

YouTube Compliance Cheat Sheet

Understanding YouTube's Guidelines for Cannabis Content

YouTube enforces strict community guidelines regarding cannabis-related content. Understanding these rules will help you avoid strikes, age restrictions, and demonetization while keeping your channel safe and growing.

What YouTube Allows & Restricts

Permitted Content (Low-Risk)

- Educational videos about cannabis science, law, or history
- News coverage on cannabis legalization and policies
- Documentary-style content about cannabis culture
- Discussions about personal experiences (without encouraging use)

Restricted Content (High-Risk)

- Encouraging or glorifying cannabis use
- Selling, linking to, or promoting cannabis products
- Step-by-step guides on how to grow, extract, or consume cannabis
- Showing minors using or being exposed to cannabis

YouTube's Three Types of Content Moderation

1 Age Restriction (18+ Only)

- Video is available but only to signed-in users over 18
- It won't appear in public search results
- Monetization is typically removed

2 Demonetization (Limited or No Ads)

- Video remains public but won't earn ad revenue
- You may still monetize via memberships, sponsorships, and affiliate marketing

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3 Takedown (Strike or Removal)

- Video is removed, and a strike is issued
- Three strikes within 90 days result in channel termination

How to Keep Your Content Compliant

- Frame your videos as educational or documentary-style
- Blur or censor cannabis-related visuals when necessary
- Use alternative wording (e.g., 'herbal remedies' instead of 'weed')
- Avoid links to cannabis-related sales sites
- Use disclaimers: 'For educational purposes only. No sales or promotions.'

Appeal Process (What to Do if You Get Flagged)

If your video gets age-restricted, demonetized, or removed, you can appeal.

Steps to Appeal a Strike or Takedown:

- 1 Review YouTube's guidelines to see if a policy was actually violated.
- 2 Go to YouTube Studio. Select the flagged video. Click Appeal.
- 3 Use a professional and factual appeal message.
- 4 If the appeal is denied, consider re-editing & re-uploading with compliance fixes.

Bonus: Copy-Paste Strike Appeal Template

Subject: Video Appeal - Compliance with YouTube Guidelines

Dear YouTube Team,

I recently received a [strike/demonetization notice] for my video titled '[Video Title]'. After reviewing the Community Guidelines, I strongly believe my content aligns with YouTube's policies and was flagged in error.

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- My video does not promote or glorify cannabis use it is strictly educational.
- I have ensured compliance by [mentioning disclaimers, avoiding sales links, censoring visuals, etc.].
- Many other educational channels cover similar topics without restriction.

I kindly request a manual review to reconsider this decision. I appreciate your time and effort in keeping YouTube a fair platform for educators and content creators.

Best Regards,

[Your Name]

[Your Channel Name]