

Smoking is a major cause of serious illness and death throughout the world today. In the interest of the public health, governments should ban cigarettes and other tobacco products.

Do you agree or disagree?

There are widely differing views on the issue of whether tobacco should be banned or not. Some people would suggest that it is their right to smoke and that prohibiting cigarettes would be a violation of their civil liberties; however, I personally believe that tobacco should indeed be made illegal. There are two principal reasons for this.

One point which I believe to be absolutely pivotal is the fact that tobacco is a drug. The majority of governments around the world take a prohibitionist approach to the problem of substance abuse. If the governments wish to be consistent in pursuing their "war on drug", therefore, I believe they must ban tobacco as well. This is particularly so given the fact that many currently illicit drugs – including heroin and marijuana - have legitimate medical applications, while tobacco has none.

However, perhaps the strongest argument in favour of banning cigarettes and other tobacco products is that of public health. It is irrefutable fact that smoking leads to lung cancer and other such potentially fatal diseases. Pro-smoking groups would no doubt argue that each individual has the right to determine what goes into his/her own body. Nevertheless, I would suggest that the interests and rights of society at large must override those of the individual. The medical treatment that smokers require is often incredibly costly, and it is frequently governments and society that cover these costs rather than the individual smoker. Hence, I feel laws prohibiting smoking would be entirely justified.

In reality, of course, the widespread prohibition of smoking is unlikely in the near future. However, given the seriousness of the problems that it causes, I believe that this should be the ultimate goal.

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ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

Basic	Intermediate	Advanced
question (n/v)	issue (n)	
	ban (n/v)	prohibit (v)
	illegal (adj)	illicit (adj)
main (adj)		principal (adj)
important (adj)		absolutely pivotal
	therefore (adv)	thus (adv) hence (adv)
most (adj)		the majority of
	drug abuse	substance abuse
want (v)		wish (v)
		especially (adv) particularly (adv)
	Proven (adj)	irrefutable (adj)
	Cause (n/v)	lead to
pay the bill		cover the cost
	illness (n) diseases (n)	
expensive (adj)		Costly (adj)
decide (v)		Determine (v)
		I would argue that / I would suggest that
need (v)		require (v)
	however (adv)	nevertheless (adv)
very (adv)	incredibly (adv)	
often (adv)	frequently (adv)	
	feel (v) believe (v)	

