

Knives and the law

Maximum penalty for an adult carrying a knife is 4 years in prison and an unlimited fine.

If convicted of carrying a knife more than once you'll get a prison sentence

It's illegal to:

- Sell a knife to anyone under 18, unless it's a folding blade 3 inches long or less
- Carry a knife in public without good reason, unless it's a folding blade 3 inches long or less
- Carry, buy or sell any type of banned knife
- Use any knife in a threatening way (Even a legal knife)

Banned knives or weapons

The following knives and weapons are illegal to bring to the UK, sell, hire, lend or give anyone the following:

- Butterfly knives (Balisongs)- a blade hidden inside a handle that splits in the middle
- Disguised knives- a blade or sharp object hidden in what looks like an everyday object
- Flick knives (Switch blades or automatic knives) a blade hidden inside a handle which shoots out when a button is pressed
- Gravity knives
- Stealth knives- a knife or spike not made from metal (Except when used in the home for food or a toy)
- Zombie knives- a knife with a cutting edges, a serrated edge and images or words suggesting it is used for violence
- Swords (Samurai swords) – a curved blade over 50cm
- Sword sticks- a hollow walking stick or cane containing a blade
- Push daggers
- Blow pipes (Blow gun)
- Telescopic truncheons- extend automatically by pressing button or spring in the handle
- Batons- straight, side handled or friction-lock truncheons
- Hollow Kubotans- a cylinder-shaped keychain holding spikes
- Shurikens (Death stars, shaken or throwing stars)
- Kusari-gama- a sickle attached rope, cord or wire
- Kyoketsu-shoge- a hooded knife attached to a rope, cord or wire
- Kusari (Manrikigusari) a weight attached to a rope, cord or wire
- Hand or foot claws
- Knuckledusters

Good reasons for carrying a knife or weapon:

Examples can include:

- Taking knives, you use to and from work
- Taking it to a gallery or museum to be exhibited
- If it's being used for theatre, film, television, historical re-enactment or religious purposes, for example the Kirpan some Sikhs carry

A court will decide if you've got a good reason to carry a knife or a weapon if you're charged with carrying it illegally.

Notice how 'self-defence' is not a good reason for carrying a weapon

- Some people say they carry a knife to defend or protect themselves but although this can seem to make sense to them, in the eyes of the law, police and the courts this is not seen as a good reason for carrying a weapon or knife.

Scenario Activity:

Bob is 12 and is being bullied. Some older kids at school are making his life a misery. They've been picking on him for a long time and now they've started stealing his money.

"I was scared, I felt like I needed to protect myself" says Bob. "So I got myself a knife and I carry it with me at all times because this makes me feel safe".

What else could Bob have done?

Discuss personal safety ideas:

(Personal safety on streets resource www.suzylamplugh.org)

The risks

What could happen to Bob (and other) if they attempted to use the knife to protect themselves?

- **Bob gets Injured or killed-** What's the impact on his family?
- **Bob injures or kills someone-** What's the impact on his family?

(Explore know the risks)