

# Awareness and use of short-fill e-liquids by youth in England in 2021: Findings from the ITC Youth Survey

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## Abstract

**Background:** Refillable e-cigarettes were popular among youth in England in 2021. The UK Tobacco and Related Products Regulations (TRPR) limits e-liquids to 20 mg/mL of nicotine in a 10 mL bottle. Short-fill e-liquids, which are not covered by TRPR regulations, are typically nicotine-free and come in larger, underfilled bottles allowing customisation with the addition of 'nicotine shots'. This paper investigates awareness, use, and reasons for use of short-fill e-liquids among youth in England.

**Methods:** Data are from the online 2021 International Tobacco Control Youth Survey, comprising 4224 youth (aged 16–19 years) in England. Weighted logistic regression models investigated associations between awareness and past 30-day use of short-fills by smoking status, vaping status, nicotine strength vaped and participant demographics. Reasons for use were also reported.

**Results:** Approximately one-quarter (23.0%) of youth in England reported awareness of short-fill e-liquids. Among youth who had vaped in the past 30 days, 22.1% had used short-fills in the past 30 days; use was most prevalent among those who were also smoking (43.2%) and those who reported usually vaping nicotine concentrations of 2.1% (21 mg/mL) or more (40.8%). 'Convenience of a bigger bottle' was the most selected reason for use (45.0%), followed by 'less expensive than regular e-liquids' (37.6%).

**Conclusions:** Awareness of short-fills was common among youth in 2021, including among those who had never vaped or smoked. Among youth who vaped in the past 30 days, short-fill use was more prevalent among those who also smoked and those who vaped nicotine-containing e-liquids. Integration of short-fill products into existing e-cigarette regulations should be considered.

## Recommended Citation

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