



Smoking Facts

The Law

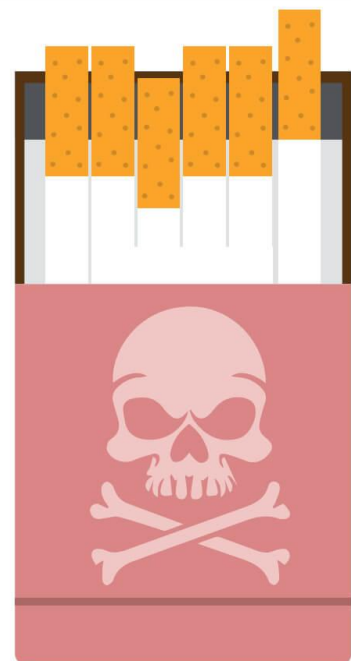
- You must be 18 or older to buy cigarettes in the UK.
- It is illegal to sell tobacco, electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) or e-liquids to anyone under 18
- It is illegal to buy the above products for anyone under 18

Why is smoking so bad?

Smoking is inhaling the smoke from burning tobacco (which is made from the dried leaves of the tobacco plant).

When tobacco is burned it releases dangerous substances including:

- **Tar** - a toxic substance that over time damages lungs.
- **Carbon monoxide** - a poisonous gas that is absorbed through the lungs and enters the bloodstream.
- **Nicotine** - highly addictive chemical which makes it hard to stop smoking.



Smoking risks and dangers

Smoking is one of the biggest causes of death and illness in the UK. Smoking can:

- cause cancer in various parts of the body including lungs, mouth, bowel and liver,
- damage your lungs, leading to lung diseases that make breathing difficult,
- increase the risk of a heart attack and stroke, and
- make asthma and the common cold worse.

**Passive smoking - also known as
“second-hand smoke”**

- The risks of smoking can also occur because of ‘passive smoking’. This is when people breathe in other people’s smoke.
- Babies and children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of second-hand smoke.
- Due to the risks of passive smoking, it is against the law to smoke in school buildings, workplaces, enclosed public buildings and on public transport.
- It is also illegal to smoke in an enclosed private vehicle if someone under 18 is also present.

**E-cigarettes (vaping), nicotine pouches and other nicotine products**

- E-cigarettes allow someone to inhale nicotine in a vapour instead of through tobacco smoke.
- Nicotine pouches and other products allow someone to ingest nicotine through the mouth.
- People sometimes use these products when they are trying to give up smoking.
- However, these products also carry risks because:
 - They still contain potentially harmful chemicals.
 - They are still fairly new and so the long-term health risks to heart, lungs, blood vessels etc are not known.
 - Most e-cigarettes contain addictive nicotine.
 - Nicotine pouches vary in strength and can contain more addictive nicotine than normal cigarettes.
 - Nicotine pouches can have nasty side effects like mouth soreness, harming your gums, nausea, vomiting, headaches and dizziness.