businesscompanion
trading standards law explained

Legislation etc

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Trading Standards

For more information on the work of Trading Standards services and the possible consequences of not abiding by the law, please see 'Trading Standards: powers, enforcement and penalties'.

In this update

The legal definition of a ninja sword changed on 16 July 2026.

Last reviewed / updated: July 2026

Key legislation

- Restriction of Offensive Weapons Act 1959
- Poisons Act 1972
- Criminal Justice Act 1988
- Criminal Justice Act 1988 (Offensive Weapons) Order 1988
- Knives Act 1997
- Control of Poisons and Explosives Precursors Regulations 2015
- Offensive Weapons Act 2019
- Control of Poisons and Explosives Precursors Regulations 2023
- Criminal Justice Act 1988 (Offensive Weapons) (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2026

Sources and attribution statement

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https://www.gov.uk/
https://www.hse.gov.uk/
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https://www.gov.uk/buying-carrying-knives
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< Part 2. Knives, bladed articles and bladed products

Please note

This information is intended for guidance; only the courts can give an authoritative interpretation of the law.

The guide's 'Key legislation' links go to the legislation.gov.uk website. The site usually updates the legislation to include any amendments made to it. However, this is not always the case. Information on all changes made to legislation can be found by following the above links and clicking on the 'More Resources' tab.

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