

# Coronavirus: What are the rules for face masks or face coverings?

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Face coverings will be compulsory in shops, supermarkets and while ordering takeaways in England from Friday.

So, what are the rules and what will shops ask customers to do?

## What are the face coverings rules in shops?

Face coverings must be worn in enclosed public spaces in England from 24 July.

This includes shops, supermarkets, shopping centres, banks, building societies and post offices. It extends to train and bus stations and airports.

Customers must wear a face covering before entering any shop and must keep it on until they leave.

Those who fail to wear a mask could be fined up to £100, or £50 if they pay within 14 days. The rules will be enforced by the police, not shop workers, and only "as a last resort".

Shop workers will not have to wear coverings.

## Will shops expect customers to wear masks?

Retailers differ over their approach:

- Sainsbury's says it "won't be challenging customers without a mask" since they may have a reason not to wear one
- The Association of Convenience Stores has advised members "not to challenge customers who are unwilling to wear a face covering" to "avoid any potential flashpoints of abuse"
- The British Retail Consortium says retailers should work "to encourage and support the new regulations", but enforcement is the responsibility of police
- Aldi will sell masks, with in-store signs and staff members prompting customers to comply
- Tesco will have signs explaining the rules and will sell masks
- John Lewis says it will "gently remind customers" to wear face coverings
- JD Sports' says customers without face masks may be offered them

In Scotland, it's been a requirement to wear face coverings in shops since 10 July. Anyone not wearing one can be fined £60 (reduced to £30 if paid within 28 days) for a first offence. People with certain medical conditions or disabilities are exempt, along with children under five.



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## How about restaurants and takeaways?

In England, face coverings do not have to be worn where it would be "impractical".

That includes restaurants, pubs and gyms.

They must be worn in a shop or cafe when buying food and drink to take away, but can be removed if you sit down to eat and drink.

They are also optional in:

- Hairdressers and beauty salons
- Cinemas, concert halls and theatres
- Museums
- Dentists and opticians

In Wales and Northern Ireland you do not currently have to wear a face covering in shops, or takeaways.

In Scotland, they are compulsory in shops and libraries. But the rules do not apply in takeaways, cafes, coffee shops, restaurants, pubs or in banks and building societies.

## Who doesn't have to wear a face covering?

Some people do not have to wear a face covering. They include:

- Children under 11
- Those unable to put on or wear a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or disability

- People for whom wearing or removing a face covering will cause severe distress
- Anyone assisting someone who relies on lip reading to communicate

You can take off your mask if:

- You need to eat, drink, or take medication
- A police officer or other official asks you to or if shop staff need to verify your age
- You are entering a shop to avoid harm, if you do not have a mask on you

Children under three should not wear face masks as they could cause choking and suffocation, Public Health England says.

## What are the face covering rules on public transport?

Since 15 June, anyone travelling by bus, train, ferry or plane in England must wear a face covering, if they are not exempted.

If it is "reasonably necessary" for you to eat or drink, you can remove the face covering to do so.

People can be refused travel if they don't follow the rules, and can be fined as a last resort.

Public transport excludes cruise ships, school transport, taxis and private hire vehicles.



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In Scotland, it is also compulsory to wear face coverings on all public transport.

People will also be required to wear masks mandatory on public transport in Wales from 27 July. These coverings should be three layers thick.

The wearing of face coverings on most buses, trains and ferries became mandatory in Northern Ireland on 10 July.

## Where am I supposed to get a face covering?

The government has been careful to use the term "face covering" rather than "face mask" - with surgical masks kept for medical use.

The BBC has created a guide on how to make your own face covering. The government has issued its own advice too.

## Do face coverings work?

World Health Organization (WHO) advice says non-medical face coverings should be worn in public where social distancing is not possible.

Coronavirus is spread when droplets are sprayed into the air when infected people talk, cough or sneeze. Those droplets can then fall on surfaces.

The WHO says there is also emerging evidence of airborne transmission of the virus, with tiny particles hanging in aerosol form in the air.

Homemade cloth face-coverings can help reduce the spread from people who are contagious but have no symptoms or are yet to develop symptoms.

Scientists in Singapore suggest the [contagion risk is especially high](#) in the 24-48 hours before an infected person is even aware they might have the disease.

Taking a face covering on and off can also risk contamination, [the WHO says](#).

SOURCE: BBC NEWS

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## How NOT to wear your face covering or mask

**DO NOT**  
use if damaged or damp



**DO NOT**  
wear it around chin



**DO NOT**  
wear loose-fitting masks



**DO NOT**  
pull away from face to speak



**DO NOT**  
touch front of mask



**DO NOT**  
share your mask

