

Crossbows Act 1987 c. 32

s. 1 Sale and letting on hire.

Law In Force With Amendments Pending

[View proposed draft amended version](#)

Version 4 of 4

28 March 2011 - Present

Subjects

Criminal law

Keywords

Age; Crossbows; Offences

England and Wales

1. Sale and letting on hire.

A person who sells or lets on hire a crossbow or a part of a crossbow to a person under the age of [eighteen]¹ is guilty of an offence, unless he believes him to be [eighteen]¹ years of age or older and has reasonable ground for the belief.

Scotland

[

1. Sale and letting on hire.

A person who sells or lets on hire a crossbow or a part of a crossbow to a person under the age of eighteen is guilty of an offence.

]²

Notes

¹ Word substituted by Custodial Sentences and Weapons (Scotland) Act 2007 asp 17 (Scottish Act) [Pt 3 s.62\(1\)](#) (October 1, 2007)

Notes

- 2 Words repealed by Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010 asp 13 (Scottish Act) [Pt 2 s.35\(2\)](#) (March 28, 2011 for all purposes in respect of offences committed on or after March 28, 2011)

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s. 1A Defences

Law In Force

Version 2 of 2

31 December 2020 - Present

Subjects

Criminal law

Keywords

Age; Crossbows; Defences; Documents; Offences

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1A Defences

(1) It is a defence for a person charged with an offence under [section 1](#) (referred to in this section as “*the accused*”) to show that—

(a) the accused believed the person to whom the crossbow or part was sold or let on hire (referred to in this section as “*the purchaser or hirer*”) to be aged 18 or over, and

(b) either—

(i) the accused had taken reasonable steps to establish the purchaser or hirer’s age, or

(ii) no reasonable person could have suspected from the purchaser or hirer’s appearance that the purchaser or hirer was under the age of 18.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1)(b)(i), the accused is to be treated as having taken reasonable steps to establish the purchaser or hirer’s age if and only if—

(a) the accused was shown any of the documents mentioned in subsection (3), and

(b) the document would have convinced a reasonable person.

(3) Those documents are any document bearing to be—

(a) a passport,

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(aa) a UK driving licence,

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(b) a European Union photocard driving licence, or

(c) such other document, or a document of such other description, as the Scottish Ministers may by order made by statutory instrument prescribe.

(4) A statutory instrument containing an order under subsection (3)(c) is subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of the Scottish Parliament.

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Notes

- 1 Added by Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010 asp 13 (Scottish Act) [Pt 2 s.35\(3\)](#) (March 28, 2011 for all purposes in respect of offences committed on or after March 28, 2011)
- 2 Added by Licensing (Amendment) (EU Exit) (Scotland) Regulations 2019/6 (Scottish SI) [Pt 2 reg.3\(2\)](#) (December 31, 2020: shall come into force on exit day as specified in 2018 c.16 s.20(1))

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s. 2 Purchase and hiring.

Law In Force

Version 3 of 3

1 October 2007 - Present

Subjects

Criminal law

Keywords

Age; Crossbows; Hiring; Offences

2. Purchase and hiring.

A person under the age of [eighteen]¹ who buys or hires a crossbow or a part of a crossbow is guilty of an offence.

Notes

- ¹ Word substituted by Custodial Sentences and Weapons (Scotland) Act 2007 asp 17 (Scottish Act) [Pt 3 s.62\(1\)](#) (October 1, 2007)

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s. 3 Possession.

Law In Force

Version 3 of 3

1 October 2007 - Present

Subjects

Criminal law

Keywords

Age; Crossbows; Offences; Possession

3. Possession.

A person under the age of [eighteen]¹ who has with him—

(a) a crossbow which is capable of discharging a missile, or

(b) parts of a crossbow which together (and without any other parts) can be assembled to form a crossbow capable of discharging a missile,

is guilty of an offence, unless he is under the supervision of a person who is twenty-one years of age or older.

Notes

¹ Word substituted by Custodial Sentences and Weapons (Scotland) Act 2007 asp 17 (Scottish Act) [Pt 3 s.62\(1\)](#) (October 1, 2007)

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s. 3A Test purchasing

Law In Force

Version 1 of 1

28 March 2011 - Present

Subjects

Criminal law

Keywords

Age; Authorisation; Chief constables; Crossbows; Offences; Test purchases

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3A Test purchasing

(1) A person under the age of 18 who buys or hires, or attempts to buy or hire, a crossbow or a part of a crossbow does not commit an offence under [section 2 or 3](#) if the person is authorised to do so by the chief constable for the purpose of determining whether an offence is being committed under [section 1](#).

(2) A chief constable may authorise a person under the age of 18 to buy or hire, or attempt to buy or hire, a crossbow or a part of a crossbow only if satisfied that all reasonable steps have been or will be taken to—

- (a) ensure the person's safety, and
- (b) avoid any risk to the person's welfare.

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Notes

1 Added by Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010 asp 13 (Scottish Act) [Pt 2 s.35\(4\)](#) (March 28, 2011)

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s. 4

Law In Force

Version 1 of 1

15 July 1987 - Present

Subjects

Criminal law

Keywords

Constables; Crossbows; Powers of search

4.— Powers of search and seizure etc.

(1) If a constable suspects with reasonable cause that a person is committing or has committed an offence under [section 3](#), the constable may—

(a) search that person for a crossbow or part of a crossbow;

(b) search any vehicle, or anything in or on a vehicle, in or on which the constable suspects with reasonable cause there is a crossbow, or part of a crossbow, connected with the offence.

(2) A constable may detain a person or vehicle for the purpose of a search under subsection (1).

(3) A constable may seize and retain for the purpose of proceedings for an offence under this Act anything discovered by him in the course of a search under subsection (1) which appears to him to be a crossbow or part of a crossbow.

(4) For the purpose of exercising the powers conferred by this section a constable may enter any land other than a dwelling-house.

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s. 5

Law In Force

Version 1 of 1

15 July 1987 - Present

Subjects

Criminal law

Keywords

Crossbows; Possession

5. Exception.

This Act does not apply to crossbows with a draw weight of less than 1.4 kilograms.

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s. 6

Law In Force

Version 1 of 1

15 July 1987 - Present

Subjects

Criminal law

Keywords

Crossbows; Offences; Punishment

6.— Punishments.

- (1) A person guilty of an offence under [section 1](#) shall be liable, on summary conviction, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months, to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale, or to both.
- (2) A person guilty of an offence under [section 2 or 3](#) shall be liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.
- (3) The court by which a person is convicted of an offence under this Act may make such order as it thinks fit as to the forfeiture or disposal of any crossbow or part of a crossbow in respect of which the offence was committed.

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