



CANNABIS

weed, skunk, puff, draw, resin, pot, marijuana, herb, hash, hashish, grass, herb, ganja, dope, bud

DrugWise

Cannabis comes from the plant *Cannabis sativa* that grows naturally in many parts of the world.

It comes in three forms: herbal, resin and oil. The main active ingredient is tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).

Cannabis is often smoked in a 'joint' with or without tobacco. It can also be inhaled or eaten. It is sometimes baked into cakes or mixed with drinks such as tea.

It is an unusual drug in that it can have sedating, hallucinogenic and/or stimulant properties.

Cannabis can make people feel relaxed and happy. They may get the giggles or become talkative. People can become more aware of their senses but also lethargic.

Cannabis may make you feel light-headed or sick and may cause feelings of anxiety and paranoia. Concerns have been raised about its possible effects on mental health.



The law

Cannabis is a Class B drug.

The maximum sentence for possession is 5 years and possibly a fine. For possession with intent to supply and production, the maximum sentence is 14 years, plus possibly a fine.

In practice maximum sentences are unlikely to be applied.

Popularity

Home Office statistics show that in 2015, as in previous years, cannabis was the most commonly used illegal drug in the UK, with 6.5% of adults aged 16 to 59 having used it in the last year (around 2.1 million people). Levels of use have remained similar since 2009 before which they were slightly higher. For adults aged 16 to 59, cannabis was the drug most commonly reported as ever used, with around 3 in 10 (29.4%) adults reporting using this drug at some point in their lifetime.



Issues

Cannabis is increasingly being studied for possible therapeutic uses. It is thought to be beneficial for multiple sclerosis, certain types of pain and other neurological conditions.

There are increasing calls for law reform regarding cannabis both throughout the world and within the UK.