

THE LAW

The law makes no distinction between air rifles and more powerful guns for which you need a licence – they are ALL classed as firearms. This means that any offence you commit can carry a very heavy penalty – and there are at least 38 different offences.

WHO CANNOT SHOOT

It is an offence for a person who is prohibited by Section 21 of the Firearms Act 1968 (*SEE POSTED COPY*) to have a firearm or ammunition in his/her possession at any time.

This Section applies to any person who has been sentenced to imprisonment or to youth custody or detention in any young offenders institution for three months or more.

A person sentenced to a period between 3 months and 3 years is prohibited for 5 years from the date of release.

A person sentenced to 3 years or more is prohibited for life.

WHO CAN SHOOT

18 years

- If you are 18 years or older there are no restrictions on buying an air rifle and ammunition, and you can use it where you have permission to shoot.

14 – 17 years

- You can
 - borrow an air rifle and ammunition
 - use an air rifle, without supervision, on private premises where you have permission
- You cannot
 - buy or hire an air rifle, or ammunition, or receive one as a gift. Your air rifle and ammunition must be bought and looked after by someone over 18 – normally your parent, guardian or some other responsible adult.
 - have an air rifle in a public place unless you are supervised by somebody aged 21 or over, and you have a reasonable excuse to do so (for example, while on the way to a shooting ground).

Under 14 years

- You can
 - use an air rifle UNDER SUPERVISION on private premises with permission from the occupier - normally the owner or tenant. The person who supervises you must be at least 21 years old.
- You cannot
 - buy, hire or receive an air rifle or its ammunition as a gift
 - shoot, WITHOUT ADULT SUPERVISION.
 - Parents or guardians who buy an air rifle for use by someone under 14 must exercise control over it at all times, EVEN IN THE HOME OR GARDEN.

FIRING PELLETS BEYOND YOUR BOUNDARY

It is an offence to fire an air rifle pellet beyond the land where you have permission to shoot, unless the occupier of the neighbouring land has also given you permission. Where someone under 14 is shooting, BOTH the young person AND the supervising adult can be prosecuted.

It is also against the law, in England and Wales, to fire an air rifle within 50 feet of the centre of a highway if this results in someone being injured, interrupted or endangered.

At all times, have in your mind, the pellet is yours until it comes to a stop.