

The Law | The sale of age-restricted goods to children

This information is intended for retailers selling age-restricted goods. It is intended only for guidance as only the courts can interpret the law. If you require further advice regarding the law then please contact Lancashire County Council Trading Standards Service on 01772 532145.

Alcohol

Neither you nor anyone you employ should sell alcohol to anyone under the age of **18**.
In addition: -

It is illegal for a young person to buy or attempt to buy alcohol.

It is a criminal offence for any person to buy or attempt to buy alcohol for a person under the age of **18** years.

Confectionery containing alcohol

Including liqueur chocolates etc must not be sold to children under **16** years of age.

The maximum penalty for not following the law is a level 5 fine of up to £5000 under the Licensing Act 2003 (current penalty £1000) and your liquor licence may be removed at the courts' discretion.

Cigarettes

It is illegal to sell tobacco products to children under the age of **16** years, even if they are buying for their parents or another adult.

Tobacco products include cigarettes, cigarette papers, cigars, pipe tobacco, products containing tobacco intended for oral use or nasal use and smoking mixtures intended as a substitute for tobacco.

You must only sell cigarettes in packets of **10** or more in their original packaging. You must not sell loose cigarettes or split packets.

If you sell cigarettes to any person under the age of **16** years you could face a fine of up to £2500.

You must display a clear notice stating "**It is illegal to sell tobacco products to anyone under the age of 16**"

The sign must have letters at least 36 mm high, be A3 size (297mmx420mm) and be visible where tobacco products are sold.

If you fail to display this sign then you could face a fine of up to £1000.

Cigarette vending machines

You must not allow persons under the age of 16 years to obtain cigarettes from vending machines. Vending machines should be placed where you can see them and where you can control their use.

You must display a sign on the vending machine stating **“This machine is only for the use of people aged 16 or over.”**

The sign itself should be at least 60mm x 100mm with the letters being at least 6mm in height.

Fireworks

You must not sell fireworks to any person under the age of **18** years (remember sparklers are fireworks). **You must not** sell party poppers, caps, cracker snaps, novelty matches, serpents and throwdowns to anyone who you feel looks under the age of **16** years unless they can provide Proof of Age.

If you sell these products to children you could be fined up to £5000 in the magistrates court or face a term of imprisonment of up to 6 months, or both.

You must display the statutory notice (min size 400mm x 300mm, letters at least 16mm in height) with the wording: -

“It is illegal to sell adult fireworks to anyone under the age of 18” and “It is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to possess adult fireworks in a public place”.

Video cassette tapes/DVDs/computer games

You must not sell, rent or supply a video cassette or DVD unless the British Board of Film Classification has classified it.

You must not supply (including hiring out) a video cassette tape or DVD to a person who is under the age marked on the video cassette tape/DVD.

Most computer games are exempt from classification but if the game is classified then it must not be supplied to a person who is under the age marked on the game.

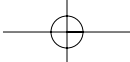
The age restrictions are **12,15** and **18**.

The maximum fine for selling or renting an age restricted cassette/DVD to a child under the specified age is £5000 and/or up to 6 months imprisonment.

Restricted 18 video cassettes and DVDs can be supplied only in licensed sex shops to persons 18 years of age and older.

Cigarette lighter fuel

You must not sell or supply cigarette lighter fuel or any lighter re-fill canister containing butane or any other substance containing butane to any person under the age of 18 years.



Intoxicating solvents

Examples are solvent-based glues, aerosols, dry cleaning fluid, correction fluid and thinners, marker pens and antifreeze.

You must not sell or supply any substance to a person under the age of 18 years, which you believe they may inhale for the purpose of causing intoxication.

Lottery tickets

You must not supply lottery tickets and scratch cards to children under 16 years of age.

You must display a notice in your shop warning against supplying lottery tickets and scratch cards to children under the age of 16 years.

You must not supply these items to a child even if they say they are for their parents or for another adult.

It is important to note that if you sell to a child then you may be breaching your contract with your supplier of the Lottery Terminal, which could ultimately result in the terminal being removed.

Air weapons

You must not sell or supply an air weapon to a person under the age of 17 years.

The penalty for selling or hiring an air weapon to a person under 17 years of age is up to 6 months imprisonment, a fine of up to £5000, or both.

Crossbows

You must not sell or hire a crossbow to a person under the age of 17 years.

The maximum penalty on summary conviction is 6 months imprisonment and or fine of £5000.

Knives

You must not sell knives to any person under the age of 16 years.

You cannot market a knife in a way that indicates it is suitable for combat or to encourage violent behaviour.

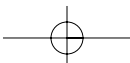
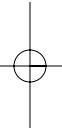
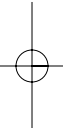
The maximum penalty on summary conviction is 6 months imprisonment or a fine of £5000, or both.

Aerosol paints

You must not sell an aerosol paint container to a person under the age of 16 years. Maximum penalty £2500.

Petrol

You must not sell petrol to any person under the age of 16 years. No person under the age of 18 years should be left in sole charge of a filling station.



Summary of age limits

16

Lottery tickets/scratch cards

16

Confectionery containing alcohol

16

Cigarettes including vending machines

16

Party poppers/caps/cracker snaps/novelty matches/serpents/throwdowns

17

Air weapons/crossbows

18

Cigarette lighter fuel/refill canisters containing butane

18

Solvents e.g. solvent based glues, marker pens, correction fluid

18

Fireworks including sparklers

18

Knives/aerosol paints/petrol

18

Alcohol

12 15 18 18 restricted

Videos / DVDs / computer games