

## The big debate

# Snacks should be banned in cinemas

For many people, tucking into a bucket of popcorn adds to the fun of going to the cinema – but not everyone feels the same way.

### What you need to know

- A 2015 poll revealed that British people spend almost £8 each on extras, such as popcorn and drinks, when they go to watch a film at the cinema.
- Earlier this year, a film fan started a petition to ban popcorn in all UK cinemas, saying that the noisy snack was ruining his enjoyment of films.
- Popcorn fans responded by starting their own petition, saying that the snack is an important part of the cinema experience.



### CINEMA SNACKS

Cinema snacks differ around the world. In the Netherlands salted liquorice is popular; in Japan it's dried sardines; Norwegians go for dried reindeer meat, and Colombians munch on spicy roasted ants.

Thousands of people are expected to flock to the cinema this month to see *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* and other Christmas blockbusters. Many people will buy snacks to enjoy during the screening. A 2015 YouGov poll found that British people spend an average of £7.85 each on extras, like sweets, popcorn and drinks, every time they go to the cinema. However, in January, a film fan called Mike Shotton set up a petition to ban the sale of popcorn in all UK cinemas. He complained that the noise of people rustling and crunching, as well as popcorn's strong smell, were ruining his movie experience. So far only 533 people have signed the petition. In response, some popcorn fans then started their own petition, saying that the snack is an essential part of going to the cinema.

### Snacks are antisocial

When people are rustling and chomping popcorn and other snacks in the cinema, it is distracting and can spoil the film for you. Some people also find the smell of food like popcorn and nachos unpleasant. These treats are messy and there is often lots of fallen food and litter to be cleared up after a screening. What's more, the snacks often come in huge sizes and contain a lot of fat, sugar and salt, which are not good for you. The refreshments aren't cheap either – a bucket of popcorn can cost about £5. Parents may feel pressured to buy treats for their children on top of the expensive cinema tickets they've already paid for. Cinemas are just selling treats as a way to make more money, but the cost could put families off going to see films at all.

### No snacks means no fun

Going to the cinema is about more than just watching the film. Having snacks like popcorn, drinks, pick 'n' mix sweets or ice cream is an important part of the whole experience. What could be more fun than enjoying a film together with friends or family while sharing tasty treats? It is exciting choosing what you want to eat in the cinema and, because it doesn't happen every day, the food doesn't have to be super-healthy. Cinemas are very expensive to run and a lot of the money from ticket sales goes to the companies that make the films, not to the cinema. If cinemas were banned from selling food and drinks, they may not make enough money and might have to shut down, and that would be bad for everyone.



### 3 reasons FOR snacks being banned in cinemas

- 1 Cinemas ask you to turn your mobile phone off and then they let people eat noisy snacks which ruins the film anyway.
- 2 Cinema refreshments often come in very big sizes and are unhealthy.
- 3 Selling expensive snacks is just another way for cinemas to get more money out of you.



### 3 reasons AGAINST snacks being banned in cinemas

- 1 Eating popcorn and sweets is a big part of the cinema experience and adds to the fun.
- 2 Selling snacks and drinks is an essential way for cinemas to make enough money to stay in business.
- 3 Why would you ban something that tastes so good?



### What do you think?

Now you've read a bit more about it, tell us what you think by voting in our online poll at [theweekjunior.co.uk/polls](http://theweekjunior.co.uk/polls). Vote **FOR** if you agree that snacks should be banned in the cinema, or vote **AGAINST** if you think they're part of the fun. We'll publish the results next week.

### Last week's poll



Last week our debate motion was: Royals have a right to a private life. You said yes, they do a job and they deserve a break.



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