

# Those exempt from wearing a face mask in the UK

According to the official Government guidance, the following groups are not required to wear a face-covering or mask while using public transport or in a shop:

- A child under the age of 11
- An employee of the transport operator, when they are acting in the course of their employment
- Any other person providing services to the transport operator, under arrangements made with the transport operator, who is providing those services
- A constable or police community support officer acting in the course of their duty
- An emergency responder such as a paramedic or fire officer acting in the course of their duty
- An official, for example, a border force officer, acting in the course of their duties
- If you are allocated a cabin, berth or other similar accommodation, at any time when you are in that accommodation, either alone, or only with members of your own household or a linked household
- If you are on board public transport but remain in your private vehicle, for example on a car ferry

Failure to adhere to the rules could result a £60 on-the-spot fine in Scotland and a £100 fine in England.

There are also a series of factors which the Government describes as a “reasonable excuse”, which also means you don’t have to wear a mask:

- If you have a physical or mental illness or impairment, or a disability that means you cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering
- If putting on, wearing or removing a face covering would cause you severe distress
- If you are travelling with, or providing assistance to, someone who relies on lip reading to communicate
- If you are travelling to avoid injury or escape the risk of harm, and you do not have a face covering with you
- If you need to remove it during your journey to avoid harm or injury or the risk of harm or injury to yourself or others
- If you need to eat, drink, or take medication you can remove your face covering
- If you are asked to remove your face covering by a police officer or other official, for example to check your railcard
- According to the website “Autism Eye”, these rules around “reasonable excuses” also cover passengers with autism.