



**Rob:** Hello, I'm Rob, welcome to 6 Minute English. With me in the studio today is Feifei. Hello Feifei.

**Feifei:** Hi Rob.

**Rob:** In today's programme we're discussing something that some people enjoy, some people can't stop doing and others just find disgusting. I am of course talking about smoking. In several countries, including the UK, there is **a smoking ban** in public places – in other words it's against the law to smoke in places such as railway stations and cafes. And it's soon to be banned in a country where smoking is a popular habit. Today we'll be looking at words and phrases to do with smoking but, as usual, we need to start with a question and this is for you to answer Feifei.

**Feifei:** OK.

**Rob:** According to figures from the World Lung Foundation, the people of which country smoke the most cigarettes each year?

- a) China
- b) Estonia
- c) Serbia

**Feifei:** I think I'll go for answer a, China.

**Rob:** Ok, well let's find out if you are right at the end of the programme. We are talking about smoking cigarettes today. I think many of us know about the health risks of **lighting up** – that's another way of saying smoking a cigarette.

**Feifei:** Yes. The World Health Organisation says smoking eventually kills half the people that do it. So it's no surprise that we hear about more smoking bans being implemented – or put in place.

**Rob:** But despite this, the consumption of tobacco products – like cigarettes – is increasing around the world. But there is some hope for people in Russia – that's where a new ban on smoking in public places is to be introduced.

**Feifei:** It's quite surprising isn't it, because many people in Russia like to smoke a lot.

**Rob:** We could say they '**smoke like chimneys**' - meaning they smoke all the time! Let's hear more about the new legislation – or law- from BBC correspondent, Joshua Rozenberg. How does he describe the action of people smoking?

**BBC correspondent, Joshua Rozenberg:**

*I'm standing outside a train station in Moscow. By the entrance here there are several people puffing away on cigarettes. But from June 1st that will be illegal. Under the new anti-smoking law signed by President Putin, smoking will be banned within 15 metres of entrances to railway stations, airports and ports; it will be illegal to smoke at educational establishments, town halls, government offices and in the parliament. Also in the lobbies of apartment blocks, on beaches and on children's playgrounds. And from June 2014 this ban will be extended to include hotels, restaurants, bars and cafes, and trains and ships.*

**Rob:** That's Joshua Rozenberg describing people 'puffing away' on cigarettes – an informal way of saying they're smoking. But those people won't be able to puff away for much longer.

**Feifei:** No. From June they will have **to stub out** – or put out their lit cigarettes because it will be illegal – against the law – to smoke within 15 metres of certain public places. These are places that everybody uses, like airports, town halls and educational establishments – that means schools, colleges and universities. And we heard that next year the ban will be extended – so made wider to include other places such as in hotels and bars.

**Rob:** It's quite a significant change in the law but the government wants to make reducing smoking one of the cornerstones of its bid to improve public health. That means they want to make it the main thing that improving health will depend on.

**Feifei:** That's right, but it will be difficult to implement because so many Russians are **addicted** to smoking – they just can't stop doing it even if they want to. Will they take notice of the new law?

**Rob:** Well there's an idiom that says '**put that in your pipe and smoke it**', meaning just accept it! Anyway, let's hear more from the BBC's Joshua Rozenberg. Can you work out what might encourage smokers to give up – or quit?

**BBC correspondent, Joshua Rozenberg:**

*The legislation will affect a huge number of people. Russia has one of the highest smoking rates in the world - an estimated 44 million Russians are addicted - that's nearly one third of the population. It's unclear whether the new law will reduce those figures. Much will depend on the price of cigarettes - right now they're incredibly cheap - most of the packs in the tobacco kiosk outside this station are selling for the equivalent of one and a half dollars.*

**Feifei:** So incredibly, a third of people in Russia are addicted to smoking. That's a lot of people who will need to control their **cravings** – or their uncontrollable need to smoke - when they're out and about.

**Rob:** But it will be hard **to extinguish** – or put out - their cigarettes because they are incredibly cheap to buy. You can buy a pack from a kiosk – which is a very small shop selling small items – for less than one and a half dollars. So to help people stop smoking, prices need to rise.

**Feifei:** Well the government is planning to introduce a minimum retail price – that's a price below which cigarettes cannot be sold. That may discourage people from smoking.

**Rob:** If not, we could say the government's plans will have **gone up in smoke** – in other words, it will be wasted. But one thing that will not go up in smoke is today's question.

**Feifei:** Oh dear!

**Rob:** Earlier, Feifei, I asked you: according to figures from the World Lung Foundation, the people of which country smoke the most cigarettes each year?

**Feifei:** And I said China.

**Rob:** And you were wrong. The answer was Serbia . 2,861 cigarettes per person are smoked each year. Well, we're out of time. Let's stub out this programme for today. Please join us again soon for 6 Minute English from bbclearningenglish.

**Both:** Bye.

## Vocabulary and definitions

<b>a smoking ban</b>	a law that does not allow smoking
<b>lighting up</b>	lighting / smoking a cigarette
<b>to smoke like a chimney</b>	to smoke a lot
<b>to stub out</b>	to put a cigarette out (by pushing the remaining part of the cigarette on to a hard surface like an ash tray)
<b>addicted</b>	unable to stop doing something even though you want to
<b>put that in your pipe and smoke it</b>	to accept what you are told, even if you don't like it
<b>cravings</b>	strong feelings for doing something (eg: smoking)
<b>to extinguish</b>	to put out
<b>to go up in smoke</b>	to be a waste of time

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