

YOUR GUIDE TO CANNABIS IN THE UK



What is cannabis?

Cannabis is a product of the marijuana plant. It contains chemicals called cannabinoids. One of these, tetrahydrocannabinol (THC for short), makes you feel stoned.

You will see cannabis in three forms:

1. Grass – looks like dried herbs and green-brown in colour.
2. Hash – a sticky brown substance. Soft or hard. Black or brown in colour.
3. Cannabis oil – sticky light-coloured liquid. It is rare to use it as an oil.

How it is used

1. Smoked with tobacco and rolled into a cigarette. Or, burned in a water pipe or 'bong'.
2. Inhaled in a vaporiser.
3. Eaten as an ingredient in a biscuit (cookies) or cake.

How cannabis makes you feel

Using cannabis affects people differently. It can make you feel relaxed, happy, 'chilled out', anxious, paranoid and confused.

How to reduce the risks of using cannabis

To stay safe, it is best to stop using cannabis. If you do not want to stop, follow this advice:

Do not mix cannabis with tobacco: it causes serious health problems.

Do not hold cannabis smoke inside you: bad chemicals stick to your lungs.

Do not use a cigarette filter: more tar collects in your lungs.

Do not use over three papers to roll a cigarette – it is unhealthy to breathe in burnt paper.

Do not use plastic bottles, rubber hoses, PVC, foil or aluminium as part of your water pipe – glass, steel or brass pipes are safer.

Do not drive or operate machinery – so you do not have an accident.

Be in control

If you have a bad time with cannabis this advice can help you to be in control.

Use a vaporiser rather than smoke cannabis because it releases the THC but not the tar.

Have something sweet to eat or drink because cannabis lowers blood-sugar.

Have a break from it or stop using it or use less if you do not feel good.

Avoid places and people where you normally use cannabis if you are trying to use less or stop using it.

The law

Cannabis is a Class B drug. That means it is illegal to possess, produce or supply.

Possession can result in 5 years in prison, an unlimited fine, or both. Supply and production can result in up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both.

It is illegal to drive with over the permitted level of cannabis in your system. If you test positive, you can receive a driving ban, a large fine, or go to prison.

Some police forces will avoid giving someone a criminal record for possession when it is for personal use.

If you are under 18, the police are allowed to tell your parents or carers.

A persistent offender will be prosecuted.

Find out about penalties here:

gov.uk/penalties-drug-possession-dealing

