

Statistical bulletin

Adult smoking habits in the UK: 2025

Cigarette smoking habits among adults in the UK, including how many people smoke, differences between population groups, changes over time and use of e-cigarettes.

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1 . Overview

Smoking

Around 4.9 million people aged 18 years and over (9.8% of the population) smoked cigarettes in the UK in 2025. This is a decrease from 2024 (10.6%), which follows a long-term downward trend. The proportion of current smokers has fallen by 10.4 percentage points since this data time series began in 2011 (20.2%), based on our estimates from the Annual Population Survey (APS).

Those aged 45 to 54 years had the highest proportion of current smokers (12.4%). Those aged 18 to 24 years have had the largest reduction in smoking prevalence among all age groups (18.5 percentage points) between 2011 (25.7%) and 2025 (7.2%).

E-cigarettes

In Great Britain, around 5.4 million adults aged 16 years and over (9.9%) used an e-cigarette daily or occasionally in 2025, based on the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN). While the number and percentage of adults using e-cigarettes has remained similar to 2024 (5.4 million and 10.0%), overall there has been an upward trend in the proportion of e-cigarette users since 2020 (6.4%).

In 2025, the percentage of current e-cigarette users continued to be higher than current smokers according to the OPN (9.9% and 8.7%, respectively). This equates to around:

- 5.4 million current e-cigarette users
- 4.8 million current smokers

This is a continuation of the trend seen in 2024, when e-cigarette use overtook cigarette smoking for the first time.

E-cigarette use was highest among people aged 25 to 34 years in Great Britain, with 16.4% using e-cigarettes daily or occasionally.

2 . How to use these statistics

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) collects data on adult smoking habits through two main surveys.

The Annual Population Survey (APS) gives headline indicators of the number of adults aged 18 years and over who smoke in the UK. The Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) collects information on e-cigarette use among those aged 16 years and over in Great Britain (excluding Northern Ireland), as well as smoking habits and the intention to quit smoking.

With these statistics, you can:

- find smoking estimates, all of which fall within a range (or [confidence interval](#)) that shows the level of [uncertainty](#) around the estimate
- compare trends over time, but be aware that some declines, especially during 2020, could be because of sample sizes and methods changes
- examine trends in smoking habits by local authority, but we advise focusing on longer-term trends because short-term trends can vary more

With these statistics, you cannot:

- compare smoking in the UK, from the Annual Population Survey (APS), with smoking and vaping in Great Britain, from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN); the surveys cover different geographical areas and define a current smoker differently

3 . Smoking by area

According to the Annual Population Survey (APS), in the UK in 2025, the percentage of current smokers was:

- 9.5% in England
- 11.1% in Wales
- 11.4% in Scotland
- 9.9% in Northern Ireland

Smoking prevalence fell in all four nations between 2024 and 2025.

Figure 1: Smoking prevalence continued to fall in all countries of the UK in 2025

Current smokers as a percentage of all persons aged 18 years and over, UK, 2011 to 2025

Notes:

1. Revised weighting was applied to estimates for 2020 to 2023 to account for methodological changes introduced in 2020. Estimates from 2024 onwards are produced using the standard weighting approach.
2. For Northern Ireland, the estimate over time has been more variable because of the smaller sample size.

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Smoking by local authority

The local authorities with the highest prevalence of current smokers in the five-year period 2021 to 2025 were:

- Fenland with 18.7%
- Blackpool and Kingston upon Hull both with 18.5%

Although Fenland, Blackpool and Kingston upon Hull had the highest prevalence of current smokers, smoking prevalence fell in these areas between 2019 to 2023 and 2021 to 2025, decreasing by:

- 2.2 percentage points in Fenland, from 20.9%
- 1.7 percentage points in Blackpool, from 20.2%
- 0.7 percentage points in Kingston upon Hull, from 19.2%

The local authorities with the lowest prevalence of current smokers in the five-year period 2021 to 2025 were:

- Epsom and Ewell with 4.3%
- Woking with 4.5%

Figure 2: Explore the average prevalence of current smokers by local authority of the UK

Current smokers as a percentage of all persons aged 18 years and over, UK, 2021 to 2025 average

Notes:

1. Averages presented are five-year averages, calculated using data from 2021 to 2025, where available.
2. Five-year estimates have ranges of uncertainty (confidence intervals), which are available in the data download.
3. Estimates for Cumberland, North Yorkshire, Somerset, and Westmorland and Furness are based on 2025 data only. Estimates for North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire are based on data from 2022 to 2025.
4. Geographical classifications are based on the Annual Population Survey (APS) geography available at the time of survey processing.
5. Official smoking prevalence estimates for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland should be taken from devolved health or national surveys.

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4 . Smoking by personal characteristics

Sex

Men were more likely to smoke than women in the UK in 2025, as seen in previous years. Around 2.8 million men (11.3%) and around 2.1 million women (8.2%) reported being current smokers.

Age

When considering the population by age:

- those aged 45 to 54 years were most likely to smoke (12.4%)
- those aged 18 to 24 years, and 65 years and over were least likely to smoke (7.2%)
- among all age groups, those aged 18 to 24 years have seen the largest reduction in smoking prevalence between 2011 and 2025, from 25.7% to 7.2%

In 2011, those aged 25 to 34 years were most likely to smoke (25.8%). By 2021, these people had moved into the 35 to 44 years age group and became the second-most likely to smoke (14.3%).

In 2025, they would be aged between 39 and 48 years. This means that some people fell within the 45 to 54 years age group, which had the highest prevalence of smoking in that year.

Figure 3: People aged 45 to 54 years were most likely to smoke in 2025

Percentage who were current smokers, all persons by age group, UK, 2011 to 2025

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5 . Smoking by socio-economic characteristics

Employment status and occupation group

When considering the UK population aged 18 years and over by employment status, in 2025:

- those classed as unemployed were the most likely to smoke (16.5%)
- one in nine people who were economically inactive were current smokers (11.1%)
- those in paid employment were least likely to smoke (8.7%)

When considering current smoking habits by occupation group, as classified by the [National Statistics Socio-economic Classification \(NS-SEC\)](#), among people aged 18 to 64 years in 2025:

- "routine and manual" occupations had the highest percentage of current smokers (16.9%)
- "managerial and professional" occupations had the lowest percentage of current smokers (5.9%)

This follows the same trend since data collection began in 2014.

Figure 4: Smoking prevalence continued to be higher in routine and manual occupations than in managerial and professional occupations in 2025

Percentage who were current smokers by occupation group, all persons aged 18 to 64 years, UK, 2014 to 2025

Notes:

1. Occupation is defined using the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC).
2. We have restricted data to those of working age, aged between 18 and 64 years.

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Qualifications

People aged 18 years and over with fewer formal qualifications were also more likely to be smokers. In 2025:

- 24.8% of people with no qualifications were current smokers
- 14.9% of people who had GCSE grades A* to C or equivalent were smokers
- 4.7% of those reporting a degree or equivalent as their highest qualification were smokers

Figure 5: The highest percentage of current smokers was among those who reported they had no qualifications

Percentage who were current smokers by highest level of educational attainment, all people aged 18 years and over, UK, 2014 to 2025

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A wider range of data on the characteristics of cigarette smokers from the Annual Population Survey (APS) is available in our [accompanying dataset](#). This includes estimates by:

- relationship status
- housing tenure
- country of birth
- ethnicity
- religion

6 . Quitting smoking

In the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN), the percentage of adults in Great Britain aged 16 years and over who said they smoked cigarettes decreased from 9.1% in 2024 to 8.7% in 2025.

This is lower than the Annual Population Survey (APS) and it is not the official estimate for smoking prevalence. However, this continues the downward trend also seen in the APS, which covers the UK and adults aged 18 years and over.

Of those who had ever smoked regularly, 74.1% said they had quit smoking in 2025, down from 74.2% in 2024.

The percentage of current e-cigarette users (daily or occasional) was higher than the number of current smokers in 2025 (9.9% and 8.7%, respectively). This equates to around:

- 5.4 million current e-cigarette users
- 4.8 million current smokers

The higher percentage of e-cigarette users than current smokers is a continuation of the trend seen in 2024, when ecigarette use overtook cigarette smoking for the first time.

Figure 6: The percentage of e-cigarette users remained higher than current smokers in Great Britain in 2025

Percentage of current cigarette smokers, those who have quit smoking, and current e-cigarette users, all people aged 16 years and over, Great Britain, 1974 to 2025

Notes:

1. Definitions of "current cigarette smokers" and "cigarette smokers who have quit" are available in [Section 8: Definitions](#)
2. Data collection on e-cigarette usage started in 2014; prior to this, no information on e-cigarette use was collected.
3. From 2020 onwards, current e-cigarette users can define themselves as either daily or occasional users.
4. OPN data collection was monthly before March 2020. It changed to weekly from March 2020 to July 2021, then moved to fortnightly until June 2024. From June 2024, it returned to monthly, split across two 12-day periods.
5. Data are unweighted before 2000. From 2000 onwards, they are weighted.
6. We collected data on cigarette use every two years before 2000.
7. Information on the changes in legislation and government policy can be found on the [Smoking and vaping: guidance, policy and regulation](#).

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Of the people who currently smoked in 2025, 51.7% intended to quit smoking. Almost one in five current smokers (19.9%) intended to quit within the next three months, which was a decrease from 2024 (24.4%). Of the people who currently smoked in 2025, 15.9% were not intending to quit, an increase from 14.1% in 2024. In 2025, nearly a third (32.4%) of current smokers did not know whether they would quit smoking or not.

Current smokers who intended to quit in the next three months were more likely to wait longer to have their first cigarette of the day.

Figure 7: Current smokers who intended to quit in the next three months waited longer to have their first cigarette of the day

Percentage of current smokers by time waited after waking until first cigarette of the day and intention to quit, Great Britain, 2025

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7 . Use of e-cigarettes

Data for e-cigarette use come from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN), which covers adults aged 16 years and over in Great Britain.

An estimated 6.5% of people aged 16 years and over in Great Britain reported using an e-cigarette daily in 2025, down from 6.7% in 2024.

A further 3.4% reported using an e-cigarette occasionally, up from 3.3% in 2024.

This equates to around 5.4 million (9.9%) e-cigarette users (both daily and occasional) in Great Britain. This is similar to the number of users in 2024, although overall there has been an upward trend in the proportion of e-cigarette users since 2020 (6.4%).

The decrease in the number of daily e-cigarette users between 2024 and 2025 suggests that some individuals may have stopped using e-cigarettes altogether. In 2025, 7.2% of people reported having used an e-cigarette previously, up from 6.6% in 2024.

Those who have never used an e-cigarette continued to decrease in 2025 (83.0%) compared with 2024 (83.4%).

Figure 8: The percentage of e-cigarette users increased between 2020 and 2025

Percentage of e-cigarette users (daily or occasional), Great Britain, 2020 and 2025

Notes:

1. E-cigarette users are daily and occasional users combined.

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Current and ex-smokers were more likely to report using an e-cigarette in 2025. A third of current smokers (33.8%) used e-cigarettes daily or occasionally, an increase from 2024 (32.8%). Among ex-smokers, 20.7% were e-cigarette users, similar to 2024 (20.8%).

Among current smokers:

- an estimated 16.8% were daily e-cigarette users, up from 15.7% in 2024
- occasional e-cigarette use was similar in 2025 (17.0%) compared with 2024 (17.1%)

Among ex-smokers:

- daily e-cigarette use decreased to 16.8% in 2025, from 17.3% in 2024
- occasional use increased to 3.9%, up from 3.5% in 2024
- those reporting having previously used an e-cigarette increased to 13.5% from 11.1% in 2024

The decrease in daily e-cigarette use among ex-smokers may be caused by them transitioning to occasional use or stopping altogether.

Around 2.9% (1.1 million) of those who had never smoked reported using an e-cigarette daily or occasionally, up from 2.7% (around 940,000) in 2024.

When looking at the whole population, whether they smoked cigarettes or not, people more likely to use an e-cigarette (daily or occasionally) were:

- men (10.2%), compared with women (9.6%)
- people aged 25 to 34 years (16.4%), e-cigarette use among this age group has increased by 7.8 percentage points since 2020 (8.6%)

Figure 9: E-cigarette use has increased the most among people aged 25 to 34 years since 2020

Percentage of e-cigarette users (daily or occasional) by age, Great Britain, 2020 to 2025

E-cigarette use (daily or occasional) decreased across all age groups between 2024 and 2025, except among people aged 25 to 34 years. E-cigarette use among this age group increased by 3.5 percentage points between 2024 (12.9%) and 2025 (16.4%). This increase means that, in 2025, people aged 25 to 34 years were most likely to use e-cigarettes, replacing those aged 16 to 24 years who had the highest prevalence of e-cigarette use between 2021 and 2024.

The percentage of men aged 16 years and over who reported e-cigarette use was similar in 2025 compared with 2024 (10.2% and 10.1%, respectively). E-cigarette use decreased or remained the same among all male age groups, apart from men aged 25 to 34 years, where daily or occasional e-cigarette use rose to 14.4%, up from 12.0% in 2024.

Among women aged 16 years and over, e-cigarette use decreased to 9.6% in 2025, from 10.0% in 2024. The only age group not to see a decrease or remain the same was women aged 25 to 34 years, who had the highest percentage of e-cigarette users across all male and female age groups (18.3%).

8 . Definitions

Cigarette smokers who have quit

The Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) defines cigarette smokers who have quit (ex-smokers) as those who reported they do not currently smoke, even occasionally, but have previously smoked cigarettes regularly. This is provided as a proportion of those who have ever smoked cigarettes regularly.

Confidence interval

A confidence interval uses the standard error to define a range in which the true population value is likely to lie. It reflects the uncertainty around a sample estimate, with lower and upper bounds indicating the possible values. Wider intervals suggest less precision, often because of greater standard error or lower sample size.

Current cigarette smokers

The Annual Population Survey (APS) defines current cigarette smokers as those who said they had ever smoked cigarettes regularly, and that they smoke cigarettes nowadays. As the first question focuses on regular smoking, some occasional or non-daily smokers may not be captured in the estimates for current smokers. The OPN defines current cigarette smokers as those who said they smoked cigarettes, even if occasionally. Current cigarette smokers are provided as a proportion of those in the population.

Current e-cigarette users

The OPN defines current e-cigarette users as those who said they currently use e-cigarettes, a vaping device, or both. Current e-cigarette users are provided as a proportion of those in the population.

Survey mode

Survey mode is the method that is used to collect information from respondents. There are different types of survey mode, such as face-to-face, telephone, online and mixed mode.

9 . Data on smoking and e-cigarettes

[Smoking behaviours and e-cigarette use in England and Great Britain](#)

Released on 6 October 2026 | Dataset

Annual data on the proportion of adults in England and Great Britain who smoke cigarettes, cigarette consumption, the proportion who have never smoked cigarettes, the proportion of smokers who have quit, and e-cigarette use, by different characteristics such as age, sex and cigarette smoking status.

[Smoking habits in the UK and its constituent countries](#)

Released on 6 October 2026 | Dataset

Annual data and annual historical data on the proportion of adults who currently smoke, the proportion of ex-smokers and the proportion of those who have never smoked, by sex and age.

10 . Data from other statistics producers

Other statistics producers in each of the devolved countries of the UK also publish statistics on adult smoking habits. These data are used to track progress against their targets to reduce smoking.

These are:

- [Health Survey for England](#) from NHS Digital
- [Health Survey Northern Ireland](#) from Northern Ireland Department of Health
- [National Survey for Wales](#) from the Welsh Government
- [Scottish Health Survey](#) from the Scottish Government
- [Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use among Young People in England](#) from NHS Digital

These statistics are not comparable with ONS data, as they use different survey questions and samples.

11 . Quality, methods and data sources

About the statistics

[Adult smoking habits in the UK methodology](#)

Methodology | Released on 4 November 2025

Methodology information for the Adult smoking habits in the UK annual statistical bulletin.

About the data sources

[Annual Population Survey quality and methodology information \(QMI\)](#)

Methodology | Released on 6 February 2026

Quality and methodology information for the Annual Population Survey. Includes strengths and limitations, methods, and data uses and users.

[Opinions and Lifestyle Survey quality and methodology information \(QMI\)](#)

Methodology | Released on 16 May 2025

Quality and methodology information for the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey. Includes strengths and limitations, recent improvements and quality characteristics.

Statistical designation

These statistics are labelled as "official statistics". They are based on information from the Annual Population Survey (APS) and the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

On 9 October 2024, statistics produced from the APS had their accreditation suspended and were redesignated as [official statistics in development](#) until further review. This was because of ongoing challenges with the response rates, levels and weighting approach of the APS.

On 11 August 2026, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) wrote a [letter to the Office for Statistics Regulation \(OSR\)](#) stating that LFS and APS-derived outputs that are currently official statistics in development will move to [official statistics](#). We will not be seeking reaccréditation. Instead, our priority is for outputs based on the Transformed Labour Force Survey (TLFS) - the online-first sustainable replacement for the LFS and APS - to achieve the standards required to become [accredited official statistics](#), and for the OSR to consider their accreditation at the earliest opportunity.

12 . Related links

[Office for Health Improvement and Disparities: Smoking Profile](#)

Web page | Updated as and when new data become available

Data on a wide range of indicators related to the smoking of cigarettes, including different measures of prevalence in adults and young people, smoking-related mortality, and the wider impacts of smoking on health.

[Smoking prevalence in the UK and the impact of data collection changes: 2020](#)

Bulletin | Released 7 December 2021

Impact that the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has had on data collection, how this has influenced estimates of smoking prevalence and the comparability of these estimates.

[10 Year Health Plan for England: fit for the future](#)

Policy paper | Last updated 30 July 2025

A policy paper setting out the previous Labour government's 10-year Health Plan for England.

[Tobacco and Vapes Act 2026](#)

Legislation | 29 April 2026

An act to make provision about the supply of tobacco, vapes and other products, including provision prohibiting the sale of tobacco to people born on or after 1 January 2009.

13 . Cite this page

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