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Guidance

How to quarantine when you arrive in England

What to do before and after you arrive in England, including staying at home and ordering coronavirus (COVID-19) tests.

From:
>   Department of Health and Social Care (https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health-and-social-care)

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>   England

Contents

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> From 17 May, countries not on the banned travel list ('red list') will be rated amber or green. Read Red, amber and green list rules for entering England (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/red-amber-and-green-list-rules-for-entering-england) to find out more.

Everyone allowed to enter England from outside the Common Travel Area (Ireland, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man) (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/common-travel-area-guidance) must:

- quarantine at home or in the place you're staying for 10 days (the day you arrive in the UK does not count towards your 10-day total – it is 'day 0')
- take a coronavirus (COVID-19) test on day 2 and day 8 of quarantining unless your job qualifies for a travel exemption (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules)
- follow the national restrictions (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do)

> You should follow separate guidance if you've been in a country where travel to the UK is banned (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/booking-and-staying-in-a-quarantine-hotel-when-you-arrive-in-england). These countries are sometimes called the 'red list'. See the red list countries.

You should follow separate advice if you need to quarantine in:

- Scotland (https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-public-health-checks-at-borders/pages/self-isolation/)
- Wales (https://gov.wales/how-self-isolate-when-you-travel-wales-coronavirus-covid-19)
- Northern Ireland (https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-advice)

From 17 May, the following guidance will only apply to people entering England from amber list countries.

What you must do before you travel

Everyone must:

- take a COVID-19 test and get a negative result during the 3 days before you travel
- book and pay for 2 COVID-19 travel tests to be taken on or before day 2 and on or after day 8 of your quarantine
- complete a passenger locator form (https://www.gov.uk/provide-journey-contact-details-before-travel-uk) with details of where you will home quarantine when you arrive and the booking reference number for your travel tests

Providing false or deliberately misleading information when filling out your passenger locator form is an offence punishable by imprisonment. You could be fined up to £10,000, imprisoned for up to 10 years or both if you do not provide accurate details about the countries you have visited in the 10 days before you arrived in the UK.

If you break the quarantine rules, you may face a penalty of up to £10,000.

If, within the current restrictions on travel within the Common Travel Area and the recommendation not to travel at all, you're travelling from somewhere in the Common Travel Area (Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man) and you have not left the Common Travel Area for the past 10 days, you do not need a test before leaving or to home quarantine and take tests after arriving.

Get a test before travelling

You must have proof of a negative COVID-19 test (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-people-travelling-to-england) to travel to England – this includes UK citizens.

If you arrive in England without proof you tested negative, you could be fined £500.

You must take the test in the 3 days before the service on which you will arrive in England departs. For example, if you travel directly to England on Friday, you must take the test on the Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday.

See the jobs with testing travel exemptions (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules#jobs-that-qualify-for-travel-exemptions) to find out whether your job qualifies for an exemption and what that exemption covers. You may need to show evidence of the work you will be doing at the border.

Book your travel tests for after you arrive

Before you travel you must book and pay for the 2 COVID-19 tests you have to take after you arrive in England. You must take a test on before day 2 for variant surveillance and on or after day 8 to check that you do not have COVID-19.

> Find out how to book your day 2 and day 8 travel tests, the providers offering the tests, and how much they cost (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/providers-of-day-2-and-day-8-coronavirus-testing-for-international-arrivals).

You will not be able to leave quarantine until you have received a negative result from your day 8 test and quarantined for 10 days.

If you do not take the day 2 and day 8 tests, you may face a penalty of up to £2,000. You do not need to take your second test if you receive a positive result to your first test.

Provide details of where you will quarantine when you arrive (passenger locator form)

Before you travel to England you must provide your journey, contact details and the address where you will quarantine by completing the passenger locator form (https://www.gov.uk/provide-journey-contact-details-before-travel-uk). You must do this within the 48 hours before you arrive.

You must provide a booking reference number for your day 2 and day 8 travel tests to complete your passenger locator form.

You may be asked to show these details to immigration officers when you arrive.

If you provide false or deliberately misleading information, you may be fined or imprisoned.

Quarantine for 10 days after you arrive

When you arrive in England, you must travel directly to the place you're staying and not leave until 10 days have passed.

The quarantine period is continuous from the day you arrive in England and lasts for the next 10 full consecutive days after the day you arrived up until 11:59pm day 10. For the purposes of counting days, the day after arrival is considered 'day 1'. This period is necessary because it can take up to 10 days for COVID-19 symptoms to appear.

Checks to make sure you're following quarantine rules

While you quarantine, NHS Test and Trace will contact you daily to confirm you're complying with the quarantine requirements. Read the Being contacted by NHS Test and Trace section of this page for more details.

In addition, you may be visited by someone carrying out checks on behalf of the government to make sure you're complying with your legal duty to quarantine. For more information, read Self-isolation compliance checks after international travel (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/self-isolation-compliance-checks-after-international-travel).

If you break the quarantine rules, you may face a penalty of up to £10,000.

What happens if you test positive

If you test positive for either the day 2 or day 8 test, you must quarantine for a further 10 days from the day after you took the test – you will receive further advice alongside your test results. If you are staying in a managed quarantine facility and test positive on either day 2 or day 8, you will need to quarantine for a further 10 days from the day after you took the test, but you will not be charged for extending your stay.

If your day 2 test shows that you have a variant of COVID-19 known as a 'variant of concern', you will get a further call and your contacts will be asked to be tested.

If you're travelling to England for less than 10 days

If you're travelling to England for less than 10 days, you will need to quarantine for the whole of your stay. You must travel directly to your place of quarantine when you arrive in England and directly from your place of quarantine to the port or airport when you leave. You should follow safer travel guidance (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers) and avoid public transport if possible.

Being contacted by NHS Test and Trace

While you quarantine, NHS Test and Trace will contact you daily, using text messages, email or phone.

All information you provide to NHS Test and Trace is held in strict confidence and will only be kept and used in line with the Data Protection Act 2018.

Contact tracers will:

- call you from 0300 123 2008
- send you text messages from 'NHS'
- ask for your full name and date of birth to confirm your identity

Contact tracers will never:

- ask you to dial a premium rate number to speak to us (for example, those starting 09 or 087)
- ask you to make any form of payment or purchase a product of any kind
- ask for any details about your bank account
- ask for your social media identities or login details, or those of your contacts
- ask you for any passwords or PINs, or ask you to set up any passwords or PINs over the phone
- disclose any of your personal or medical information to your contacts
- provide medical advice on the treatment of any potential COVID-19 symptoms
- ask you to download any software to your computer or ask you to hand over control of your computer, smartphone or tablet to anyone else
- ask you to access any website that does not belong to the government or NHS

How to travel to the place where you're quarantining

When you arrive in England, go straight to the place you're staying to quarantine.

Only use public transport (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers) if you have no other option.

If you do use public transport, you must take all safety precautions to prevent the risk of spreading the virus. These include:

- keeping your distance and observing social contact rules (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing)
- washing or sanitising your hands regularly
- wearing a face covering (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own) that covers your nose and mouth (this is required by law unless you're exempt)
- planning ahead and avoiding the busiest routes, as well as busy times like the rush hour

- downloading the NHS COVID-19 app (https://covid19.nhs.uk/) before you travel, if possible, and checking in on the app where you see official NHS COVID-19 QR code posters along your route (such as if you stop to buy food) and if you have to take a break – otherwise minimise all stops on your journey

If you have or develop COVID-19 symptoms

If you have COVID-19 symptoms, it's important that you do not travel by public transport.

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms when you're travelling to England, you should tell one of the crew on your plane, boat, train or bus. They'll let staff in the airport, port or station know, so they can tell you what you should do next when you arrive.

Long journeys to your quarantine accommodation

If you have a long journey within the UK to arrive at the place where you'll be quarantining, you may be able to stop overnight in accommodation where you can quarantine yourself from others before continuing your journey.

Before doing so, you should check that the overnight stay is necessary and permitted under the national restrictions (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do). If so, you must quarantine and provide the address of your overnight stop on your passenger locator form in addition to your declared accommodation address.

What you can and cannot do in quarantine

Quarantine can include staying:

- in your own home
- with friends or family
- in a hotel or other temporary accommodation that is not a managed quarantine hotel (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/booking-and-staying-in-a-quarantine-hotel-when-you-arrive-in-england)

You must quarantine in one place for the full quarantine period, where you can have food and other necessities delivered.

You must quarantine at the address you provided on the passenger locator form.

Visitors

You cannot have visitors, including friends and family, unless they're providing:

- emergency assistance
- care or assistance, including personal care (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-providing-unpaid-care)
- medical assistance
- veterinary services
- certain critical public services

Going out

You cannot leave the premises where you're in quarantine. You cannot go out to work or school. You cannot visit family or friends who do not live in the premises where you quarantine. You must only exercise inside the place where you're quarantining or garden. You cannot leave the place where you're quarantining to walk your dog. You will need to ask friends or relatives to help you with this.

You must not go shopping. If you need help buying groceries, other shopping or picking up medication, you should ask friends or relatives or order a delivery or ask for help from NHS Volunteer Responders.

You can leave to escape risk of harm (for example, domestic abuse).

Where your testing provider conducts the day 2 and day 8 tests at a testing facility you may leave the house for your test. Where your tests are delivered and self-administered, if there is no one in your household or bubble who can post the test for processing, you may leave the premises to post your test. If you have to leave the premises, you should follow the guidance on the How to travel to the place where you're quarantining section of this page.

Jobs that mean you do not have to quarantine

Some jobs exempt you from needing to quarantine and/or take a test. See the list of jobs that are exempt (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules).

Exceptional circumstances

You may also be allowed to leave your accommodation in exceptional circumstances. This includes needing to:

- get basic urgent necessities like food and medicines where you cannot arrange for these to be delivered
- travel to a COVID-19 testing site
- access critical public services including social services and services provided to victims (such as victims of crime)
- move to a different place for quarantine where you can no longer remain where you are

There may be other exceptional circumstances which permit you to leave your place of quarantine. You'll need to consider carefully whether your circumstances are exceptional circumstances that require you to leave your place of quarantine. You could get advice from a medical or other professional to discuss your circumstances so that you can decide whether, for example, you have a health condition or a disability that would be seriously exacerbated if you were not able to leave the accommodation (and its outdoor areas) where you're quarantining to take exercise.

Even if you have an exception, you must continue to follow the general restrictions that apply.

What to do if you get COVID-19 symptoms

You should order a test (https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test) if you develop at least one of these 3 COVID-19 symptoms at any point:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- you've lost your sense of smell or taste or it's changed

Rules for the people you stay with

The people you're staying with do not need to quarantine, unless:

- they travelled with you
- you or someone in the place where you're staying develop symptoms of COVID-19
- you get a positive test result for your day 2 or day 8 test

If any of these things apply, your household must quarantine with you, following the same rules and for the same length of time as you.

For example, if you get a positive test result from your day 2 test or your day 8 test, your household will need to quarantine with you immediately and continue for 10 days, with the day of the test counting as day 0.

How to quarantine safely

As far as possible, avoid contact with other people in the place where you're quarantining (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance) to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-stop-the-spread-of-coronavirus-covid-19). You should stay in a well ventilated room with an outside window that can be opened, separate from other people in your home.

If you're staying in a hotel or guest house, you must stay away from others who did not travel with you, so it's important that you do not use shared areas such as bars, restaurants, health clubs and sports facilities. Stay 2 metres apart from other people staying there at all times.

Support to help you quarantine

Quarantining may be difficult, frustrating or lonely, but there are things that you can do to help make staying at home easier (https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/).

NHS Volunteer Responders (https://nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk/services) are also available if:

- you need help collecting shopping or medication
- you'd like a friendly chat

Call 0808 196 3646 (8am to 8pm) to arrange support. You can arrange one-off support, or schedule more regular help while you're quarantining.

Testing in quarantine

You need to book your day 2 and day 8 COVID-19 tests before you travel to England. Find out how to book the tests, the providers offering the tests, and how much they cost (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/providers-of-day-2-and-day-8-coronavirus-testing-for-international-arrivals).

Day 2 test

You will need to take a COVID-19 test on or before day 2 of your quarantine period. The day of arrival in England will be treated as day 0. This first test is designed to help identify any potentially harmful variants of COVID-19 at the earliest opportunity. Tests will be taken in your own accommodation.

If you get a positive result from your day 2 test, you must quarantine for 10 days beginning the day after the test was taken.

If you get a positive result from your day 2 test, you do not need to take a test on day 8.

Day 8 test

You need to take a COVID-19 test on or after day 8, unless you got a positive result from your day 2 test.

If you get a positive test result from your day 8 test you will need to quarantine immediately and continue for 10 days. The day of the test counts as day 0.

Ending quarantine

If you've quarantined for 10 full days (where day 0 is the day you took the test or had symptoms) and received a negative result to both your day 2 and day 8 tests, and you are well, you may leave the place where you're quarantining.

You can see if you can end your quarantine early through the Test to Release scheme, see below.

Children under 5 do not need to take the day 2 or day 8 test

Ending your quarantine early: Test to Release

You can still use the Test to Release for international travel scheme (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel) if you have not been in or through any country that is on the travel ban red list in the 10 days before you arrive in England.

The scheme lets you choose to pay for a private COVID-19 test. If the result is negative, you can stop quarantining.

You cannot take a test to release test until you have been in England for 5 full days.

The scheme is voluntary and applies to those quarantining in England only.

If you do not want to opt into the Test to Release scheme, you will need to quarantine for 10 days.

Day 2 and day 8 testing while using Test to Release

If you use the Test to Release scheme, you must still take a test on or before day 2 and on or after day 8, unless you're exempt (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules).

Even if you get a negative result from your Test to Release and can end quarantine, you still need to take a test on or after day 8 to check that you do not have COVID-19.

Changing the place where you're quarantining

You are not allowed to change the place where you're quarantining except in very limited circumstances, including where:

- a legal obligation requires you to change address, such as when you're a child whose parents live separately, and you need to move between homes as part of a shared custody agreement
- it's necessary and permissible for you to stay overnight at accommodation before travelling to the place where you will be quarantining for the remaining period

If this happens, you must provide full details of each address where you will quarantine on the passenger locator form. If, in exceptional circumstances, you cannot remain where you're staying, you can move to a new place to quarantine and you must complete a new passenger locator form (https://www.gov.uk/provide-journey-contact-details-before-travel-uk) as soon as possible.

Leaving quarantine

If you've quarantined for 10 full days (where day 0 is the day you took the test or had symptoms) and received a negative result to both your day 2 and day 8 tests, and you are well, you may leave the place where you're quarantining.

You can also end your quarantine early through the Test to Release scheme.

Once you leave quarantine, you must still follow the national restrictions that apply.

Circumstances not covered by this guidance

If you're intending to travel to the UK in the next 7 days and facing a set of circumstances that are not covered by this guidance, email your enquiry to dhsctesttrace.customerfeedbackteam@nhs.net.

Make sure you include your date of travel.

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1. 7 May 2021
   Added a reference to the new rules on entering England after international travel from 17 May, including a link to the new guidance. Expanded the information on how NHS Test and Trace will contact you when you quarantine.
2. 22 April 2021
   Added a reference and link to the guidance 'Self-isolation compliance checks after international travel'.
3. 20 April 2021
   Updated content to reflect the changes in national restrictions. Clarified length of quarantine periods. Clarified circumstances in which you are permitted to leave home quarantine. Removed references to limitations on eligibility for hardship support.
4. 7 April 2021
   Update to clarify details on travelling to get your test swab taken and how to raise issues with your test product.

5. 19 March 2021

   Clarified information on quarantine time periods.

6. 16 March 2021

   Added that day-2 tests may be taken in-clinic with an organisation on the list of providers of day 2 and day 8 coronavirus testing for international arrivals.

7. 11 March 2021

   Updated to include a link to the list of providers for Day 2 and Day 8 testing and book a travel test package.

8. 15 February 2021

   Added section on testing in quarantine.

9. 13 February 2021

   Includes new link, to https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-jobs-with-testing-travel-exemptions

10. 12 February 2021

    Re-inserted link to booking platform as the service is live again.

11. 11 February 2021

    First published.

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