

# In custody at the police station

## What do the words mean?



You might be reading this because the police have arrested you or someone you know. They think you or someone you know might have broken the law.

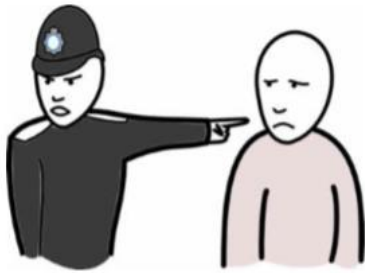


The police want to find out more about what has happened.

It doesn't mean that you have definitely done anything wrong.

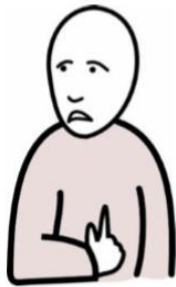


Here is a list of some words you might hear or read and what they mean at the police station.



## Accused

Saying someone has done something wrong.



## Admit

Saying yes you did something



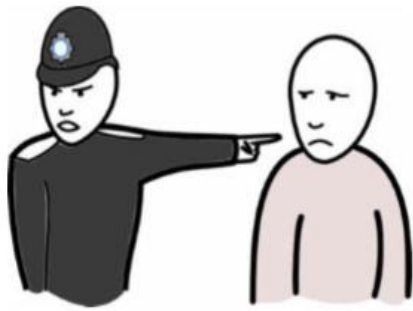
## Appropriate adult

A sensible adult who can support you. They can be someone in your family or a special worker.



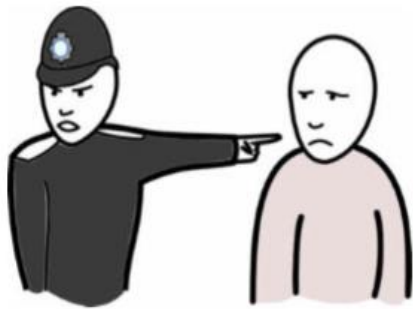
If you are under 18 or a vulnerable adult you need an appropriate adult when the police **interview** you or do a **strip search**.

An appropriate adult is not a law expert like a **solicitor**.



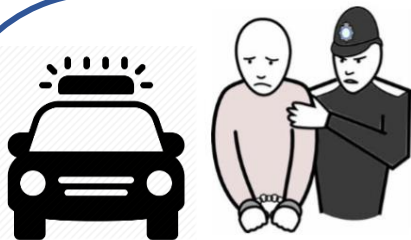
## Allege

Saying something bad has happened



## Allegation

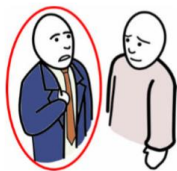
A bad thing that someone says has happened.



## Arrested

Being taken to a police station because they think you may have done a crime.

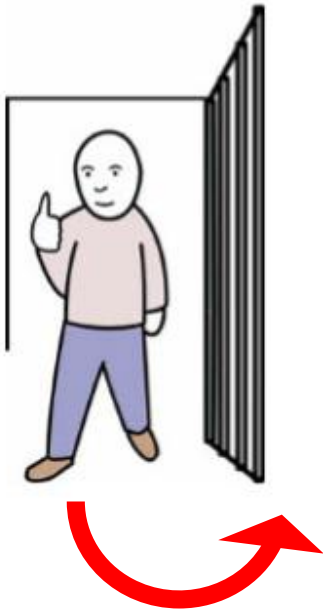
The police will ask you questions about it.



You have the right to have a **lawyer** to help you.



If you are less than 18 years old the police must make sure you have an **appropriate adult** with you.



## Bail

Being allowed out and told to come back another day.

! You may have certain conditions. For example, there may be people you are not allowed to see or places you are not allowed to go to.

It is very important that you keep to the conditions.

! You must come back when the police say.



## Body search

Someone pats your body to check if you have got anything you are not allowed to keep.

You keep most of your clothes on but you might have to take off your coat.



## Caution

A warning to be careful. There are 2 main types of caution at the police station.

1. The police give you a caution when they **arrest** you. This is a warning about what you say or don't say.
2. They may give you a different type of caution if they let you go. This is about what they think you did wrong. They warn you about what will happen if you do it again.



## Cell

A locked room where you wait on your own.



You have the right to ask for things you need.



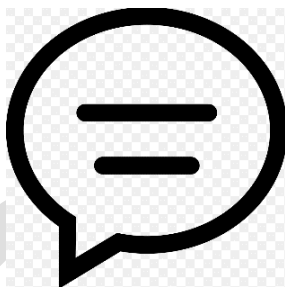
## Charge

The police tell you officially that they think you have done a crime and you need to go to **court**.

The police may drive you to court.



Or they may give you papers telling you when you must go to court. It is important to go to court at the right time on the day the papers say.



## Comment

Saying something



## Court

The place where people decide if you broke the law and what should happen next.



## Custody

Being locked up in a police station or in prison.



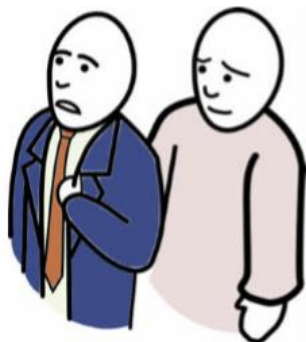
## Custody desk

The desk where the police book you in to the police station.

They do not ask you questions about what happened yet.



It will help you if you answer the questions about your name, age, and an adult the police can contact for you.



## Defence

You or a **lawyer** saying why you did or didn't do something.



## Evidence

Information that helps to prove what really happened



## Fingerprints

The police take a picture of the pattern in the skin on your fingertips.

This is one of the ways the police check who you are for **evidence**.



## Hearing

When a **court** hears what everyone has to say.



## Illegal

Against the law.





## Interview

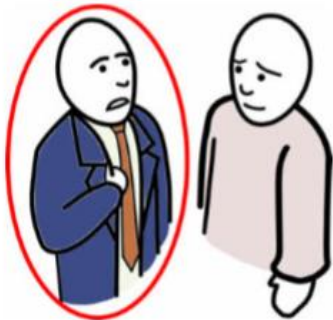
The police ask you questions about what happened. You get the chance to tell your story.



You can have a **solicitor** to give you advice.



If you are under 18 or a vulnerable adult the police must make sure you have an **appropriate adult** with you.



## Lawyer

Someone who knows about the law and can give you advice about it. Usually a **solicitor**.



## Magistrate

The people in charge of a lower **court** where most cases start off.

There are usually 3 magistrates in court.



## Mouth swab

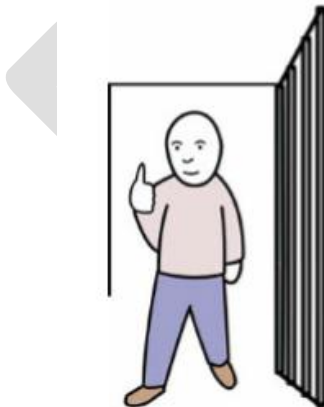
Someone rubs a soft stick inside your mouth to collect your DNA.

This is one of the ways the police check who you are for **evidence**.



## No comment

Not saying anything.



## No further action (NFA)

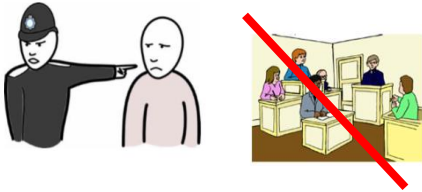
You are allowed to go.

This is the end of the matter. The police are not going to take you to **court**.



## Offence

Something that is against the law.  
A crime is an offence.



## Out of court disposal

The police still think you have done something wrong but they are not going to take you to **court**.

They will give you a **caution** (a warning).

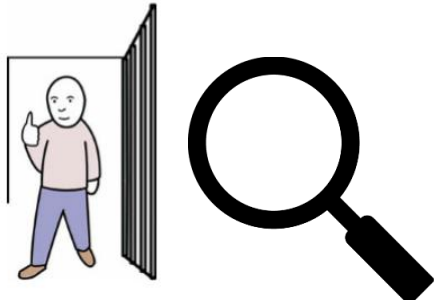


## Postal requisition

The police send you a letter telling you they have **charged** you with an **offence**.



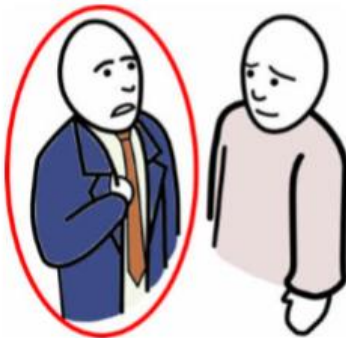
The letter will say when you must go to **court**. It is important to go to court at the right time on the day the letter says.



## Released under investigation (RUI)

You are allowed to go.

- ! The police will look for more **evidence**. They may want to talk to you again.
- ! The police will decide if they need to **charge** you. Then they will send you a letter to tell you what they have decided.



## Solicitor

A **lawyer** who can give you advice about the law and help you get ready for **court** or speak for you in a **magistrates** court.



## Statement

Writing down what really happened. Someone else can write this down for you and if you agree you just have to sign it.

- ! It is important that you understand and agree with what you sign.



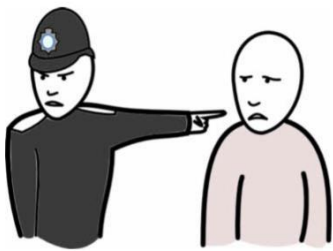
## Strip search

You have to take your clothes off so the police can check your body and clothes.

They are only allowed to do this if they think you are hiding something you are not allowed to keep, for example a knife or **illegal** drugs.



If you are under 18 your **appropriate adult** must be there when this happens, unless you want them to leave.



## Suspect

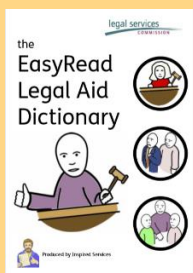
Police think the person broke the law.



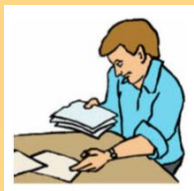
## Witness

Someone who saw or heard something. They can tell the police or the court what happened.

This booklet was made in June 2019



It uses some of The Easy Read Legal Aid Dictionary commissioned by the Legal Services Commission and produced by Inspired Services Publishing.



The people who made the Legal Aid Dictionary hoped their words and pictures will be used by other people who work with the law so that more people understand what is happening.

We hope this happens with our words and pictures, too.