

# Smoking statistics

## Adults

Just under 1 in 5 (19%) of adults in Great Britain now smoke: 20% of men and 17% of women. This means there are about **9.6 million adult smokers** in Great Britain.

Smoking rates have more than halved since 1974 when 51% of men and 41% of women smoked.

Smoking prevalence is **highest in the 25-34 age group** (24%) and lowest amongst those aged 60 and over (11%).

More than half (59%) of all adults report that they have never smoked.

**Smoking rates are much higher among poorer people.** In 2014, 13% of adults in managerial and professional occupations smoked compared with 30% in routine and manual occupations.

## Quitting smoking

Surveys show that about two-thirds of current smokers would like to stop smoking but only about 30%-40% make a quit attempt in a given year.

## Addiction

60% of smokers say they would find it hard to last a whole day without smoking and 70% have their first cigarette of the day within one hour of waking.

## Deaths from smoking

**About half of all regular cigarette smokers will eventually be killed by their addiction.**

Every year, around **96,000 people in the UK die from diseases caused by smoking.**

Smoking accounts for over one-third of respiratory deaths, over one-quarter of cancer deaths, and about one-seventh of cardiovascular disease deaths.

## Young people

**Two-thirds of smokers start before age 18.**

Of those who try smoking between one-third and one-half will become regular smokers.

It is illegal to sell cigarettes to any person under the age of 18.

## Regional & national smoking rates

There is some variation in smoking rates by region in England and between countries within the UK.

- In 2014, the North East of England had the highest prevalence (19.9%) while the South East had the lowest at 16.6%.

In 2014, adult smoking rates by country were:

- England 19%
- Scotland 20%
- Wales 20%
- N.Ireland 22%

## Government revenue and expenditure

In 2014-15 the Government received **£9.5 billion** in revenue from tobacco tax (excluding VAT).

In 2012-13 the Government spent £87.7m on services to help people stop smoking and a further £58.1m on stop smoking medication.

## Tobacco smoke

**Contains over 7,000 chemical compounds**, present as either gases or as tiny particles. These include carbon monoxide, arsenic, formaldehyde, cyanide, benzene, toluene and acrolein.