

Prohibited Donated Items List FAQs

General

Why do we have a Prohibited Donated Items List? Why can't we sell certain items? What should I say to a customer who asks why an item is in our bin/has been disposed of?

We appreciate all donations, but we sometimes do receive items which we can't sell, because they are either broken, damaged, stained or can't be sold for legal or health & safety reasons - this includes any homemade or hand-knitted clothing, accessories or toys. Unfortunately, in these instances, we have no other option but to pay to dispose of them.

Do we accept items made in/supplied by businesses based in countries like Russia or Israel?

Do we accept religious items or texts like the Quran or The Bible?

Yes. Cancer Research UK takes a neutral political stance, if we refused donated items from Russia or Israel (or any other countries in conflict) this would be seen as a politically motivated stance.

The same guidance applies to religious items and texts. Cancer Research UK takes a neutral religious stance, if we refused items like the Quran or The Bible this would be seen as a religiously motivated stance. We also sell buddhas as part of our BIG range which contradicted this previous guidance.

The only exception would be if there was content which could be seen as culturally insensitive/morally wrong e.g., Nazi propaganda.

Clothing & Accessories

Can I sell new items without the care/traceability labels attached?

We can sell new items without care/traceability labels **if the item has been manufactured by a company** (not handmade), as the item would have had to have passed the relevant safety checks at time of manufacturing for it to be sold legally.

Can I sell used items without the care/traceability labels attached?

Used items manufactured by a company (not handmade) without care/traceability labels can also be sold, as the item would have passed the relevant safety checks when it was originally manufactured for it to be sold legally.

Can I sell recently produced or vintage handmade or handknitted clothing?

No.

Why can I sell new and second-hand clothing without care/traceability labels but not handmade or handknitted clothing either with or without care/traceability labels?

Handmade or handknitted clothing **cannot** be sold either with or without care/traceability labels. This is because the item would not have been put through and passed the relevant industry safety checks a business must undertake to be able to legally sell an item.

Can I sell handmade earrings?

If the earrings have been made using new hooks or studs, these can be sold in shops. If the earrings are used, then they cannot be sold in shops.

As these are technically new/repurposed items, we cannot ask for or claim Gift Aid on the sale, as per BIG stock.

A sign needs to be displayed that informs customers of the following –

- That due to personal hygiene reasons, earrings cannot be returned.
- Make clear what the metal is made from on the hooks, as some people have Nickel allergies.

Can I accept items made with real animal fur for vintage markets/events?

CRUK would need to request appropriate documentation from donors, and check if any items need a CITES licence for the onward sale (e.g. due to the type of animal fur, or the location of the buyer).

To get this right would require a substantial investment of time and therefore it isn't normally possible to accept these items. Additionally, there is a reputational risk with being involved in the sale of animal fur, with public viewpoints and market trends highlighting the unethical nature of these products.

If substantial revenue is expected, e.g. from a large donation or for a particular event, Area Managers should contact marketplacequeries@cancer.org.uk to discuss how CRUK can do this compliantly.

Children's items

Can I sell handmade or handknitted toys?

No, as with clothing, they would need to have been put through and passed the relevant industry safety checks for us to be able to legally sell an item in the UK/EU.

Do dolls clothes need to have a fire label or CE label? E.g., 'Baby Anabelle' or 'Build a Bear' clothes?

Clothing intended for toys would fall under the toy safety regulations, and therefore should show CE or UKCA marking, but they wouldn't have to have the fire safety labelling.

I have received a donation of a couple of baby cribs (toy ones for dolls) made of material, would these require a fire label or CE label?

If there is upholstery, it should have a label stating keep away from fire.

If the clothing and doll are part of one piece, then they would have to show just the one marking, this could either be on the item somewhere itself and (if applicable) on the packaging.

Most importantly, toys should have warnings displayed if deemed to be unsuitable for children under 36 months and should state the age the toy is appropriate for.

Can I sell used children's shoes?

Only new children's shoes can be sold in shops.

Furniture & homeware

If an item of furniture doesn't have a fire safety label attached, but comes with an accompanying fire safety certificate instead, can I sell the item?

No, a fire safety label must be directly attached.

Can I sell an item of pre-1950s furniture which doesn't have fire safety labelling?

Yes.

Can I sell padded furniture from approx. 1970's which doesn't have a Batch ID number?

No, if the display labelling is missing then there is no way to trace where these items have come from without the ID or manufacturer details.

How do I find out the date of a furniture item?

Ideally search for labels, stamps, or manufacturing tags, and research the piece online to see if you can identify it. If unsure Online Marketplace may be able to advise as they deal with lots of antique pieces.

Can I sell sofa covers without a fire safety label?

Yes, but the sofa itself must have the fire safety labelling displayed. Loose covers sold separately do not.

Can we sell cushions and covers pre-1950's without fire safety labels?

We can sell pre-1950s covers, but the quality of the filling of cushions needs to be checked and deemed fit for purpose due to the age of the material.

Do curtains, tablecloths and cut off fabric for dress making or Arts & Crafts need to have fire safety labelling attached to them?

Curtains for domestic use do not need the fire labelling but should have a fabric content label to comply with the Textile Products (labelling and fire composition) regulations 2012, unless the fabric is pre-1970's.

Tablecloths and Arts & Crafts fabrics do not require the labelling.

Sharps & weapons

Why can't I sell sharps and weapons? If I find sharps or weapons in a donation, what do I do with them?

We cannot sell dangerous items for legal and safety reasons.

You can dispose of small sharps in your sharps bin in-store.

You can dispose of large sharps and weapons at your local Police station.

Electricals/Software/Hardware

Can I sell a product that is powered by USB?

Yes, if new and in original packaging (if used then it cannot be sold) – but be careful of **used flash drives** or **used storage devices, we can't sell these as this poses a GDPR risk.**

Why can't I sell used electronic devices such as mobile phones, tablets and laptops if I have reset them to their factory settings?

Resetting electronics that hold data to their factory settings does not fully erase personal data, so breaches GDPR regulations regarding data protection. Devices need to be professionally wiped of data using special erasure value tools.

Why can we sell power tools without instructions?

Instructions are normally easy to find online.

Please note some power tools are still prohibited from sale, see the Prohibited Donated Items List for further information.

Miscellaneous

Are we allowed to sell age-restricted items?

There are strict rules concerning the sale of DVDs, Blu-ray discs, CDs, videos, and computer games as laid down by the Video Recordings Act 1984 (amended 2010).

When a customer is purchasing an age restricted item and appears to be under the age of 25 you must ask for ID prior to selling. If the customer is under the age of the certification stated on the item and cannot show proof of ID, then the refusal log must be completed.

How do I know if an item is culturally insensitive?

Any items, terms, names or branding which could cause offence to certain cultures or groups, would be culturally insensitive.

Can I accept World War Two gas masks to sell?

No, these contain asbestos and **cannot be sold**, they must be disposed of appropriately:

- Contact your local authority/council/environmental health department

- They will either collect and dispose of it or ask for it to be taken to them.
- The mask **must be wrapped in a bag and sealed** to prevent anyone deciding to try it on etc.

Can we sell food & drink in-store or online?

We're not able to sell food and drink items donated by our corporate partners or members of the public through our shops. This is because of the Food Standards Agency regulations which would require each shop to be registered as a food retailer.

We have, however, received confirmation from Amazon that any food/drink items we receive from them can be consumed by our shop staff. Shop colleagues may want to offer a suggested donation in exchange for these items, but this is not mandatory. We hope your teams get to enjoy some delicious treats for all their hard work!

Can we sell prescription eyewear or sunglasses without the UVA/UVB mark in-store?

No, but you can remove prescription lenses or lenses without the UVA/UVB mark and sell the frames only.

Why can't we sell unboxed/unwrapped candles?

This is to stop customers trying to light them in the shop. If they are fully wrapped and sealed in cellophane/boxed, then they can be sold.

Why can't we sell used hearing aids?

Used hearing aids need to be recalibrated for new users, and we don't have the technology to do this.