

Price Marking of Goods for Retail Sale

A guide for retailers which explains the requirements of the Price Marking Order 1999.

What does the order require?

The Order requires that where goods are offered for retail sale, the selling price and, where appropriate, the unit price must be given to consumers in writing (this includes in catalogues, in shops and via the internet).

How should price indications be given?

The indication of the price at which goods are available to consumers must be **clearly legible, unambiguous, easily identifiable and inclusive of VAT and any additional taxes.**

Prices can be:

- shown on goods themselves;
- on a ticket or notice near to the goods; or
- grouped together with other prices on a list or catalogue(s) in close proximity to the goods. If counter catalogues are used then there should be sufficient copies for consumers to refer to.

However, if goods are kept out of sight of the consumer, they are exempt from price marking until an indication is given that they are for sale.

Price indications should be available and legible to consumers without them having to ask for assistance in order to see them.

What about goods in shop windows?

Window and similar displays which contain items which can be removed and sold to consumers (eg jewellers or bakers), must display selling prices, unless the items are purely promotional and not for sale.

Can price indications be in a foreign currency?

If a trader indicates that he is willing to accept foreign currency for the purchase of a product, in addition to the price in sterling he must also:

- give the price in the foreign currency together with any commission to be charged; or
- clearly give the conversion rate together with the commission to be charged.

What about VAT and other charges?

All price indications which can be seen by consumers must include VAT and any other compulsory charges or taxes. Postage, packing or delivery charges may be shown separately as long as they are unambiguous, easily identifiable and clearly legible.

If the rate of VAT changes:

- general notices in store may be used for up to 14 days after the change takes effect, indicating that prices will be adjusted at the till to reflect the change in duty.
- catalogues and sales literature may continue to be distributed providing: - a label is attached indicating prices will be adjusted to reflect the change, and
 - there is sufficient information to allow the adjusted prices to be established, or
 - a supplement accompanies the catalogue/sales literature which enables consumers to establish the selling price.

What are the unit pricing requirements?

A unit price must be given when products are:-

- sold from bulk, or
- required by the Weights & Measures Act 1985 to be marked with an indication of quantity, or
- required by the Weights & Measures Act 1985 to be made up in a prescribed quantity (eg bread).
- a unit price must be given in advertisements only where the selling price of a product is indicated.

The unit price for most items is the price per kilogram, litre, metre, square metre, or cubic metre. Certain items, identified in **Schedule 1**, are exempt from this requirement and the unit price should be given for an alternative quantity (e.g. price per 100g for bread).

For solid food products in a liquid medium (ie water, brine, vinegar, syrups and fruit or vegetable juice) the unit price should refer to the net drained weight of the product.

Traders can give the imperial equivalent unit price, provided the metric unit price is given first and the imperial equivalent is no larger than the metric price.

Where the unit price falls below £1 it must be given to the nearest 0.1p. If it is above £1 must be given to the nearest 1p.

Are there any exemptions?

The following do not require an indication of retail prices:-

- Private sales
- Trade to trade sales (but any indication visible to a consumer must comply)
- Sales of antiques and works of art
- Sales by auction
- Products supplied during the provision of a service (eg shampoo used at a hairdresser)
- Advertisements (this exemption does not apply to catalogues, adverts containing prices, or to advertisements which are intended to encourage distance contracts eg via the internet)

The following do not require an indication of the unit price:-

- Advertisements by radio or on the television or cinema
- Products which have had the price reduced due to damage or risk of deterioration
- Assorted products sold in a single package
- Where the item is being sold at its unit price
- Products prepacked in a constant quantity which are either : - sold from a shop with a floor area for retail sale or display not exceeding 280m², or
- sold by a mobile trader (eg selling from a stall, barrow etc), or
- sold from a vending machine.

What are the consequences of non-compliance?

Failure to comply with these requirements is a criminal offence.

SCHEDULE 1

Relevant unit of quantity for specific products for the purpose of the definition of "unit price"

Product	Units
Herbs	10 g
Spices	10 g
Flavouring essences	10 ml
Food colourings	10 ml
Seeds other than pea and bean seeds	10 g
Cosmetic make-up products	10 g/ml
Rice	100 g
Pickles	100 g
Sauces, edible oils	100 ml
Fresh processed salad	100 g
Chilled desserts	100 ml
Cream	100 ml
Bread	100 g
Biscuits	100 g
Pies and flans indicating net quantity	100 g
Ice cream and frozen desserts	100 g/ml
Preserves	100 g
Soups	100 g
Fruit juices, soft drinks	100 ml
Coffee	100 g/ml
Tea and other beverages prepared with liquid	100 g
Confectionery	100 g
Potato crisps and similar products commonly known as snack foods	100 g
Breakfast cereal products	100 g
Dry sauce mixes	100 g
Lubricating oils other than oils for internal combustion engines	100 ml
Shaving creams	100 g/ml
Hand creams	100 ml
All purpose lotions and creams	100 ml
Sun products	100 ml
Oral products, including toothpaste	100 g/ml
Hair lacquer	100 ml

Hair shampoos and conditioners	100 g/ml
Hair strengtheners, creams and brilliantines	100 ml
Bubble baths and foaming products for bath and shower	100 ml
Deodorants	100 g/ml
Talcum powders	100 g
Toilet soaps	100 g
Alcohol based beauty and toilet products containing less than 3% by volume of natural or synthetic perfume oil and less than 70% by volume of pure ethyl alcohol; aromatic waters, hair lotions, pre-shower and after-shave lotions	100 ml
Handrolling and pipe tobacco	100 g
Wines, sparkling wine, liqueur wine, fortified wine	750 ml
Coal, where sold by the kilogram	50 kg
Ballast, where sold by the kilogram	1,000 kg

This leaflet is not an authoritative interpretation of the law and is intended only for guidance.