

# UK smoking crackdown is 'nuts', says Johnson

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[theday.co.uk/uk-smoking-crackdown-is-nuts-says-johnson-4](https://theday.co.uk/uk-smoking-crackdown-is-nuts-says-johnson-4)



*Weary: Historically, many child labourers smoked, like these newspaper boys in Missouri in 1910.*

## Should we welcome a smoking ban? British politicians want to stop anyone born in 2009 or later from smoking. But how much should politicians control our lives?

### What's happening?

*Last night, police arrested a 44-year old. He confessed to lighting a cigarette.*

This could be England's future. This week politicians voted to ban smoking. If it passes into law, the ban will make it **illegal** for anyone born in 2009 or later to buy **tobacco** products.

### Find out more

Youth smoking has a long history. Up to 90% of smokers worldwide begin as teenagers.

But soon, if you are 15 or younger, you will never be allowed to smoke. It is hoped that eventually, no-one will smoke at all.

The law is supported by the leaders of both major **political parties**. But it has sparked debate about the sort of country people want. Former **prime minister** Boris Johnson moaned: "The party of **Winston Churchill** wants to ban cigars? It's just mad." Winston Churchill was a famous smoker.

Almost everyone knows that smoking is harmful. It costs lots of money to treat smoking-related health problems, and smoke is also bad for the **atmosphere**.

But some say people should still have the freedom to smoke if they want to. They worry that if politicians can ban smoking, they could also ban other things: alcohol, driving, perhaps even praying.

Yet many think it is a good thing that politicians are stepping in. Smokers find it very difficult to stop, even though they know it is bad. The **government** can stop future **generations** from facing this problem.

Should we welcome a smoking ban?

## Some say

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Yes! We all know how bad smoking is for your health. The government can make sure that young people never harm their health this way.

## Others think

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No! We should be allowed to make our own choices, even if they are bad for us. If the government wants to stop smoking, they can put up **taxes** so cigarettes cost more to buy.

## Some people say

*"Smoking is hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain, and dangerous to the lungs."*

**King James I (1566 – 1625), monarch of England and Scotland**

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*What do you think?*

## Six steps to discovery

### 1. Connect

**How do you feel about this story?** - Do you know anyone who smokes?

### 2. Wonder

**What questions do you have?** - For example: When did people start smoking?

### 3. Investigate

**What are the facts?** - Pick out one thing we know for certain about this story and one thing we cannot say for sure.

### 4. Construct

**What is your point of view?** - Imagine you are the leader of your country. Would you ban smoking?

### 5. Express

**What do others believe?** - In pairs, discuss other things that you think should one day be banned.

### 6. Reflect

**What might happen next?** - Design a poster for a campaign spreading awareness of the upcoming smoking ban.

## Glossary

**Illegal** - Against the law.

**Tobacco** - A substance smoked in cigarettes. It contains nicotine, which is addictive.

**Political parties** - A group of people with a broadly similar set of political ideas, who work together to get themselves elected.

**Prime minister** - A prime minister is the head of government in a country with a parliamentary system.

**Winston Churchill** - The British prime minister during World War Two, and later from 1951 to 1955.

**Atmosphere** - The layer of gases surrounding a planet or moon, held in place by that planet's gravity. Small planets and moons have weak gravitational fields, and therefore only a very thin atmosphere.

**Government** - The group of people who govern - or lead - the country.

**Taxes** - There are three main ways for governments to obtain money: print it, borrow it or collect taxes.