

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE STYRIAN YOUTH ACT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

How long am I allowed to stay out (in public places)?

Your parents or legal guardians are solely responsible for determining the hours you are allowed to stay out within the legally prescribed limits:

- Until you are 14 years old, you are allowed to stay out from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m.
- When you are between 14 and 16 years old, you are allowed to stay out from 5 a.m. to 1 a.m.
- Only when you are 16 years old are you permitted to stay out without any time restrictions – providing your parents or legal guardians allow you to do so!

You are permitted to be out on the streets before 5 a.m., if you have to be there for work reasons.

If you are accompanied by an adult, you may stay out without any time restrictions. However, your “welfare as a child” must not be endangered.

Who can act as my guardian?

In addition to your parents or legal guardians, grandparents, family members, friends, teachers, educators, youth organisation leaders and similar persons are also regarded as guardians. Of course, they must be adults, i.e. at least 18 years old. In the event of being checked, this guardian must be able to prove that they are authorised to supervise you (a form for this purpose can be found on the website of the Youth Unit – Youth Protection).

When and to whom do I have to prove my age?

Should you provide the police, youth protection authorities, or persons who are subject to control obligations under the Styrian Youth Act (such as cashiers, waiters, and waitresses), information about a specific age or age group, you are obliged to prove your age accordingly.

You can prove your identity with an official photo ID, such as a passport, identity card, driving licence or equivalent digital ID, or with an official youth ID card, the check.it card issued by the province of Styria, or a pupil ID card.

Please note: A photo/screenshot of a valid photo ID is not sufficient!

Are there places where I am not allowed to be?

You are not permitted to visit certain establishments, such as brothels, peep shows, sex shops, swingers' clubs, (sports) betting shops and similar establishments until you reach the age of 18.

You are also not allowed to enter premises or attend events where alcoholic beverages are served without quantity restrictions for a single price or at a significantly lower price than is usually the case ('flat-rate parties', '1-euro parties', etc.).

When is alcohol permitted?

You are not allowed to buy, possess or consume any alcoholic beverages until you are 16 years old.

From the age of 16, you are allowed to drink beverages without distilled alcohol, e.g. wine, beer, sparkling wine, partially fermented 'sturm' wine, cider. However, the consumption of these drinks must not lead to any significant mental or physical impairment, such as severe drunkenness!

Until you are 18 years old, beverages with distilled alcohol (e.g. vodka, whisky, liqueurs, schnapps, etc.) and mixed drinks containing spirits (e.g. alcopops, Aperol, etc.) are prohibited.

When are tobacco and nicotine permitted?

You are not allowed to purchase, possess or consume tobacco products, related products or other nicotine products until you are at least 18 years old. This includes cigarettes, e-cigarettes ('vapes'), water pipes ('shishas'), tobacco heaters ('heets'), 'snus' and nicotine pouches.

You may not purchase or possess the devices for consumption or any parts of them (components of an e-cigarette, such as a tank).

What is meant by media harmful to minors?

Children and young people are strictly prohibited from purchasing or possessing media and objects that are harmful to minors.

Such media and objects are considered harmful to young people if

1. criminal acts of inhuman brutality are shown
 - for entertainment purposes,
 - they serve to glorify violence or
 - promote aggression or violence in some other manner;
2. people are discriminated against on the basis of their skin colour, worldview, national or ethnic origin, gender, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or disability, or if pornographic acts or sexuality that disregard human dignity are depicted.

Content that is harmful to minors may be found on analogue data carriers and media as well as on digital media and online media.

How old do I have to be in order to possess weapons and soft guns?

The possession of weapons, ammunition and blank cartridges is prohibited for persons under the age of 18! Further regulations on gun ownership for persons over the age of 18 can be found in the Weapons Act.

Airsoft guns (soft guns), paintball markers and imitation weapons that could be mistaken for real ones are considered to be objects harmful to minors. Their purchase or possession is prohibited until the age of 18.

Are there age restrictions for participating in games of chance and sports betting?

Until you are 18 years old, you are not allowed to use slot machines, participate in games of chance or place sports bets.

How old do I have to be to hitchhike?

You are only permitted to flag down motor vehicles driven by people you do not know in order to be given a lift once you are 16 years old (this also applies to booking a ride via internet platforms, known as 'carpooling websites'). However, there are exceptions. These are: in emergencies, if you know the driver, or if you are accompanied by a guardian.

At what age am I criminally responsible?

From the age of 14, you are responsible for any criminal offences you commit and are also liable in general for damages for any illegal actions.

In exceptional cases, if you are not yet 14 years old, your parents or legal guardians will be liable for your unlawful conduct if damage occurs.

What penalties must I expect if I violate youth protection regulations?

If you do not comply with the youth protection regulations, the law provides for the following penalties: warnings, counselling, group work, training measures, social services, fines of up to €300.

During an inspection, police officers or other supervisory authorities are entitled to confiscate alcoholic beverages, tobacco/nicotine products and similar items, drugs or media or objects that are harmful to minors. In addition, if there is suspicion of a violation of the alcohol regulations in the Youth Act, you may be asked to take a breathalyser test.

When am I allowed to move out of the family home?

Until you reach the age of majority, i.e. until your 18th birthday, your parents or legal guardians have, in principle, the right to determine your place of residence.

At what age am I allowed to get a piercing or tattoo?

From the age of 14, you are assumed to be able to judge for yourself the implications of getting a piercing, so that consent from your parents or legal guardians is not required. Exceptions: The consent of parents or legal guardians is required if the pierced area does not heal within 24 days, or the piercing is to be made in a very sensitive area or if the procedure involves high risks.

In principle, tattoos are permitted from the age of 18. However, with the consent of parents or legal guardians from the age of 16.