

COVID-19 ADVICE

Angling and the Law in England under Covid rules



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The rules covering the Covid restrictions are set out in the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations 2020. These have the effect of law and penalties are in place for non-compliance. Alongside the regulations is [Government guidance](#) which, whilst not statutory, assists us to understand what we should be doing.

The Angling Trust is the Government recognised national governing body for all forms of recreational fishing and is tasked by Sport England with providing these formal guidelines for the benefit of anglers, angling clubs and fisheries. [These can be found here](#)

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FISHING IS PERMITTED

From May 13th, 2020, when the first lockdown rules were relaxed, fishing and some other forms of outdoor recreation were specified as a 'reasonable excuse to leave home'. This has been maintained throughout the introduction of a second lockdown and the current four-tier system of restrictions. The Tier 4 guidance clearly states that it is permissible to be '*outdoors or visit some public outdoor places, such as parks, the countryside accessible to the public, public gardens public gardens (whether or not you pay to enter them) or outdoor sports facilities*' for the purpose of exercise and recreation.

WHO CAN YOU FISH WITH?

In Tier 4 the guidance states that you can '*continue to do unlimited exercise alone, or in a public outdoor place with your household, support bubble, or with one other person if you maintain social distancing*'.

In Tiers 1, 2 & 3 the Rule of Six applies although social distancing must be maintained at all times.

WHERE CAN YOU GO FISHING?

In all tiers we are advising anglers to limit their travel to go fishing. In Tiers 3 & 4 there is strong advice not enter or leave these areas and although this has not been written into the regulations we are urging anglers to follow the guidance as far as is practically possible. The guidance states that you can leave home for the purpose of '*spending time or exercising outdoors. This should be done locally wherever possible...*'

IN WHICH TIERS IS MATCH FISHING PERMISSIBLE?

Subject to the travel guidance match fishing can lawfully take place in Tiers 1, 2 & 3. However, the new regulations mean that any form of competition including more than two people from different households is prohibited in Tier 4.

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CAN YOU FISH AT NIGHT?

From May 2020 no time limits have been placed on how long you can fish for although you should return home at the end of your trip.

The guidance states *"You can continue to do unlimited exercise alone, or in a public outdoor place with your household, support bubble, or with one other person..."*

The most recent regulations covering all tiers do not impose time limits on outdoor recreation so night fishing remains permissible. This has been confirmed in writing to the Angling Trust by both DEFRA and DCMS.

COMPLIANCE

The Angling Trust guidelines have the benefit of legal expertise and have been circulated to all English police forces. However, anglers should be aware that the new Tier 4 regulations give a specific power to police constables and police support officers (PCSOs), where they *'consider that a person is outside the place where they are living' in contravention of the restriction on movement, to 'direct that person to return to the place where they are living'.*

If challenged we would recommend that anglers refer to these guidelines in any discussion that may ensue. However, it is possible that a police officer may take a different view. Failure to comply with a *'direction'* could make you liable for a fine and in these circumstances we would encourage full compliance. If we feel that anglers have been treated unreasonably we reserve the right to make direct representations to the relevant Police Force Area.

Further Information: admin@anglingtrust.net

Thank You and Stay Safe

Angling Trust
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HELP AND SUPPORT

We're here to help you get
continue fishing safely

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VISIT OUR SUPPORT HUB

www.anglingtrust.net/covid-19

