

Coronavirus – Social Distancing Guidance

Updated on 5th January 2021 (All services)

Social distancing is a key method of keeping people safe and preventing the spread of Covid-19.

It means keeping a certain distance away from other people to lessen the risk of passing on - or catching - coronavirus.

Each UK nation is advising people to stay 2m (6ft) away from anyone they don't live with. However, there are some differences:

- **England**, stay 2 metres apart from anyone not in your household or bubble.
- **Scotland**, people should keep 2m away from each other. Children under 12 do not need to maintain physical distance from others.
- **Wales**, stay 2m apart. Primary-age children are also exempt (under 11's).

Social distancing is important because coronavirus spreads mainly when an infected person coughs, sneezes or speaks, and transmits small droplets - packed with the virus - into the air.

These droplets can land in other people's mouths or noses nearby or may be inhaled into the lungs. You could also be infected after touching a surface on which the droplets have landed.

The risks are far higher indoors than outdoor.

It's very important to do what you can to reduce the risk of you and other people getting ill with coronavirus.

You can spread the virus even if you do not have symptoms.

Do

- try to stay at least 2 metres (3 steps) away from anyone you do not live with (or anyone not in your support bubble)
- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- wash your hands as soon as you get home
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards

Don't

- do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean

Different restrictions apply across the UK.

[England: Coronavirus rules](#)

[Scotland: Coronavirus rules](#)

[Wales: Coronavirus rules](#)