulnerable and clarification on the rules for staying overnight with members of your support bubble.
15. 30 March 2021
Coronavirus restrictions page updated to include translated summaries of 29 March guidance changes.
16. 29 March 2021
First published.

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Brexit

Check what you need to do (<https://www.gov.uk/transition>)

Explore the topic

- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) \(https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-taxon\)](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-taxon)