

There are rules you need to follow if you intend to remove a countryside hedgerow. You could get an unlimited fine if you break these rules.

Check if a hedgerow is protected

A countryside hedgerow is a boundary line of bushes which can include trees. A hedgerow is protected, meaning you cannot remove it, if it meets the following criteria for:

- length
- location
- 'importance'

Length

A hedgerow is protected if it's:

- more than 20m long with gaps of 20m or less in its length
- less than 20m long, but meets another hedge at each end

Location

A hedgerow is protected if it's on or next to:

- land used for agriculture or forestry
- land used for breeding or keeping horses, ponies or donkeys
- common land
- a village green
- a site of special scientific interest
- a [protected European site](#) such as a special area of conservation or special protection area
- a local or national nature reserve
- land belonging to the state

A hedgerow is not protected if it's in, or marks the boundary of, a private garden.

'Importance'

A hedgerow is important, and is protected, if it's at least 30 years old and meets at least one of these criteria:

- marks all or part of a parish boundary that existed before 1850
- contains an archaeological feature such as a [scheduled monument](#)
- is completely or partly in or next to an archaeological site listed on a [Historic Environment Record \(HER\)](#), (formerly a Sites and Monuments Record)
- marks the boundary of an estate or manor or looks to be related to any building or other feature that's part of the estate or manor that existed before 1600
- is part of a field system or looks to be related to any building or other feature associated with the field system that existed before 1845 - you can check the County Records Office for this information
- contains [protected species](#) listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- contains species that are endangered, vulnerable and rare and identified in the [British Red Data books](#)
- includes [woody species](#) and [associated features](#) as specified in [Schedule 1, Part II Criteria, paragraph 7\(1\)](#) of the Hedgerow Regulations - the number of woody species needed to meet the criteria is one less in northern counties

No calculations necessary and no names on this page. Draw a diagram that illustrates the various rules related to hedgerow removal. Your audience is farmers and homeowners. Imagine you are creating an informational poster that would be posted in local government offices.