Navigating nic salt regulations: bottle sizes and nicotine limits in the UK

If you vape nicotine salts in the UK, the rules around bottle size and nicotine strength are not always straightforward. The regulations that govern these products exist for consumer safety, but they can also create confusion when you are trying to choose the right product. Understanding what is allowed, what is restricted, and where the limits sit will help you avoid buying something that does not meet the rules or that does not suit your needs.

UK regulations for nicotine-containing e-liquids, including nic salts, come from the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations (TRPR), which implement the EU Tobacco Products Directive. Since Brexit, the UK has maintained these rules with some adjustments, but the core limits on bottle size and nicotine strength remain in place. For anyone buying or using nic salts, the two most important numbers to know are 10ml for bottle capacity and 20mg/ml for nicotine strength. These are not flexible guidelines; they are legal maximums.

Before you order or buy a bottle, check the label for the nicotine concentration and the bottle volume. Any nic salt product sold legally in the UK must not exceed 10ml per container and must not contain more than 20mg/ml of nicotine. This applies to all retail sales, whether from a physical shop or an online store. If you see a 30ml bottle of 50mg/ml nic salt, that product is not compliant with UK regulations. It may be intended for other markets where different rules apply, but it cannot be sold legally in the UK.

The 10ml limit on bottle size is a practical restriction that affects how you buy and use nic salts. Since you cannot purchase a larger bottle, you may need to buy multiple smaller bottles to get the volume you want. Some vapers find this inconvenient, but it is a rule that has been in place for years. The reasoning behind the size limit is tied to the nicotine strength: smaller bottles reduce the risk of accidental exposure to high-concentration nicotine. If you are someone who goes through e-liquid quickly, factor in that you will need to carry or store several 10ml bottles rather than one larger container.



Nicotine strength is capped at 20mg/ml, which is equivalent to 2%. For many vapers, especially those who have recently switched from smoking, this level provides a satisfying throat hit and nicotine delivery. However, some users who previously relied on higher-strength nic salts available outside the UK may find 20mg/ml too low. If that is your situation, you may need to adjust your expectations or consider using a different type of e-liquid, such as freebase nicotine at a higher strength, but note that freebase liquids are also subject to the same 20mg/ml limit. The 20mg cap applies to all nicotine-containing e-liquids sold in the UK, regardless of the nicotine type.

When you buy nic salts, the bottle must also meet packaging requirements. Child-resistant caps and tamper-evident seals are mandatory. The label must carry a warning that nicotine is

highly addictive and must list the ingredients, batch number, and the manufacturer's contact details. These requirements are not optional; they are part of the product notification process that every e-liquid must go through before it can be sold in the UK. If you receive a product that does not have child-resistant packaging or that lacks a clear warning label, it is likely not compliant, and you should question its origin.

Age restrictions are another key part of the regulations. You must be 18 or over to buy any nicotine-containing product in the UK. Sellers are required to verify your age, and online retailers must use an age verification service at checkout. This rule applies equally to nic salts and all other vaping products. If you are buying for someone else, remember that the sale is still subject to age verification. The legal responsibility sits with the seller, but as a buyer you should be aware that attempting to purchase on behalf of a minor is also an offence.

Advertising rules for nic salts are strict. You cannot promote them in ways that appeal to under-18s, and you cannot make health claims that are not supported by evidence. Marketing must not suggest that vaping is harmless or that it is a safe alternative to smoking. The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) enforces these rules, and many vape brands have had their ads pulled for making unsubstantiated claims. For the consumer, this means that the information you see in ads and on packaging is limited. You will rarely see bold claims about health benefits. Instead, you are more likely to see statements about flavour, strength, and device compatibility.

Product notification is a behind-the-scenes requirement that affects what is available on the market. Every e-liquid, including each nic salt variant, must be notified to the UK Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) before it can be sold. The notification includes details about the ingredients, nicotine concentration, and packaging. This process is intended to ensure that only safe and properly labelled products reach the shelves. If a product has not been notified, it cannot be sold legally. As a consumer, you will not typically see the notification number, but reputable brands will have it in their records. If you are unsure about a product, you can ask the retailer whether it has been notified.



For a more detailed look at specific nic salt products and their compliance with UK rules, you can find reviews and breakdowns at vapourmagazine.co.uk. The site covers flavour profiles, device compatibility, and how each product fits within the current regulatory framework. That kind of practical information can help you decide which nic salts are worth trying without worrying about whether they meet the legal requirements.

One common area of confusion is the difference between nic salts and freebase nicotine when it comes to strength. Both are capped at 20mg/ml in the UK, but the experience can feel different. Nic salts are formulated to be smoother on the throat at higher strengths, which is why they are often preferred by vapers who want a stronger nicotine hit without harshness. However, because the strength limit is the same, you cannot get a higher nicotine

concentration with nic salts than with freebase. The choice between them comes down to personal preference and your vaping style, not the maximum available strength.

If you are mixing your own e-liquid, the rules still apply. You cannot legally sell or supply a homemade nic salt liquid that exceeds the 10ml bottle size or the 20mg/ml limit. If you mix only for your own use, the regulations do not apply in the same way, but you should still be careful with high-concentration nicotine. The safety measures that commercial products must follow, such as child-resistant packaging and clear labelling, are good practices for anyone handling nicotine at home.

For many vapers, the 10ml bottle size is the most noticeable restriction. It means that if you vape a lot, you will go through small bottles quickly. This can be a hassle, but it also means that you are less likely to spill a large amount of high-strength nicotine liquid. Some brands have responded by offering multi-packs or subscription services that send several 10ml bottles at once. These can save time and reduce the frequency of orders. When buying in bulk, check that each individual bottle is compliant. A pack of five 10ml bottles is fine; a single 50ml bottle is not.

Another point to watch is the warning label. The wording must state that the product contains nicotine, which is highly addictive. It must also list the nicotine strength and the net volume. If a bottle has a label that is hard to read, missing information, or not in English, treat it with caution. Legitimate products sold in the UK will have clear labelling that meets the legal standards. If the label looks off, the product may be counterfeit or imported from a market with different rules.



The rules around nic salts in the UK are not going to change dramatically in the near future. The government has consulted on potential revisions to vaping regulations, but for now, the 10ml bottle size and 20mg/ml nicotine limit remain the key benchmarks. If you are new to vaping or new to nic salts, knowing these numbers will help you avoid buying a product that cannot be used or that is not legal. For a thorough overview of current nic salt options and how they measure up against the regulations, reading through the product guides on vapourmagazine.co.uk can provide clarity.

Ultimately, the regulations exist to protect consumers, but they also shape the market. Understanding them helps you make informed choices and avoid frustration. Stick to reputable

retailers, check the labels, and remember the two numbers: 10ml and 20mg/ml. That is the foundation of UK nic salt compliance.