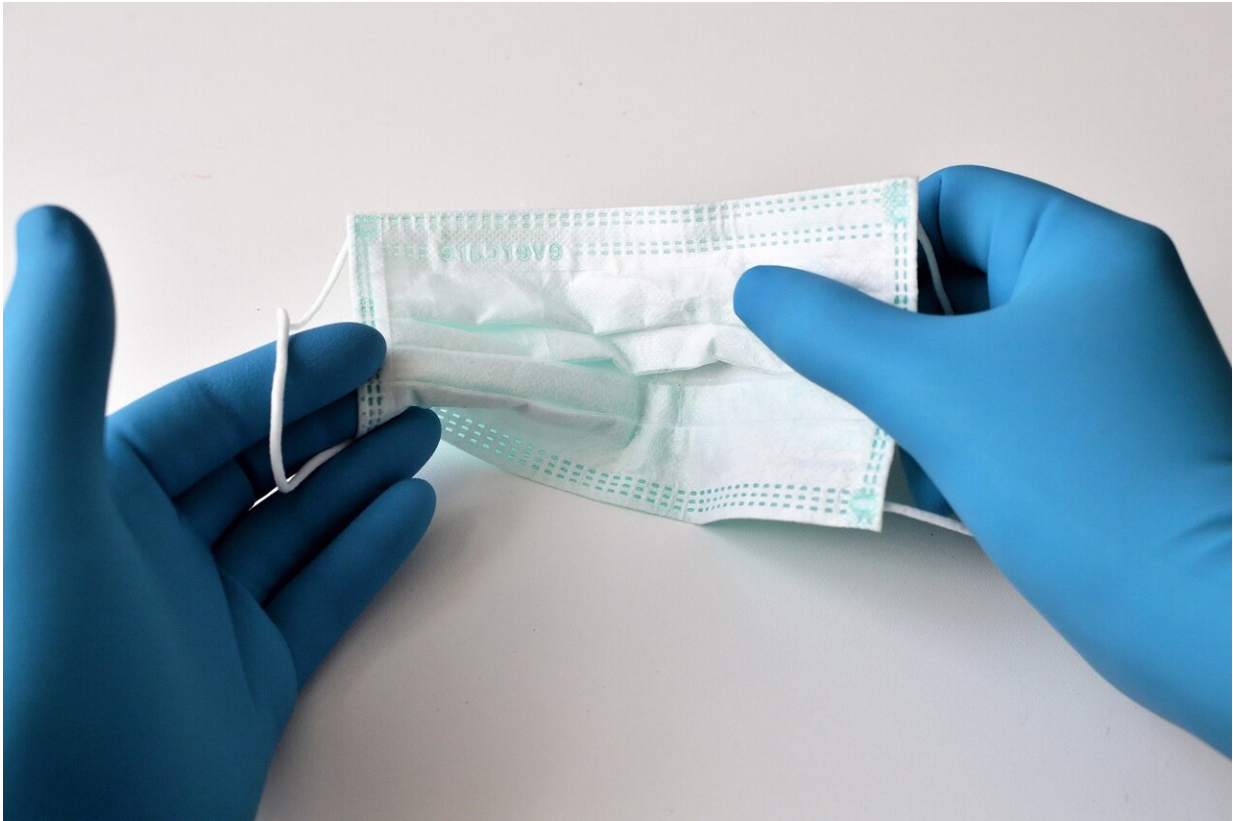


UK's Johnson insists new lockdown will end on Dec 2

November 4 2020



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A second coronavirus lockdown in England will end on December 2, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson said on Wednesday, despite suggestions it could be extended if it fails to cut infections.

Johnson told parliament the restrictions, which come into effect at 0000 GMT Thursday, would "end automatically on December 2".

"We will then, I hope very much, be able to get this country going again, to get businesses, to get shops open again in the run up to Christmas," he told lawmakers.

Last weekend, Johnson announced a [lockdown](#) across England after dire warnings that hospitals would be overwhelmed with cases in the coming months if nothing was done.

But his senior colleague Michael Gove indicated the lockdown could last beyond the December 2 cut-off if it failed to bring infection rates down.

The leader of the main opposition Labour party, Keir Starmer, also suggested it would be "madness" not to extend the measures if it had not been successful.

He argued for a shorter, "circuit-breaker" lockdown last month and accused Johnson of ignoring scientific advice to impose the measures sooner.

The [prime minister](#) sought to reassure [business leaders](#) concerned about the effect of the new round of closures on their bottom line.

"I want to thank you for the heroic efforts you've made," he told the annual conference of the Confederation of British Industry.

"Believe me we will end these autumn measures on December 2nd when they expire," he added.

The lockdown measures include a return to working from home where possible and the closure of all non-essential shops and services, including

pubs, bars and restaurants.

Johnson, however, had been under pressure from some of his own Conservative MPs not to impose the new restrictions given the effect of the first lockdown on jobs and livelihoods.

Britain is among the hardest-hit countries in the world in the outbreak, with more than 47,000 deaths from just over one million positive cases.

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