

STOP & SEARCH



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

**Stop and search –
know your rights**
Easy read version

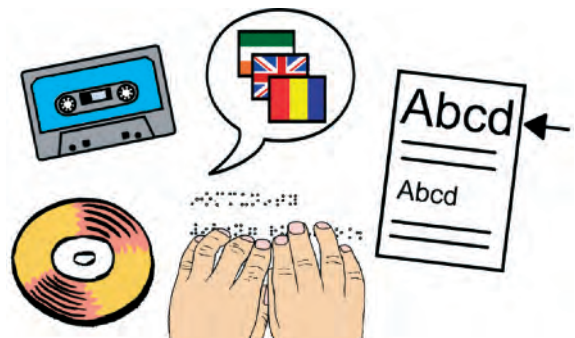
**This is a guide to
the way a 'stop and
search' is done.**

**It does not cover
all of the law.**



For more information
or translations into
other languages

or different formats



go to
www.apa.police.uk

or contact your local
police authority.



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Who can stop you?

- A police officer; or
- a police community support officer (PCSO)

A PCSO **must** be in uniform.



A police officer does not have to be in uniform; if they are not in uniform they **must** show you their identity card.



What is a stop?

A 'stop' is when a police officer stops you and asks you:

- what you are doing;
- why you are in a certain area or where you are going; or
- what you are carrying.

Why can I be stopped by the police?



What is a stop and search?

You can be stopped and searched anywhere when a police officer thinks that you are carrying:



- drugs which are against the law;



- weapons;



- stolen property;



or things which could be used:

- to do a crime; or
- to do an act of violence.

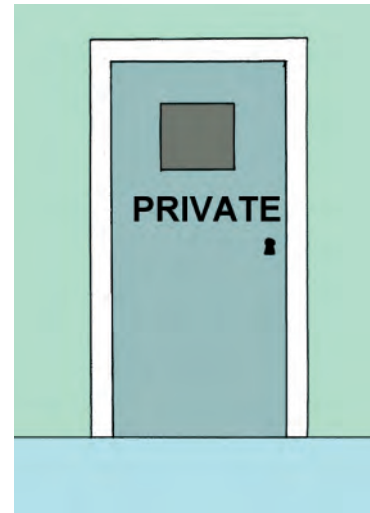


The police officer can ask you to take off outer clothing, for example your coat or jacket.

They can ask you to take off anything you wear for religious reasons, such as a face scarf, veil or turban.



If the police officer asks you to do this they should, if possible, take you somewhere where other people cannot see you.



You can ask that the officer who searches you is the same sex as you.



It does not mean you are being arrested.



Sometimes police officers can search anyone within a certain area:

- when there is proof that serious violence could take place there, for example, at a football ground;
- or where a terrorist threat is known.



The police officer must explain this to you and must be searching for things which could be used for violence or terrorism.



What if I am in a vehicle?

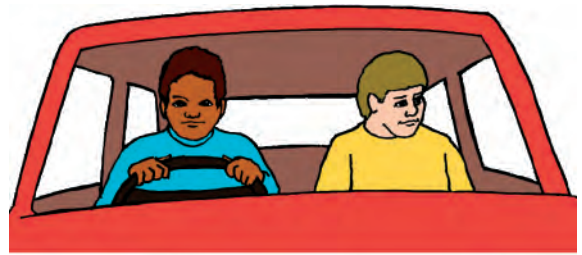
Your vehicle can be stopped at any time.

You may be asked to show your driving documents.

You should be given a written record.

How should a stop and search be carried out?

Before you are searched, the police officer must tell you and make sure you understand:



- that you must wait to be searched;
- what law they are using and your rights;
- their name;
- the station they work at;
- why they stopped you;
- what they are looking for; and
- your right to a form.



Your right to a form

If you are stopped or searched the police officer must fill in a form and give you a copy.



The police officer should give you a copy of the form straight away unless they are called away to an emergency; in this case you can get a copy from a police station.



You must keep a copy of the form especially if you are not happy with the way you were treated.



The police officer must write down:

- your name or a description of you (only if you are searched);
- how you describe your cultural background for example; Asian, Black Caribbean, Chinese, White;
- when and where you were stopped or searched;
- why you were stopped or searched;



- if they are taking any action against you;
- the name and/or numbers of the police officers; and
- if you were searched, what they were looking for and anything they found.



The police officer will ask you for your name, address and date of birth.

You do not have to give me your details unless you are being arrested

You do not have to give this information if you don't want to unless you are being arrested.



What can I do if I am unhappy about how I was treated?

The officer should treat you fairly and with respect. If you are unhappy with how you were treated, you can complain.



If you feel you were treated differently because of your race, age, sexuality, gender, disability, religion or faith, you can complain.



It will help if you keep the form that the police gave you.



You can get advice about how to make a complaint from places like:

- a police station;
- your local police authority;
- a Citizen's Advice Bureau;



- the Independent Police Complaints Commission;
- the Commission for Equality and Human Rights; or
- a Solicitor

The police officer who stops you must:

- treat you fairly and with respect;
- give you the reason why you have been stopped;
- give you their details, including name, police number and station; and
- give you a copy of the stop/search form.

Remember – you have the right to complain if you have not been treated fairly.



For more information,
translations into
alternative languages and
different formats go to
www.apa.police.uk or
contact your local police
authority.



Your local police authority is

If you are stopped and searched, you have rights.



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