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Guidance

Reopening businesses and venues

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1. Step 1 - from 8 March

Businesses permitted to open remain the same as currently allowed

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-businesses-and-premises-to-close/closing-certain-businesses-and-venues-in-england>).

In addition, businesses eligible to host childcare and supervised activities for children (such as community centres or libraries) will be able to host these activities for children providing that they are necessary to enable parents to work, seek work, attend education, seek medical care, or attend a support group.

2. From 29 March

At this stage, some further settings will be permitted to open.

This will include outdoor sports facilities such as:

- gyms
- swimming pools
- sports courts (such as tennis and basketball courts)
- golf courses, including mini golf
- water sports venues
- climbing walls
- driving and shooting ranges
- riding arenas at riding centres
- archery venues

People can use these venues in a group of six people, or with members of up to two households.

At this step, formally organised outdoor sport will also return - this can include a larger number of participants, provided that appropriate steps are taken to make it COVID-Secure in line with the law. Indoor facilities, such as changing rooms, should not be used at this time, although toilet facilities can be accessed. At this stage, these gatherings must only include participants - not spectators.

Businesses eligible to host childcare and supervised activities for children will now be able to host all outdoor children's activities, and outdoor parent-and child groups for up to 15 people (not counting those aged under five).

3. Step 2 - no earlier than 12 April

Following the move to Step 2, further settings will be permitted to open. Unless a specific exemption exists, these must only be attended/used in line with the wider social contact limits at this stage - as a single household or bubble indoors; or in a group of 6 people or 2 households outdoors.

Non-essential retail will reopen. This will include but not be limited to:

- clothing stores and tailors
- charity and antique shops

- homeware and carpet stores
- showrooms (such as for vehicles as well as kitchens and bathrooms)
- electronic goods and mobile phone shops
- retail travel agents
- photography studios
- remaining auction houses and markets
- tobacco and vape stores
- betting shops (subject to additional COVID-Secure measures, such as limiting the use of gaming machines).
- car washes (except for automatic car washes that are already open)

Personal care facilities and close contact services will reopen. This will include:

- hair, beauty and nail salons
- body and skin piercing services
- tattoo studios
- spas and massage centres (except for steam rooms and saunas)
- holistic therapy (including acupuncture, homeopathy, and reflexology)
- tanning salons

Indoor sports and leisure facilities will reopen. This will include at:

- gyms and leisure centres
- sports courts
- swimming pools
- dance studios and fitness centres
- driving and shooting ranges
- riding arenas
- archery venues
- climbing wall centres

Self-contained holiday accommodation in which all facilities (including for sleeping, catering, bathing, and indoor lobbies and corridors for entry and exit) are restricted to exclusive use of a single household/support bubble will reopen.

Outdoor areas at hospitality venues (cafes, restaurants, bars, pubs, social clubs, including in member's clubs) can reopen, including for takeaway alcohol. These venues may allow customers to use toilets located inside. At any premises serving alcohol, customers will be required to order, be served and eat/drink while seated ("table service"). Venues will be prohibited from providing shared smoking equipment such as shisha pipes.

Outdoor attractions will reopen at:

- adventure parks and activities
- animal attractions (such as at zoos, safari parks and aquariums)

- drive in events, such as for cinemas, theatres, and other performances.
- film studios
- funfairs and fairgrounds
- model villages
- museums and galleries
- skating rinks
- theme parks
- trampolining parks
- water and aqua parks

Public buildings, such as community halls and centres, and libraries, can reopen.

Businesses eligible to host childcare and supervised activities for children will now be able to host these activities (including sport) for all children, regardless of circumstances.

Permitted businesses operating in otherwise closed attractions (such as a gift shop or a takeaway kiosk at a museum) may only open where they are a self-contained unit and can be accessed directly from the street.

Outdoor gatherings or events, organised by a business, charity, public body or similar organisation, can be organised, subject to specific conditions: that they comply with COVID-Secure guidance including taking reasonable steps to limit the risk of transmission, complete a related risk assessment; and ensure that those attending do not mix beyond what is permitted by the social contact limits (unless another exemption exists, such as for work purposes, or supervised activities for children). This could enable spectators at a grassroots sports match or a village fete, provided people do not mix beyond groups of 6 people or two households. We will update guidance to local authorities on how smaller outdoor events like these should be run safely.

In all the venues above, indoor events that bring people together - even if they do not mix with other households - must not run until Step 3. This is only permitted if there is an explicit exemption - this includes support groups, supervised activities for children, parent-and-child groups (up to 15 people, not counting those aged under five), communal worship, or a wedding, reception or commemorative event like a wake.

Over the spring, the Government will run a scientific Events Research Programme. This will include a series of pilots using enhanced testing approaches and other measures to run events with larger crowd sizes and reduced social distancing to evaluate the outcomes. These pilots will start in April.

4. Step 3 - no earlier than 17 May

Following the move to Step 3, further settings will be permitted to open. Unless a specific exemption exists, these must only be attended/used in line with the wider social contact limits at this stage - in a group of 6 people or 2 households indoors; or in a group of no more than 30 people outdoors.

Indoor areas of hospitality venues will reopen. As outdoors, table service will be required. Venues will be prohibited from providing shared smoking equipment such as shisha pipes.

Indoor entertainment and visitor attractions will reopen. This will include:

- cinemas

- theatres
- concert halls
- museums and galleries
- adventure playgrounds and activities
- amusement arcades and adult gaming centres
- bingo halls
- casinos
- bowling alleys
- skating rinks
- games, recreation and entertainment venues such as escape rooms and laser quest
- play areas (including soft play centres and inflatable parks)
- model villages
- snooker and pool halls
- trampolining parks
- water and aqua parks
- indoor visitor attractions at theme parks and film studios
- indoor attractions at zoos, safari parks, aquariums and other animal attractions
- indoor attractions at botanical gardens, greenhouses and biomes
- indoor attractions at sculpture parks
- indoor attractions at landmarks including observation wheels or viewing platforms
- indoor attractions at stately or historic homes, castles, or other heritage sites
- conference centres and exhibition halls, including for the purposes of business events (subject to the capacity limits set out below)

Remaining outdoor entertainment events, such as cinemas, theatres, and other performance events will also be permitted.

Remaining holiday accommodation can reopen, as can saunas and steam rooms. Indoor team sport and group exercise classes will return.

At this step, both outdoor and indoor gatherings or events, organised by a business, charity, public body or similar organisation, can be organised, subject to specific conditions: that they comply with COVID-Secure guidance including taking reasonable steps to limit the risk of transmission, complete a related risk assessment; and ensure that those attending do not mix beyond what is permitted by the social contact limits (unless another exemption exists, such as for organised sport or exercise, supervised activities for children or a significant life event).

Spectators will be allowed at elite sporting events and performance events. Attendance at these events will be restricted to 50% of capacity up to 1,000 people for indoor events, and 50% of capacity up to 4,000 people for outdoor events. For outdoor events taking place in venues with seated capacity of over 16,000, event organisers may apply a 25% capacity cap, up to a maximum of 10,000 seated people. Large business events will also be able to go ahead, subject to the same capacity requirements.

5. Step 4 - no earlier than 21 June

In Step 4 we hope to reopen remaining settings such as nightclubs and adult entertainment venues, and to lift the restrictions on social contact and large events that apply in Step 3. This is subject to the outcome of the Events Research Programme, and a review of social distancing measures.

We will also look to relax COVID-Secure requirements on businesses, subject to the outcome of the reviews.

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