Staying safe and making good choices around Bonfire Night

Easy Read

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Staying safe and making good choices around Bonfire Night

Bonfire Night is the 5 November.

It can be fun, but for some people it is scary and upsetting.

Loud bangs and bright flashes can be really hard for some people to see or hear, if:

- it reminds them of difficult experiences they have had
- they have autism
- they have health conditions that affect how their nervous system deals with noise and bright images

The emergency services are there to keep everyone safe.

It is harder for emergency workers to do their job if people:

- do not use fireworks properly
- start fires on purpose
- attack emergency workers

It means that emergency workers might not be able to help in real emergencies like house fires or road accidents.

Fireworks and bonfires can be very frightening and dangerous for animals.

Pets and other animals can:

- panic
- get injured
- become seriously ill or die

You can still have fun and enjoy fireworks.

But think about how fireworks might affect other people and always stay safe.

Fireworks in Scotland: the law

Scotland has strict rules about fireworks to keep people safe and have less accidents.

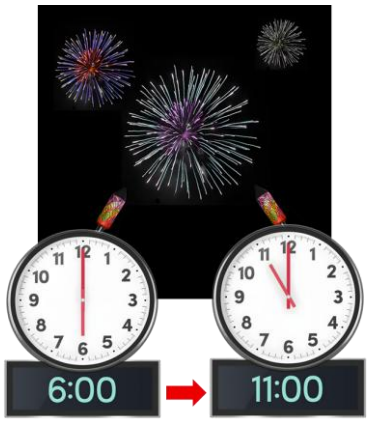
Who can buy fireworks?

You must be 18 or older to buy most fireworks.

Shops can only sell fireworks at certain times of the year, like around the dates of:

- Bonfire Night
- New Year
- Chinese New Year
- Diwali

When you can use fireworks



You can only set off fireworks between 6pm and 11pm.

On Bonfire Night the time limit is up until midnight.

On New Year's Eve, Chinese New Year, and Diwali, you can use fireworks until 1am.

Where you can use fireworks

You can usually set them off in private places like your garden, but not if you are in a Firework Control Zone – see page 7.

Misuse offences

Misuse means using something in the wrong way.

An **offence** is something that is illegal or against the law.

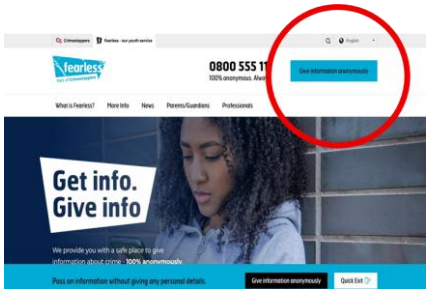
It is an offence to:

- have or use fireworks if you are under the age of 18
- sell, buy or give fireworks to anyone under 18 apart from category F1 fireworks like party poppers

- set off fireworks in a restricted area or at times when it is not allowed
- throw or set off fireworks in a public place like a street, park or road

- cause suffering to animals

If you know that someone is using fireworks in a way that breaks the law you can tell Fearless without giving your name.



Go to fearless.org and click on the blue rectangle in the top right corner.

This takes you to a page where you can fill in an online form.

In an emergency always call 999.

Extra powers

Local councils can set up special areas called Firework Control Zones where fireworks are **banned**.

Banned means they cannot be used.

In these zones you cannot set off fireworks anywhere - even in your own garden - unless they are Category 1 fireworks like sparklers, crackers, or party poppers.

Big, organised public firework displays are still allowed so people can enjoy fireworks safely.

The police make sure people are following the rules and are not using fireworks in a Firework Control Zone.

Dispersal zones

Dispersal means to get people to leave an area.

Police Scotland can create Dispersal Zones in areas where **antisocial behaviour** is a problem.

Antisocial behaviour means doing things that make other people feel:

- frightened
- worried
- stressed

In these zones police can tell groups of 2 or more people to leave if they are:

- hanging about
- behaving in an antisocial way

People who do not leave the area or come back before 24 hours have passed can be arrested.

How to check if you are in a Zone

Firework Control Zones

Check your local council website or their social media for maps and updates.

Dispersal zones

Check the website and social media of Police Scotland or look out for signs in your local area.

A Firework Control Zone and a Dispersal Zone can be 2 different places or they can be in the same area.

These rules are in place to keep everyone in our community safe and free from harm and fear.

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