



A guide to  
**STORING,  
DISPLAYING AND  
SELLING KNIVES**  
and other bladed items

For more information visit  
[sussex.police.uk/stopknife-crime](https://sussex.police.uk/stopknife-crime)  
**#StopKnifeCrime**

*This guide has been designed to help you*

# STORE, DISPLAY AND SELL KNIVES RESPONSIBLY

*Please follow the advice and help to protect your  
business, your staff and our local communities.*

## SELLING KNIVES SAFELY

Before selling a knife or bladed item, retailers must take steps to ensure that it is appropriate to sell the item. It is against the law to sell to anyone who is under 18, but businesses should also not sell an item if they have concerns about how the buyer may use it.

## AVOIDING UNDERAGE SALES

The best way to avoid underage sales is by operating a Challenge 25 policy. This is by:

- Assessing the age of all customers buying knives.
- Challenging anyone the seller thinks is under 25 for proof of age.
- Checking the customer's ID to ensure the customer is over 18.

It is difficult to judge someone's age as everyone assesses differently.

The best method of assessing age is to look closely at the face of the person and ask yourself if the customer is under 25. If you believe the customer is under 25, ask to see their ID.

## SOME HELPFUL TIPS

- Don't ask the customer's age, only ask for ID.
- Practice with staff on the use of Challenge 25 and monitor how they do it.
- Display a Challenge 25 poster at counters so they can refer the customer to it as they ask for ID.

## ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF ID

- UK Photo Driving License
  - full and provisional
- Passport
- PASS endorsed ID

## STORING KNIVES SAFELY

Responsible retailers ensure that knives are stored and displayed safely. This means preventing customers from accessing knives without the assistance of a member of staff.

Doing this can prevent knives being stolen and can make it much easier to prevent staff from mistakenly selling to someone who is underage.

- Display knives behind the counter, out of reach of customers.
- Consider dummy packs so that customers have to ask for the products if they want to buy them.
- Use of CCTV where knives are stored which may act as a deterrent.
- Keep knives and other bladed items out of sight – under the counter or in a storeroom (you could use pictures or signs to advertise the fact that knives are available)
- Use shelf-hanger locks, so that knives can be displayed but not taken off their hanger without assistance from staff.
- Only selling knives contained in tamperproof packaging which cannot be opened without using another tool – these are the only knives that should be openly displayed, even where shelf hanger locks are used.
- Additional security tags to packaging as an additional deterrent. These can alert staff if a knife is stolen.

**Remember,** if knives are not on open display, they cannot be stolen and used as a weapon inside or outside the shop.

## TRAINING

Training staff on Challenge 25 is important to ensure they feel confident in challenging someone who looks underage.

When training staff, consider the following:

- Supervise a member of staff to ensure they are following the Challenge 25 process correctly.
- Provide training videos for staff to watch such as [nbcc.police.uk/knifeguidance](http://nbcc.police.uk/knifeguidance).
- Provide a training checklist.
- Send new starters on an external training course.
- Provide refresher training on Challenge 25 to reinforce key messaging and learning.
- Keep and check refusals records (if your business keeps them).
- Give feedback to staff you have seen serving a young customer.
- Use till prompts if available.
- Display posters and stickers where knives are kept.

## RECORDING REFUSALS OF SALE

Once you have challenged someone for ID, it is good practice to record it.

When recording a refusal sale, you should note:

- The date and time of attempted purchase
- The description of the buyer (Approximate age, male or female)
- The product.

Maintaining a refusals log will help to demonstrate that you actively refuse sales and have an effective system in place. Logs should be regularly checked to ensure that all members of staff are using them.

Sussex Police and its partner agencies are

# COMMITTED TO CATCHING CRIMINALS AND PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITIES

from the dangers of knife crime. The information we receive from you plays a big part in enabling us to do that.

## HOW DO I REPORT A CRIME?

For more information visit **sussex.police.uk**

If you see anything suspicious or want to report a crime, report online at [sussex.police.uk](https://sussex.police.uk) or call **101**.

In an emergency always call **999**.

You can also report crime anonymously to Crimestoppers on Freephone **0800 555 111** or online at **[crimestoppers-uk.org](https://crimestoppers-uk.org)**

Thank you for helping us to keep Sussex safe.

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