# Man sentenced for inappropriate prank at Go Outdoors store



Ricki Hughes, a 41-year-old resident of Runcorn, was sentenced to 12 weeks in prison following an incident in a Go Outdoors store in Warrington that has drawn significant public attention. Hughes was convicted of using threatening, abusive, or insulting behaviour that caused distress to a store employee, believed to be part of a prank related to a stag do on January 4 of this year.

The events unfolded around 2:30 PM when Hughes entered the store, ostensibly seeking a refund on a pair of shoes. He presented a shoe box to a female staff member, which she later discovered contained a flesh-toned sex toy in addition to the shoes. Simultaneously, a second man filmed the interaction, signalling to the staff member that they were at the centre of a prank. This realisation left her feeling humiliated, prompting her to request that Hughes leave the store due to his behaviour, which she described as making others uncomfortable.

Witnesses described Hughes as seemingly unfazed by the impact of his actions. He reportedly responded to the employee’s discomfort with declarations that "it's just a joke, it's just banter," and further escalated the situation by holding the sex toy to his nose and sniffing it. The staff member, a student teacher, became visibly distressed and required support from colleagues, who escorted her to an office after she broke down in tears.

Hughes's actions were captured on CCTV, which subsequently aided Cheshire Police in identifying him. During a voluntary interview with detectives, he allegedly giggled throughout the proceedings, indicating a lack of seriousness regarding the situation.

The court proceedings revealed that Hughes had a substantial criminal history, with 30 prior convictions for a range of 69 offences, including drug-related incidents and breaches of community orders. In defence, lawyer Julian Nutter contended that Hughes’s behaviour stemmed from a misguided attempt at humour, invoking comparisons to vintage television shows such as "Benny Hill" and "Candid Camera." Nutter expressed that Hughes's actions were reflective of a cultural clash between traditional humour and modern sensibilities, though he acknowledged the distress caused to the victim.

Upon his appeal, which took place on Thursday, Recorder Carwyn Cox recognized the original court's sentencing as erroneous but upheld the essence of the conviction. While the court found that there were mitigating circumstances, such as Hughes’s lack of prior offences for behaviour of this nature, it concluded that the incident itself was clearly inappropriate.

Cox stated, "In our view, this incident was clearly distasteful and ill thought through... There was obviously no need for this behaviour to have taken place on this day." The judge also noted the insensitivity of Hughes’s conduct, especially considering the context in which the store employee was trying to do her job.

Following the ruling, Hughes, dressed in a grey Nike t-shirt, responded with a nod and a "thank you" as the court re-evaluated his sentence. He was ordered to pay court costs amounting to £85 along with a £154 victim surcharge. Police Constable Graham Davies commented on the incident, stating, "While Hughes may have seen this as just a prank, the store worker was not amused and was left traumatised by his actions."

Hughes will remain in custody until July 2026 owing to prior convictions, adding to the complexity of his situation. This case continues to highlight discussions surrounding acceptable behaviours within the boundaries of humour, particularly in public spaces.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.warrington-worldwide.co.uk/2025/04/11/dad-who-traumatised-shop-worker-with-stag-do-sex-toy-prank-has-jail-sentence-reduced-on-appeal/> - This URL corroborates the incident involving Ricki Hughes at Warrington's Go Outdoors store, where he used a sex toy as part of a prank, and provides details about his sentencing and appeal.
* <https://www.vacourts.gov/courts/scv/rulesofcourt.pdf> - While not directly related to the incident, this document on the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia provides general legal context about court proceedings and potential appeals.
* <https://www.txcourts.gov/media/1457525/texas-rules-of-civil-procedure.pdf> - This document provides additional legal context regarding civil procedures, which indirectly supports understanding of how court cases, such as Hughes', can be managed and appealed.
* <https://www.courts.michigan.gov/4903ae/siteassets/publications/benchbooks/cvrb/cvrb.pdf> - This document offers insights into victim rights and legal procedures, potentially relevant to the impact on the store employee and how such cases are handled.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - The article's source, though it does not provide direct corroboration for the specific claims as it is a news service and not a specific article link.