



Bizarre Laws Around the World

A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

1. What is the strangest law you have ever heard of?
2. Why do you think some countries create unusual laws?
3. Should bizarre laws be removed or kept for tradition? Give a reason.
4. Have you ever broken a law without realizing it? What happened?
5. Which country do you think has the weirdest rules, and why?

B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

Match the words with their meanings. Check this again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| ___ 1. ban | a) a local or city law |
| ___ 2. permit | b) a minor legal offense |
| ___ 3. curfew | c) to make people obey a law |
| ___ 4. enforce | d) a fixed time people must be at home |
| ___ 5. loophole | e) a gap in a rule that lets you avoid it |
| ___ 6. penalty | f) a broad label that covers many items |
| ___ 7. ordinance | g) to officially prohibit something |
| ___ 8. jurisdiction | h) the area where a rule applies |
| ___ 9. public decency | i) behavior considered acceptable in public |
| ___ 10. umbrella term | j) a punishment for breaking a rule |
| ___ 11. misdemeanor | k) to allow something by rule |
| ___ 12. compliance | l) following a rule or requirement |

READING



1. Every country has laws that make sense only when you know the local history. In Switzerland, for example, it is illegal to own just one guinea pig because they are social animals and can suffer when kept alone. In Venice, feeding pigeons in the main square is banned to protect historic buildings. Many so called bizarre laws are simply practical answers to everyday problems.
2. Headlines often oversimplify these rules. People sometimes say “gum is illegal in Singapore,” but the real target is sales and littering. In Japan, some towns ask people not to walk while using a phone to reduce accidents. In Thailand, stepping on currency is illegal because it shows disrespect to the king whose image appears on the money. Cultural context shapes both the law and public reaction to it.
3. Whether these laws seem amusing or annoying, they raise useful questions. What counts as public decency? How far should local governments go to protect historical sites, animals, or safety? When a rule looks odd, look first at the problem it tries to solve. Often a curiosity turns into a lesson about culture, design, and the trade offs we make in public life.

COMPREHENSION

1. Why is it illegal to own only one guinea pig in Switzerland?
2. Why did Venice ban feeding pigeons in the main square?
3. How is the “gum is illegal in Singapore” claim misleading?
4. What local problem are Japan’s phone walking rules trying to reduce?
5. Why can stepping on Thai currency be punished?

VOCABULARY REVIEW

Complete the sentences.

1. The city passed a new _____ that limits late night construction noise.
2. Police can _____ safety rules during large festivals to prevent accidents.
3. Visitors risk a heavy _____ if they leave trash near the monuments.
4. Because of a legal _____, the bar kept its patio open past midnight.
5. The campaign improved _____ with recycling rules across neighborhoods.
6. The beach town introduced a 10 p.m. _____ for fireworks.
7. Only the national government has _____ over immigration policy.
8. Selling certain items without a _____ is not allowed in this market.
9. Posters urged “_____ in public spaces: dress modestly for the temple.”
10. “Street food” is an _____ that includes many local dishes and snacks.

GRAMMAR REVIEW - FUTURE: WILL vs GOING TO

Use 'will' for spontaneous decisions, promises, offers, and predictions without strong evidence. Use 'going to' for plans or predictions based on present evidence.

1. I think people _____ (find) these laws surprising.
2. We _____ (visit) the town hall tomorrow; it is already on the itinerary.
3. Do not worry, I _____ (help) you complete the permit form right now.
4. Look at those dark clouds over the sea - it _____ (rain).
5. The council _____ (review) the ordinance next month; it is scheduled.
6. He forgot his wallet; I _____ (pay) the fine for him this time.
7. They _____ (launch) a campaign to explain the pigeon feeding ban.
8. Be careful with your phone while walking - you _____ (bump) into someone.
9. The mayor just called; she _____ (join) our meeting in five minutes.
10. We _____ (collect) signatures this weekend; everything is prepared.

DISCUSSION

1. Which law from the reading do you find most reasonable? Why?
2. When should public safety override personal freedom? Give an example.
3. Is it fair to fine tourists for breaking local customs they do not know?
4. If your city could adopt one unusual rule for a month, what would it be and why?

CRITICAL THINKING

Choose a public problem (littering, noise, animal welfare, etc.). Design a narrow law to solve it. Define the goal, the rule, exceptions, and how it would be enforced. Predict benefits and trade offs.