



1. Home (<https://www.gov.uk/>)
2. Transport (<https://www.gov.uk/transport>)
3. Local transport (<https://www.gov.uk/transport/local-transport>)
4. Buses (<https://www.gov.uk/transport/buses>)

Part of

Work and financial support during coronavirus

(<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-taxon/work-and-financial-support>)

Guidance

Coronavirus (COVID-19): safer travel guidance for passengers

Walking, cycling, and travelling in vehicles or on public transport during the coronavirus outbreak.

Published 12 May 2020

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From:

Department for Transport (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport>)

Applies to:

England (see guidance for Wales (<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-travel>), Scotland (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-2-staying-safe-and-protecting-others/>), and Northern Ireland (<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-overview-and-advice>))

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Travel safely during the coronavirus outbreak

You can help control coronavirus and travel safely by:

- working from home where possible

- shopping locally and less often
- considering all other forms of transport, such as cycling and walking, before using public transport
- avoiding the busiest times and routes
- keeping your distance when your travel, where possible
- washing or sanitising your hands regularly

You should not travel at all if you:

- are experiencing any coronavirus symptoms (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>)
- are self-isolating as a result of coronavirus symptoms or sharing a household or support bubble with somebody with symptoms (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>)
- are clinically extremely vulnerable (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>) and cannot shield during your journey
- have been advised by the NHS test and trace service (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/nhs-test-and-trace-if-youve-been-in-contact-with-a-person-who-has-coronavirus>) that you should self-isolate

If you have any symptoms of coronavirus you should self-isolate at home and arrange to have a test to see if you have coronavirus (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/>).

If anyone in your household or support bubble (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-people-from-outside-your-household#making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household>) has symptoms of coronavirus you should self-isolate.

Social distancing

You should maintain a 2 metre distance where possible, because the risk of transmission is small at this distance.

From 4 July 2020, government guidance on social distancing (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing-after-4-july>) is changing. If you cannot keep a 2 metre distance, reduce the risk to yourself and others by maintaining a 1 metre distance where possible, and taking suitable precautions.

Help keep yourself, other passengers and transport staff safe, by taking the following precautions:

- limit the number of people or households that you come into contact with, for example avoid peak travel where possible
- wash or sanitise your hands regularly
- use a face covering
- avoid touching your face
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the inside of your elbow when coughing or sneezing
- travel side by side or behind other people, rather than facing them, where seating arrangements allow
- touch as few surfaces as possible
- stay outdoors, rather than indoors, where possible
- minimise the time spent close to other people, where possible
- avoid loud talking, shouting or singing
- dispose of waste safely, including items such as used disposable face coverings

Face coverings

From 15 June 2020, it is the law that you must wear a face covering when travelling in England (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2020/592/contents/made>) on a:

- bus or coach
- train or tram
- ferry or hovercraft or other vessel
- aircraft
- cable car

If you do not wear a face covering you will be breaking the law and could be fined £100, or £50 if you pay the fine within 14 days.

A face covering is a covering of any type which covers your nose and mouth.

How to wear and make a face covering (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering>).

Some people don't have to wear a face covering including for health, age or equality reasons. Some transport staff may not wear a face covering if it is not required for their job.

You should also wear a face covering in other enclosed spaces where it is difficult to maintain social distancing. For example, at stations, interchanges, ports and airports and in taxis and private hire vehicles. A taxi driver or private hire vehicle operator may be entitled to refuse to accept you if you do not wear a face covering.

The rule applies in situations where individuals from different households or support bubbles (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-people-from-outside-your-household#making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household>) could be travelling together on a service such as a charter boat, but not if you are giving a lift to someone from another household or support bubble in your private car.

Surgical masks or respirators used by healthcare and other workers as part of personal protective equipment (PPE) should continue to be reserved for people who need to wear them at work.

Face coverings are not a substitute for maintaining social distancing and good hand hygiene.

The law requiring you to wear a face covering on public transport applies while you are in England.

Scotland (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-2-staying-safe-and-protecting-others/pages/face-coverings/>), Wales (<https://gov.wales/face-coverings-frequently-asked-questions>) and Northern Ireland (<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-overview-and-advice>) have different rules and laws from England.

If travelling from any other UK nation, you will be required to wear a face covering when you enter England, regardless of the rules in the nation you are transiting from.

When you can remove your face covering

You should remove your face covering if asked to do so by a police officer or other relevant person.

It is important to wash or sanitise your hands before and after touching your face covering. For longer journeys, take more than one face covering and a plastic bag for used face coverings.

You do not need to wear a face covering if you have a legitimate reason not to. This includes:

- not being able to put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability
- if putting on, wearing or removing a face covering will cause you severe distress
- if you are travelling with or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading to communicate
- to avoid harm or injury, or the risk of harm or injury, to yourself or others
- to avoid injury, or to escape a risk of harm, and you do not have a face covering with you
- to eat or drink, but only if you need to
- to take medication
- if a police officer or other official requests you remove your face covering

Walking and cycling

Walk or cycle (<https://www.think.gov.uk/cycle-safety>) if you can.

This will reduce pressure on public transport and the road network.

Your local council (<https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>) can help you plan your journey by providing maps showing dedicated paths and routes.

Where possible, keep a suitable distance from other people. For example, when waiting at crossings and traffic lights. Take precautions where this is not possible.

Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands before and after cycling.

Consider making a list of items to take with you.

Private cars and other vehicles

Plan your journey

Plan your route, including any breaks, before setting out. Routes may be different as local areas make changes to enable social distancing.

Check that your vehicle is safe and roadworthy (<https://www.think.gov.uk/campaign/vehicle-safety-checks>) if you haven't used it for several weeks.

People from a household or support bubble (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-people-from-outside-your-household#making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household>) can travel together in a vehicle.

You should wear a face covering in an enclosed space where social distancing isn't possible and where you will come into contact with people outside your household or support bubble. Take care to use face coverings properly.

Consider making a list of items to take with you.

Car sharing

If you normally share a vehicle with people from other households or support bubbles for essential journeys, we recommend you find a different way to travel so that you can maintain social distancing. For example, consider walking, cycling or using your own vehicle if you can.

If you do have to travel with people outside your household or support bubble try to:

- share the transport with the same people each time

- keep to small groups of people at any one time
- open windows for ventilation
- travel side by side or behind other people, rather than facing them, where seating arrangements allow
- face away from each other
- consider seating arrangements to maximise distance between people in the vehicle
- clean your car between journeys using standard cleaning products - make sure you clean door handles and other areas that people may touch
- ask the driver and passengers to wear a face covering

On your journey

Expect more pedestrians and cyclists, especially at peak times of day. Where possible, allow other road users to maintain social distancing. For example, give cyclists space at traffic lights.

Limit the time you spend at garages, petrol stations and motorway services. Try to keep your distance from other people and if possible pay by contactless.

Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands often, and always when exiting or re-entering your vehicle.

Completing your journey

When finishing your journey wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands as soon as possible

Public transport

From 15 June 2020, you must wear a face covering on public transport in England. You will be breaking the law if you fail to do so and could be fined.

A face covering is a covering of any type which covers your nose and mouth.

How to wear and make a face covering (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering>).

Some people don't have to wear a face covering for health, age or equality reasons.

You should remove your face covering if asked to do so by a police officer or other relevant person.

It is important to wash or sanitise your hands before and after touching your face covering.

Plan your journey

Consider all other forms of transport before using public transport.

Before and during your journey, check with your transport operator for the latest travel advice on your route:

- bus, coach, tram and ferry operators (<https://www.traveline.info>)
- National Rail (https://www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations_destinations/coronavirus.aspx)
- TfL (<https://tfl.gov.uk/campaign/coronavirus-covid-?intcmp=62419>)

Travel may take longer than normal on some routes due to social distancing measures. Allow more time if your journey involves changes between different forms of transport.

If you can:

- travel at off-peak times
- use quieter stations and stops – get off a stop early if it's less busy
- keep changes to a minimum, for example, between bus and train
- walk for more of your journey, for example the first or last mile
- book your tickets online in advance or pay by contactless

Consider making a list of items to take with you and minimise the luggage you take.

On your journey

From 15 June 2020, you must wear a face covering on public transport in England. You will be breaking the law if you fail to do so and could be fined.

Some people don't have to wear a face covering for health, age or equality reasons.

The risk of transmission is small at 2 metres and where possible, you should maintain 2 metres distance. From 4 July 2020, government guidance on social distancing is changing.

If you cannot keep a 2 metre distance, reduce the risk to yourself and others by maintaining a 1 metre distance where possible, and taking suitable precautions.

Help keep yourself, other passengers and transport staff safe by taking the following precautions:

- ensure you maintain social distancing, where possible, including at busy entrances, exits, under canopies, bus stops, platforms or outside of stations
- limit the number of people that you come into contact with, for example avoid peak travel
- wash or sanitise your hands regularly
- avoid touching your face
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the inside of your elbow when coughing or sneezing
- travel side by side or behind other people, rather than facing them, where seating arrangements allow
- touch as few surfaces as possible
- stay outdoors, rather than indoors, where possible
- minimise the time spent close to other people, where possible
- avoid loud talking, shouting or singing
- dispose of waste safely, including items such as disposable face coverings
- be prepared to queue or take a different entrance or exit at stations
- wait for passengers to get off first before you board
- wait for the next service if you cannot safely keep your distance on board a train, bus or coach
- avoid consuming food and drink on public transport, where possible
- respect other people's space while travelling
- be aware of pregnant, older and disabled people who may require a seat or extra space
- be aware that not all disability is visible and some people may be exempt from wearing a face covering

Treat transport staff with respect and follow instructions from your transport operator. This may include:

- notices about which seats to use or how to queue
- additional screens, barriers or floor markings
- requests to board through different doors or to move to less busy areas

Seek assistance if you need it

If you require assistance when travelling, contact your transport operator as you would normally do.

If any problems arise or you feel ill during your journey, speak to a member of transport staff. In the case of an emergency, contact the emergency services as you normally would.

If you need help, try to keep a suitable distance from members of staff. If this isn't possible, try to avoid physical contact and keep the time you spend near staff as short as possible.

Children on public transport

Where travel is necessary, consider whether children could walk or cycle, accompanied by a responsible adult or carer, where appropriate.

Social distancing applies to children as well as adults. Children should keep their distance from people who are not in their household or support bubble (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-people-from-outside-your-household#making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household>), while on public transport. If this isn't possible children should:

- avoid physical contact
- face away from others
- keep the time spent near others as short as possible

Children under the age of 3 should not wear face coverings. Children aged from 4 to 11 can wear face coverings, but they are not required to.

If you are the responsible adult or carer travelling with children, please help them:

- minimise the surfaces they touch
- maintain their distance from others
- wear their face covering
- wash their hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands as soon as possible after the end of your journey

Where relevant, consider travel guidance for educational settings

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>).

Completing your journey

When finishing your journey:

- consider walking or cycling from the station or stop you arrived at
- wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands as soon as possible - do the same for children who have travelled with you

Taxis and private hire vehicles

You should wear a face covering when using taxis or private hire vehicles. A taxi driver or private hire vehicle operator may be entitled to refuse to accept you if you do not wear a face covering.

The risk of transmission is small at 2 metres and where possible, you should maintain 2 metres distance.

From 4 July 2020, government guidance on social distancing is changing.

If you cannot keep a 2 metre distance, reduce the risk to yourself and others by maintaining a 1 metre distance where possible, and taking suitable precautions.

Follow the advice of the driver. For example, you may be asked to sit in the back left-hand seat if travelling alone. You may want to check with your taxi or private hire operator before travelling if they have put any additional measures in place.

You should use contactless payment if possible, or find out if you can pay online in advance.

Be aware of the surfaces you touch. Be careful not to touch your face. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the inside of your elbow when coughing or sneezing.

When finishing your journey wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands as soon as possible

Aviation, ferries and maritime transport

From 15 June 2020, you must wear a face covering when travelling on a ferry, hovercraft or aircraft in England. You will be breaking the law if you fail to do so and could be fined.

This applies:

- in English airspace, when you are on board an aircraft which took off from, or is to land at, a place in England
- in the English territorial sea, when you are on board a vessel which departed from, or is to dock at, a place in England

Some people don't have to wear a face covering for health, age or equality reasons.

It is important to wash or sanitise your hands before and after touching your face covering.

How to wear and make a face covering (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering>).

Plan your journey

Before you travel, check with your travel operator and port, or airline and airport for the latest travel advice on your route.

There is specific guidance for passengers in airports and on aircraft (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-air-travel-guidance-for-passengers>).

Consider making a list of items to take with you.

On your journey

The risk of transmission is small at 2 metres and where possible, you should maintain 2 metres distance.

From 4 July 2020, government guidance on social distancing is changing.

If you cannot keep a 2 metre distance, reduce the risk to yourself and others by maintaining a 1 metre distance where possible, and taking suitable precautions.

Be aware of the surfaces you touch. Be careful not to touch your face. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the inside of your elbow when coughing or sneezing.

Be considerate to your fellow passengers and to transport staff:

- do not congregate near entrances or exits while waiting
- be aware of pregnant, older and disabled people who may require a seat or extra space
- be aware that not all disability is visible and some people may be exempt from wearing a face covering

Treat transport staff with respect and follow instructions from your transport operator. This may include:

- notices about which seats to use or how to queue
- additional screens, barriers or floor markings
- requests to board through different doors or to move to less busy areas

Completing your journey

When finishing your journey wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands as soon as possible.

Travelling abroad

COVID-19 exceptional travel advisory notice

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) currently advises British nationals against all but essential international travel (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>). This advice is being kept under constant review.

If you travel abroad, make sure you understand the:

- public health requirements of your destination country (<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>)
- restrictions on re-entering the UK (<https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control>)

Also read the following guidance:

- Essential international travel guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-essential-international-travel-guidance>)
- Guidance for British citizens travelling abroad (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>)
- Guidance for passengers in airports and on aircraft (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-air-travel-guidance-for-passengers>)

Check your specific plans with your airline, ferry, train operator and accommodation provider, and where relevant with your travel insurance provider.

Your transport provider may put measures in place to help you follow the public health guidance of the destination country.

On arrival in the UK

On arriving in the UK, you should comply with border, immigration and self-isolation requirements (<https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control>).

If you are entering the [UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/common-travel-area-guidance/common-travel-area-guidance) from outside the Common Travel Area (CTA)

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/common-travel-area-guidance/common-travel-area-guidance>) you will need to:

- provide journey and contact details (<https://www.gov.uk/provide-journey-contact-details-before-travel-uk>) before travelling to the [UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/common-travel-area-guidance/common-travel-area-guidance)
- self isolate (<https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control>) for 14 days

These measures apply to anyone entering the [UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules), regardless of nationality or length of trip. There are specific exemptions (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules>) in place.

You should leave the port, airport or station as quickly as possible. Access to ports or airports may be limited to passengers, crew members and staff.

Non-passengers should only enter airports where needed. For example, accompanying or picking up a passenger requiring assistance or unaccompanied children.

Completing your journey

When finishing your journey:

- follow all local guidance
- wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands as soon as possible

Exemptions - people who do not have to wear a face covering

The requirement to wear a face covering does not apply to:

- a child under the age of 11
- passengers in an allocated cabin, berth or other similar accommodation, when they are alone or with members of their household or support bubble (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-people-from-outside-your-household#making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household>)
- passengers who remain in their private vehicle while on board public transport, for example on a car ferry
- an employee of the transport operator, when they are acting in the course of their employment
- any other person providing services to the transport operator, under arrangements made with the transport operator, who is providing those services
- a constable or police community support officer acting in the course of their duty
- an emergency responder such as a paramedic or fire officer acting in the course of their duty
- an official, for example a border force officer, acting in the course of their duties

You also do not need to wear a face covering if you have a good reason not to. This includes:

- if you have a physical or mental illness or impairment, or a disability that means you cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering
- if putting on, wearing or removing a face covering would cause you severe distress
- if you are travelling with, or providing assistance to, someone who relies on lip reading to communicate
- if you are travelling to avoid injury or escape the risk of harm, and you do not have a face covering with you
- if you need to remove it during your journey to avoid harm or injury or the risk of harm or injury to yourself or others
- if you need to eat, drink, or take medication you can remove your face covering

- if you are asked to remove your face covering by a police officer or other official, for example to check your railcard

Enforcement of face coverings on public transport

You are not allowed to get on public transport if you are not wearing a face covering, unless you have a legitimate reason for not wearing one. Transport staff may tell you not to board or ask you to get off.

If you refuse to wear a face covering, you can receive a fine from the police or Transport for London enforcement officers. The fixed penalty notice will require you to pay £100 (reduced to £50 if paid within 14 days).

Checklists for safer travel

Plan your journey

- can I walk or cycle to my destination?
- have I checked the latest travel advice from my transport operator?
- have I booked my travel ticket online, bought a pass or checked if contactless payment is possible?
- have I planned my journey to minimise crowded areas and allow for delays?
- am I taking the most direct route to my destination?

What to take with you

- a face covering -for longer journeys, take more than one face covering and a plastic bag for used face coverings
- a plan for the journey
- tickets, contactless payment card or pass
- phone, if needed for travel updates, tickets, contactless payments
- hand sanitiser
- essential medicines
- tissues

Safer travel information sheet

Safer travel guidance for passengers information sheet

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/890273/covid-19-passenger-guidance-infographic.pdf)

PDF, 92.8KB, 1 page

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See also

Coronavirus (COVID-19): safer transport guidance for operators

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-transport-guidance-for-operators>)

Published 12 May 2020

Last updated 29 June 2020 + show all updates

1. 29 June 2020
Social distancing guidance updated.
2. 14 June 2020
Updated to reflect the upcoming requirement for passengers to wear face coverings on public transport in England.
3. 28 May 2020
Added details of how people with coronavirus symptoms can arrange to have a test to see if they have COVID-19.
4. 23 May 2020
Addition of text 'You should be prepared to remove your face covering if asked to do so by police officers and police staff for the purposes of identification.'
5. 12 May 2020
First published.

Related content

- Coronavirus outbreak FAQs: what you can and can't do (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do>)
- Staying alert and safe (social distancing) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>)
- COVID-19: guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>)
- Meeting people from outside your household (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-people-from-outside-your-household>)
- NHS test and trace: how it works (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>)

Detailed guidance

- Coronavirus (COVID-19): safer air travel for passengers (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-air-travel-guidance-for-passengers>)

Collection

- Coronavirus (COVID-19): transport and travel guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-transport-and-travel-guidance>)
- Guidance for schools: coronavirus (COVID-19) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/guidance-for-schools-coronavirus-covid-19>)

Explore the topic

- Cycling and walking (<https://www.gov.uk/transport/cycling-and-walking>)
- Buses (<https://www.gov.uk/transport/buses>)
- Inland waterways (<https://www.gov.uk/transport/inland-waterways>)
- Light rail and trams (<https://www.gov.uk/transport/light-rail-and-trams>)

- [Tube](https://www.gov.uk/transport/tube) (<https://www.gov.uk/transport/tube>)
- + 5 more
- [UK sea passengers](https://www.gov.uk/transport/uk-sea-passengers) (<https://www.gov.uk/transport/uk-sea-passengers>), [Rail passenger experience](https://www.gov.uk/transport/rail-passenger-experience) (<https://www.gov.uk/transport/rail-passenger-experience>), [Infectious diseases](https://www.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/health-protection-infectious-diseases) (<https://www.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/health-protection-infectious-diseases>), [Driving and transport in the UK during coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-taxon/driving-and-transport-in-the-uk) (<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-taxon/driving-and-transport-in-the-uk>), and [Working safely during coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-taxon/working-safely) (<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-taxon/working-safely>)