

# UK LAW ON SELLING, BUYING & CARRYING KNIVES

## BASIC LAWS ON KNIVES

It's illegal to:

- Sell a knife to anyone under 18, unless it has a folding blade 3 inches long (7.62 cm) or less
- Carry a knife in public without good reason, unless it has a folding blade with a cutting edge 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)

## SCOTLAND

In Scotland, 16 to 18 year olds are allowed to buy cutlery and kitchen knives.

## LOCK KNIVES

Lock knives are not classed as folding knives and are illegal to carry in public without good reason.

Lock knives:

- That have blades that can be locked and refolded only by pressing a button
- Can include multi-tool knives - tools that also contain other devices such as a screwdriver or can opener

## BANNED KNIVES & WEAPONS

It is illegal to bring into the UK, sell, hire, lend or give anyone the following:

- Butterfly knives (also known as 'Bali songs') - a blade hidden inside a handle that splits in the middle
- Disguised knives - a blade or sharp point hidden inside what looks like everyday objects such as a buckle, phone, brush or lipstick
- Flick knives (also known as 'switchblades' 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 at home, for food or a toy)
- Zombie knives - a knife with a cutting edge, a serrated edge and images or words suggesting it is used for violence
- Swords, including samurai swords - a curved blade over 50cm (with some exceptions, such as antiques and swords made to traditional methods before 1954)
- Sword-sticks - a hollow walking stick or cane containing a blade
- Push daggers
- Blowpipes ('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 spike
- Shurikens (also known as 'shaken', 'death stars' or 'throwing stars')
- Kusari-gama - a sickle attached to a rope, cord or wire

- Kyoketsu-shoge - a hook-knife attached to a rope, cord or wire
- Kusari (or 'manrikigusari') - a weight attached to a rope, cord, wire
- Hand or foot-claws
- Knuckledusters

For further information you can contact your local police to check if a knife or weapon is illegal.

## **GOOD REASONS FOR CARRYING A KNIFE OR WEAPON**

Examples of good reasons to carry a knife or weapon in public can include:

- Taking knives you use at work to and from work
- Taking it to a gallery or museum to be exhibited
- If it'll be used for theatre, film, television, historical re-enactment or religious purposes, for example the Kirpan some Sikhs carry
- If it'll be used in a demonstration or to teach someone how to use it

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.