

A Guide to Saying 'No'

Display Proof of Age material

Displaying proof of age material may make youngsters think twice before attempting to buy.

Stand Your Ground

A refusal can embarrass a customer, so be tactful. Always be polite and calm, and don't antagonise by getting annoyed or aggressive. Be professional. Apologise.

If faced with a group, move the person you're talking to away from the rest. This lessens the chance of them playing to the crowd.

- Be polite
- Apologise
- Don't antagonise
- Be firm
- Use tact
- Don't humiliate

Avoid Blame

Politely stress your legal obligations, when refusing to serve someone. If you're asking for identification for proof of age, emphasise it's nothing personal, but the law requires it. State it's the policy of the shop to make this request to anyone whom you suspect of being under-age.

- De-personalise the situation
- Explain your legal obligation
- Blame the shop policy
- Don't get angry

Keep Your Distance

Try to stay calm; apologise; use relaxed body language and avoid prolonged eye contact. Use slow and deliberate body movements and try to keep something between you and the possible aggressor. Stay behind the counter - this provides a barrier should violence occur.

- Avoid prolonged eye contact
- Use relaxed body language
- Say sorry
- If possible keep a barrier between you