Timeline of UK government coronavirus lockdowns and measures, March 2020 to December 2021

IfG

16 March
PM says "now is the time for everyone to stop non-essential contact and travel"

19 March
PM says the UK can "turn tide of coronavirus" in 12 weeks

23 March
PM announces the first lockdown in the UK, ordering people to "stay at home"

25 March
Coronavirus Act 2020 gets Royal Assent

26 March
Lockdown measures legally come into force

10 May
PM announces a conditional plan for lifting lockdown, and says that people who cannot work from home should return to the workplace but avoid public transport

4 July
UK's first local lockdown comes into force in Leicester and parts of Leicestershire.

More restrictions are eased in England, including reopening of pubs, restaurants, hairdressers.

18 July
Local authorities in England gain additional powers to enforce social distancing

14 September
'Rule of six' – indoor and outdoor social gatherings above six banned in England

22 September
PM announces new restrictions in England, including a return to working from home and 10pm curfew for hospitality sector

30 September
PM says UK at a "critical moment" in the crisis and would "not hesitate" to impose further restrictions if needed needed

5 November
Second national lockdown comes into force in England

24 November
PM announces up to three households will be able to meet up during during a five-day Christmas period of 23 to 27 December

4 January
PM says children should return to school after the Christmas break, but warns restrictions in England will get tougher

6 January
England enters third national lockdown

8 March: Step 1
Schools in England reopen for primary and secondary school students.

Recreation in an outdoor public spaces will be allowed between two people.

'Stay at home' order remains in place.

29 March: Step 1
Outdoor gatherings of either six people or two households will be allowed, including in private gardens. Outdoor sports facilities also reopen.

'Stay at home' order ends but people encouraged to stay local.

17 May: Step 3
Limit of 30 people allowed to mix outdoors.

'Rule of six' or two households allowed for indoor social gatherings.

Indoor venues will reopen, including pubs, restaurants, cinemas.

Up to 10,000 spectators can attend the very largest outdoor-seated venues like football stadiums.

19 July: Step 4
Most legal limits on social contact removed in England, and the final closed sectors of the economy reopened (e.g. nightclubs).

8 December
PM announces a move to 'Plan B' measures in England following the spread of the Omicron variant.

10 December
Face masks become compulsory in most public indoor venues under Plan B.

15 December
NHS Covid Pass becomes mandatory in specific settings, such as nightclubs under Plan B.

March | April | May | June | July | August | September | October | November | December | 2021 | January | February | March | April | May | June | July | August | September | October | November | December

16 April
Lockdown extended for "at least" three weeks. Government sets out five tests that must be met before restrictions are eased

30 April
PM says "we are past the peak" of the pandemic

1 June
Phased re-opening of schools in England

15 June
Non-essential shops reopen in England

23 June
PM says UK's "national hibernation" coming to an end – announces relaxing of restrictions and 2m social distancing rule

29 June
Matt Hancock announces that the UK's first local lockdown would be applied in Leicester and parts of Leicestershire

3 August
Eat Out to Help Out scheme, offering a 50% discount on meals up to £10 per person, begins in the UK

14 August
Lockdown restrictions eased further, including reopening indoor theatres, bowling alleys and soft play

14 October
A new three-tier system of Covid-19 restrictions starts in England

31 October
PM announces a second lockdown in England to prevent a "medical and moral disaster" for the NHS

2 December
Second lockdown ends after four weeks and England returns to a stricter three-tier system of restrictions

15 December
PM says Christmas rules will still be relaxed but urges the public to keep celebrations "short" and "small"

19 December
PM announces tougher restrictions for London and South East England, with a new Tier 4: 'Stay at Home' alert level. Christmas mixing rules tightened.

21 December
Tier 4 restrictions come into force in London and South East England

26 December
More areas of England enter Tier 4 restrictions

15 February
Hotel quarantine for travellers arriving in England from 33 high-risk countries begins

22 February
PM publishes a roadmap for lifting the lockdown

12 April: Step 2
Non-essential retail, hairdressers, public buildings (e.g. libraries and museums) reopen.

Outdoor venues, including pubs and restaurants, zoos and theme parks also open, as well as indoor leisure (e.g. gyms).

Self-contained holiday accommodation opens.

Wider social contact rules continue to apply in all settings – no indoor mixing between different households allowed.

14 June: Step 4
PM confirms that Step 4 of the roadmap will be delayed by four weeks, until 19 July, as the government accelerates the vaccination programme.

Restrictions on weddings and funerals abolished.

14 September
PM unveils England's winter plan for Covid – 'Plan B' to be used if the NHS is coming under "unsustainable pressure", and includes measures such as face masks.

Lockdown / restrictions introduced | Lockdown restrictions eased | PM / government announcements | Legislation / emergency powers

Source: Institute for Government analysis.

CC BY-NC