
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2023 No. 768

**ARMS AND AMMUNITION,
ENGLAND AND WALES**

The Firearms (Air Weapons) (England and Wales) Rules 2023

Made - - - - *6th July 2023*

Coming into force - - *31st July 2023*

The Secretary of State makes the following Rules in exercise of the powers conferred by section 53(1)(c) of the Firearms Act 1968⁽¹⁾.

Citation, commencement and extent

1.—(1) These Rules may be cited as the Firearms (Air Weapons) (England and Wales) Rules 2023 and come into force on 31st July 2023.

(2) These Rules extend to England and Wales.

Storage of air weapons

2.—(1) For the purposes of section 24ZA(1) of the Firearms Act 1968⁽²⁾ (“the Act”), “reasonable precautions to prevent any person under the age of eighteen from having an air weapon⁽³⁾ with him” include storing an air weapon when it is not in use or is being cleaned, repaired, tested or in transit—

- (a) securely to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, access to the air weapon by a person under the age of eighteen;
- (b) out of sight of a person under the age of eighteen; and
- (c) separately from compatible ammunition⁽⁴⁾.

(2) This rule does not apply to a rifle to which section 27A of the Act⁽⁵⁾ applies.

(1) 1968 c. 27. Section 53 was amended by section 61(3)(a) of the Offensive Weapons Act 2019 (c. 17). There are other amendments to the Firearms Act 1968 which are not relevant to these Rules.

(2) Section 24ZA(1) was inserted by section 46(2) of the Crime and Security Act 2010 (c. 17).

(3) See section 1(3)(b) of the Firearms Act 1968 in relation to the expression “air weapon”.

(4) See section 57(2) of the Firearms Act 1968 in relation to the word “ammunition”.

(5) Section 27A was inserted by section 61 of the Offensive Weapons Act 2019.

Status: This is the original version (as it was originally made). This item of legislation is currently only available in its original format.

6th July 2023

Chris Philp
Minister of State
Home Office

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Rules)

These Rules are made under section 53(1)(c) of the Firearms Act 1968 (c. 27) (“the 1968 Act”) and extend to England and Wales.

Rule 2(1) sets out the minimum storage requirements for an air weapon to comply with section 24ZA(1) of the 1968 Act. Section 24ZA of the 1968 Act provides that it is an offence for a person in possession of an air weapon to fail to take reasonable precautions to prevent a minor from having the weapon.

The effect of rule 2(2) is that these Rules do not apply to an air weapon when it is a rifle from which a shot, bullet or other missile, with a kinetic energy of more than 13,600 joules at the muzzle of the weapon, can be discharged.

A full impact assessment has not been produced for this instrument. There was, however, an impact assessment prepared to support the Government’s response to the consultation which ended on 16 February 2021 on the access of air weapons by those under the age of 18. A copy of the impact assessment can be found at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1090906/20220523_Air_Weapons_IA_DRAFT_FINAL.pdf. A hard copy may be obtained from the Firearms Policy Unit, Home Office, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF.