

## Plans for smoking law to stop UK youth buying cigarettes

England's young smokers could be denied access to cigarettes under a new policy by UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak. The proposal would raise the legal age for buying cigarettes by one year every year, starting from 2026. People must be 18 or over to legally buy cigarettes in the UK. But if the tough measure goes ahead, then anyone currently in their mid-teens may never be able to buy cigarettes.

The restriction would be implemented in England only, not the rest of the UK. The last time the minimum age limit for buying cigarettes was changed in the UK was in 2007, when it was increased from 16 to 18. Sunak's government said that the 2007 change that targeted the youth saw a 30% major reduction in 16- and 17-year-olds smoking.

In total, smoking rates have declined by 66% since the 1970s, but there are around 6.4 million UK citizens who still buy cigarettes. Meanwhile, vaping has tripled in popularity since 2000, officials say. Now, instead of adolescent children smoking, they are developing a vaping addiction. It is also illegal in the UK to sell vapes to under-18s.

Mr Sunak said he wants to end the UK's "biggest cause of preventable death and disease". He said four in five smokers start before they are 20, and that later "the vast majority try to quit". In a speech he gave about stopping teenagers from taking up smoking, he gave a slogan-like remark to "stop the start" of the deadly habit.

### Warm-up activities

Write a sentence including one of these words: *single*, *double*, or *triple*.

Compare smoking versus vaping – how are they similar and different?

Take a vote and discuss who would be in favour of, neutral to, or against a smoking ban.

### Reading comprehension questions

1. What is Rishi Sunak's proposal?
  2. Who will the smoking ban affect first?
  3. What part of the UK will the law affect?
  4. What happened in 2007?
  5. After 2007, the government saw a big cut in what?
  6. Have smoking numbers gone up or down since 1970?
  7. How much has vaping gone up since 2000?
  8. Can children buy vapes in the UK?
  9. Did Mr Sunak say 80% of smokers try to quit?
  10. How is Mr Sunak's "stop the start" comment described?
- 
- A. New young smokers.
  - B. Three times as much.
  - C. They've declined.
  - D. Annually raising the age a person can legally buy cigarettes.
  - E. The legal age limit for buying cigarettes was increased by two years.
  - F. People currently in the middle of their teenage years.
  - G. No; most try to stop he said.
  - H. Not legally.
  - I. As a catchy slogan.
  - J. Only England.

## Listening exercises

1. Listening comprehension reordering. Put the summary sentences A-J in the order you hear them 1-10 in the story.

- A. .... Smoking numbers have gone down since the 1970s.
- B. .... The UK Prime Minister wants to raise the legal smoking age.
- C. .... Children cannot buy vapes in the UK.
- D. .... Those in their mid-teens now will never be able to buy cigarettes.
- E. .... In 2007 the legal age limit was increased by two years.
- F. .... Vaping has gone up three times as much since 2000.
- G. .... Most smokers try to stop, Mr Sunak said.
- H. .... In a catchy comment, Mr Sunak said he wants to “stop the start”.
- I. .... The proposal only affects England.
- J. .... After 2007 there was a big cut in new young smokers.

2. Listening for pronunciation. Circle how many words in the clip start with the following letters (not including numbers or short function words such as *in* or *the*):

i 2 3 4

m 1 2 3

t 2 3 4

3. Dictation. Write the words you hear. Each word is read twice in the audio.

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_ c o i d a n i t d
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ n i z e c t i
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_ e d a y l d
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_ y d n e
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_ t a o m i y j r
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_ s e r a m e u
- 7. \_\_\_\_\_ i m n m i m u
- 8. \_\_\_\_\_ a r p s o l o p
- 9. \_\_\_\_\_ t c r n t i s o r i e
- 10. \_\_\_\_\_ o h u t y

### Phrases, synonyms, and antonyms match-up

Match the words on the left to their endings to make phrases from the text.

- |                |              |
|----------------|--------------|
| 1. preventable | A. majority  |
| 2. minimum     | B. addiction |
| 3. vaping      | C. 18s       |
| 4. major       | D. access    |
| 5. taking      | E. citizens  |
| 6. under-      | F. age       |
| 7. vast        | G. teens     |
| 8. denied      | H. death     |
| 9. mid-        | I. up        |
| 10. UK         | J. reduction |

Match the words on the left from the text to their synonyms.

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. tough     | A. comment |
| 2. implement | B. aim at  |
| 3. remark    | C. apply   |
| 4. target    | D. reduce  |
| 5. decline   | E. strong  |

Match the words on the left from the text to their antonyms.

- |               |            |
|---------------|------------|
| 1. major      | A. healthy |
| 2. deadly     | B. minor   |
| 3. adolescent | C. adult   |

**Grammar gap-fill cloze: attributive adjectives**

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| A. tough       | F. adolescent |
| B. preventable | G. deadly     |
| C. smoking     | H. minimum    |
| D. vast        | I. new        |
| E. young       | J. major      |

England's 1.\_\_\_\_\_ smokers could be denied access to cigarettes under a 2.\_\_\_\_\_ policy by UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak. The proposal would raise the legal age for buying cigarettes by one year every year, starting from 2026. People must be 18 or over to legally buy cigarettes in the UK. But if the 3.\_\_\_\_\_ measure goes ahead, then anyone currently in their mid-teens may never be able to buy cigarettes.

The restriction would be implemented in England only, not the rest of the UK. The last time the 4.\_\_\_\_\_ age limit for buying cigarettes was changed in the UK was in 2007, when it was increased from 16 to 18. Sunak's government said that the 2007 change that targeted the youth saw a 30% 5.\_\_\_\_\_ reduction in 16- and 17-year-olds smoking.

In total, 6.\_\_\_\_\_ rates have declined by 66% since the 1970s, but there are around 6.4 million UK citizens who still buy cigarettes. Meanwhile, vaping has tripled in popularity since 2000, officials say. Now, instead of 7.\_\_\_\_\_ children smoking, they are developing a vaping addiction. It is also illegal in the UK to sell vapes to under-18s.

Mr Sunak said he wants to end the UK's "biggest cause of 8.\_\_\_\_\_ death and disease". He said four in five smokers start before they are 20, and that later "the 9.\_\_\_\_\_ majority try to quit". In a speech he gave about stopping teenagers from taking up smoking, he gave a slogan-like remark to "stop the start" of the 10.\_\_\_\_\_ habit.

### Vocabulary multiple-choice cloze

England's young smokers could be 1.\_\_\_\_\_ access to cigarettes under a new policy by UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak. The 2.\_\_\_\_\_ would raise the legal age for buying cigarettes by one year every year, starting from 2026. People must be 18 or over to legally buy cigarettes in the UK. But if the tough 3.\_\_\_\_\_ goes ahead, then anyone currently in their mid-teens may never be able to buy cigarettes.

The 4.\_\_\_\_\_ would be implemented in England only, not the rest of the UK. The last time the 5.\_\_\_\_\_ age limit for buying cigarettes was changed in the UK was in 2007, when it was increased from 16 to 18. Sunak's government said that the 2007 change that targeted the 6.\_\_\_\_\_ saw a 30% major reduction in 16- and 17-year-olds smoking.

In total, smoking rates have declined by 66% since the 1970s, but there are around 6.4 million UK 7.\_\_\_\_\_ who still buy cigarettes. Meanwhile, vaping has tripled in popularity since 2000, officials say. Now, instead of adolescent children smoking, they are developing a vaping 8.\_\_\_\_\_. It is also illegal in the UK to sell vapes to under-18s.

Mr Sunak said he wants to end the UK's "biggest cause of preventable death and disease". He said four in five smokers start before they are 20, and that later "the vast 9.\_\_\_\_\_ try to quit". In a speech he gave about stopping teenagers from taking up smoking, he gave a slogan-like remark to "stop the start" of the 10.\_\_\_\_\_ habit.

- |                 |                |                |                |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. A. defined   | B. confirmed   | C. denied      | D. credited    |
| 2. A. properly  | B. channel     | C. simply      | D. proposal    |
| 3. A. medical   | B. third       | C. measure     | D. freedom     |
| 4. A. consumer  | B. restriction | C. institution | D. retail      |
| 5. A. minimum   | B. extended    | C. eventually  | D. mixed       |
| 6. A. truth     | B. source      | C. rough       | D. youth       |
| 7. A. officials | B. citizens    | C. billions    | D. chiefs      |
| 8. A. approach  | B. addiction   | C. account     | D. arrangement |
| 9. A. highly    | B. annual      | C. majority    | D. limits      |
| 10. A. deadly   | B. appeal      | C. healing     | D. steady      |

## Writing cloze

Spell the words 1-15 correctly. The first letters of 1-15 are the correct starting letters.

- |               |                |               |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1. dneide     | 6. mimnimu     | 11. acoidnitd |
| 2. pyloic     | 7. yohut       | 12. ilalelg   |
| 3. parsolop   | 8. deledicn    | 13. mtaoiyjr  |
| 4. mseraeu    | 9. cniszeti    | 14. soagnl    |
| 5. rtcrtisoie | 10. ptpiolryua | 15. deayld    |

England's young smokers could be 1. \_\_\_\_\_ access to cigarettes under a new 2. \_\_\_\_\_ by UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak. The 3. \_\_\_\_\_ would raise the legal age for buying cigarettes by one year every year, starting from 2026. People must be 18 or over to legally buy cigarettes in the UK. But if the tough 4. \_\_\_\_\_ goes ahead, then anyone currently in their mid-teens may never be able to buy cigarettes.

The 5. \_\_\_\_\_ would be implemented in England only, not the rest of the UK. The last time the 6. \_\_\_\_\_ age limit for buying cigarettes was changed in the UK was in 2007, when it was increased from 16 to 18. Sunak's government said that the 2007 change that targeted the 7. \_\_\_\_\_ saw a 30% major reduction in 16- and 17-year-olds smoking.

In total, smoking rates have 8. \_\_\_\_\_ by 66% since the 1970s, but there are around 6.4 million UK 9. \_\_\_\_\_ who still buy cigarettes. Meanwhile, vaping has tripled in 10. \_\_\_\_\_ since 2000, officials say. Now, instead of adolescent children smoking, they are developing a vaping 11. \_\_\_\_\_. It is also 12. \_\_\_\_\_ in the UK to sell vapes to under-18s.

Mr Sunak said he wants to end the UK's "biggest cause of preventable death and disease". He said four in five smokers start before they are 20, and that later "the vast 13. \_\_\_\_\_ try to quit". In a speech he gave about stopping teenagers from taking up smoking, he gave a 14. \_\_\_\_\_-like remark to "stop the start" of the 15. \_\_\_\_\_ habit.



### Fill in missing letters

Fill in the text with these five missing letters: c h v w z

England's young smokers \_ould be denied a\_\_ess to \_igarettes under a ne\_ poli\_y by UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak. T\_e proposal \_ould raise t\_e legal age for buying \_igarettes by one year e\_ery year, starting from 2026. People must be 18 or o\_er to legally buy \_igarettes in t\_e UK. But if t\_e toug\_ measure goes a\_ead, t\_en anyone \_urrently in t\_eir mid-teens may ne\_er be able to buy \_igarettes.

T\_e restri\_tion \_ould be implemented in England only, not t\_e rest of t\_e UK. T\_e last time t\_e minimum age limit for buying \_igarettes \_as \_\_anged in t\_e UK \_as in 2007, \_\_en it \_as in\_reased from 16 to 18. Sunak's go\_ernment said t\_at t\_e 2007 \_\_ange t\_at targeted t\_e yout\_ sa\_ a 30% major redu\_tion in 16- and 17-year-olds smoking.

In total, smoking rates \_a\_e de\_lined by 66% sin\_e t\_e 1970s, but t\_ere are around 6.4 million UK \_iti\_ens \_\_o still buy \_igarettes. Mean\_\_ile, \_aping \_as tripled in popularity sin\_e 2000, offi\_ials say. No\_, instead of adoles\_ent \_\_ildren smoking, t\_ey are de\_eloping a \_aping addi\_tion. It is also illegal in t\_e UK to sell \_apes to under-18s.

Mr Sunak said \_e \_ants to end t\_e UK's "biggest \_ause of pre\_entable deat\_ and disease". \_e said four in fi\_e smokers start before t\_ey are 20, and t\_at later "t\_e \_ast majority try to quit". In a spee\_\_ \_e ga\_e about stopping teenagers from taking up smoking, \_e ga\_e a slogan-like remark to "stop t\_e start" of t\_e deadly \_abit.

## Cool-down discussion, keywords, and game

Discussion questions:

- What would you say to someone to persuade them to stop smoking?
- What is the legal age to buy cigarettes in your country and should it be raised?
- Why is vaping becoming increasingly popular?
- Regarding changing something, what does the phrase “a breath of fresh air” mean?
- Regarding stopping something, what does the phrase “cold turkey” mean?

CEFR B2 10 lesson keywords:

Used in this lesson as an adjective (adj), noun (n), or verb (v).

addiction (n), citizen (n), deadly (adj), deny (v), majority (n), measure (n), minimum (adj), proposal (n), restriction (n), youth (n)

Language game:

In the table below, add one word to each box that matches both the category and the beginning letter, e.g. a flavour beginning with *S* is *strawberry*.

	S	T	O	P
A flavour				
A good or bad habit				
Something cheap				
A word ending in <i>-er</i>				
Something used by hand				

## Answers

### Page 3 Reading comprehension questions

1D, 2F, 3J, 4E, 5A, 6C, 7B, 8H, 9G, 10I

### Page 4 Listening exercises

1. Listening comprehension reordering: 1B, 2D, 3I, 4E, 5J, 6A, 7F, 8C, 9G, 10H
2. Listening for pronunciation: i 2 implemented increased, m 2 minimum major, t 2 time targeted
3. Dictation: 1. addiction, 2. citizen, 3. deadly, 4. deny, 5. majority, 6. measure, 7. minimum, 8. proposal, 9. restriction, 10. youth

### Page 5 Phrases, synonyms, and antonyms match-up

Phrases 1H, 2F, 3B, 4J, 5I, 6C, 7A, 8D, 9G, 10E

Synonyms 1E, 2C, 3A, 4B, 5D

Antonyms 1B, 2A, 3C

### Page 6 Grammar gap-fill cloze: attributive adjectives

1E, 2I, 3A, 4H, 5J, 6C, 7F, 8B, 9D, 10G

### Page 7 Vocabulary multiple-choice cloze

1C, 2D, 3C, 4B, 5A, 6D, 7B, 8B, 9C, 10A

### Page 8 Writing cloze

1. denied, 2. policy, 3. proposal, 4. measure, 5. restriction, 6. minimum, 7. youth, 8. declined, 9. citizens, 10. popularity, 11. addiction, 12. illegal, 13. majority, 14. slogan, 15. deadly

For interactive versions of these exercises and the audio files, visit:

<https://www.everybitenglish.com/lesson-20231020-upper-intermediate-b2-smoking-laws>

Thanks for using this lesson!