

Meeting friends and family this Christmas

On 19th December, the government announced changes to the Tier system which has also impacted on who you can meet at Christmas.

The rules on Christmas bubbles will be put into law. Once in force, you must follow the rules to minimise the spread of infection.

One in three people with coronavirus (COVID-19) have no symptoms and will be spreading it without realising it. The safest way to celebrate Christmas this year is with your household or existing support bubble in your home. The more people you see, the more likely it is that you will catch or spread coronavirus.

Brighton currently remains in Tier 2 "High Alert" which means that you may see a maximum of two other households (your 'Christmas bubble') on Christmas Day (25 December). You cannot see anyone from a Tier 4 area unless you are in an existing support bubble.

Before, and after, Christmas Day you must continue to follow the Tier 2 rules. There are no special rules for meeting up for New Years, and you should follow the [Tier 2: High alert](#) rules (or the rules for any other Tier should Brighton be moved into a different one).

You can only form a Christmas bubble if you do not live in a Tier 4 area. If you are permitted to form a Christmas bubble and choose to do so:

- keep your Christmas bubble as small as possible. Two other households is a maximum, not a target
- do not join a Christmas bubble with anyone from a Tier 4 area (If you are in an existing support bubble with someone who lives in a Tier 4 area, you can see each other on Christmas Day)
- stop all unnecessary social contact outside your immediate household as soon as possible and for at least five days before you meet other households in your bubble
- only meet your Christmas bubble in private homes or in your garden, places of worship, or public outdoor spaces
- only see your bubble on Christmas Day. Do not stay overnight and keep your visits as short as possible
- stay local where possible. Avoid travelling from a high prevalence to a low prevalence area
- only meet people who are not in your Christmas bubble outside your home according to the rules in the tier you live in (unless coming from a lower to a higher tier) and do not meet socially with friends and family that you do not live with in your home or garden unless they are part of your Christmas bubble

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You can continue to use a childcare bubble on 25 December, including in a Tier 4 area, but only if reasonably necessary for the purposes of childcare and where there are no reasonable alternatives.

When seeing your Christmas bubble, you should keep taking steps to reduce the spread of the virus. This includes meeting outdoors where possible, ensuring indoor spaces get as much fresh air as possible, making space between members of different households wherever you can, washing your hands regularly and for 20 seconds, and following [rules on self-isolation](#) if you develop symptoms or test positive for coronavirus.

You must not visit another household if you, or anyone in your household, is feeling unwell or self-isolating. You should get [a free NHS test](#) if you have symptoms, have been asked to by your local council or your hospital, or are taking part in a government pilot project.

For more information about the changes, and Tier 4 (which does not currently apply to Brighton and Hove) click here: [Prime Minister announces Tier 4: 'Stay At Home' Alert Level in response to new COVID variant](#)

Christmas guidance:

[Guidance for the Christmas period](#)

[Making a Christmas bubble with friends and family](#)

[Read guidance on making and using a childcare bubble](#)

[If you are a student who has moved home for the university holidays](#)

The government has produced [guidance for the Christmas period](#) covering:

[Meeting friends and family](#)

[Visiting bars, pubs and restaurants](#)

[Visiting churches and other places of worship](#)

[Visiting shops and Christmas markets](#)

[Attending events, including performances and Christmas lighting ceremonies](#)

[New Year's Eve](#)

[Carol singing](#)

[Going to work](#)

[Childcare](#)

[Visiting relatives in care homes](#)

[Travel within the UK](#)

[Volunteering](#)

[Weddings, civil partnerships and funerals](#)

Information on Tiers

[Tier 2: High alert](#)

[Full list of local restriction tiers by area](#)

[Local restriction tiers: what you need to know](#)

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Care homes

[Visiting arrangements in care homes](#)

Vulnerable people

[COVID-19: guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable](#)