

AED (Defibrillator)

Question	Answer
What is an AED?	An Automated External Defibrillator that analyses the heart and gives a shock only if needed to help restart a normal rhythm.
When should you use an AED?	As soon as someone is unresponsive and not breathing normally—call 999, start CPR, and use an AED as soon as it's available.
What number do you call in the UK?	Call 999 (use speakerphone). The call handler can tell you if there's an AED nearby and guide you.
Do you need training to use an AED?	No. Anyone can use one. It gives clear verbal and/or visual instructions.
Will an AED shock by mistake?	No. It only shocks if it detects a rhythm that needs it.
Where do AED pads go on an adult?	On the bare chest: one pad high on the right of the chest, one on the left side below the armpit (follow the pictures on the pads).
How do you place pads for a child (1–8 years or <25 kg)?	Use child (paediatric) mode/pads if available. If pads might touch, place one on the centre of the chest and the other on the back (front to back).
Can you use an AED on a baby (<1 year)?	Follow local guidance: if a defibrillator with a baby/child setting and pads is available, use as shown; otherwise, prioritise high-quality CPR and follow 999 guidance.
What if you're alone and there's no AED in sight?	Don't leave the person. Call 999 on speaker, start CPR. Send someone else to fetch an AED if possible.
How fast should chest compressions be?	About 2 per second (≈ 120 per minute). Push hard and in the centre of the chest, allowing full recoil.
How deep should compressions be?	Adults: 5–6 cm with two hands. Children: 4–5 cm with one hand if suitable. Infants: about one-third of chest depth with two fingers.
When should you stop CPR?	If the person starts breathing normally, a healthcare professional takes over, or the AED tells you to stop.
What should you do as soon as an AED arrives?	Turn it on, expose the chest, attach the pads as shown, stand clear when it says 'analysing/shock', then resume CPR immediately when prompted.
How do you find your nearest AED in the UK?	Call 999. The operator can direct you to a nearby registered public access defibrillator.

