

## Furniture Flammability Advice for Consumers

The role of the Furniture Industry Research Association is to support organisations across the furniture supply chain. As such **we're unable to support consumers with specific enquiries.**

However we are aware some consumers have flammability concerns, so this guide offers general advice, alongside details of further resources (**page 6**) should you need any additional support.

### Q1. What flammability regulations apply to furniture?

The [Furniture and Furnishings \(Fire Safety\) Regulations 1988 \(as amended in 1989, 1993, 2010 and 2025\)](#) set levels of fire resistance for domestic upholstered furniture, furnishings and other products containing upholstery.

It is **illegal for furniture (whether manufactured in the UK or abroad) not to comply with the regulations**, which essentially state that:

- Filling materials must meet specified ignition requirements
- Upholstery composites must be cigarette resistant
- Covers must be match resistant (with certain exceptions)
- A permanent label must be fitted to every item of new furniture (not mattresses and bed-bases) (**see Q2**)

The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations are **enforced by local Trading Standards departments**, so as a consumer, if you need advice, clarification or additional information they are best placed to assist.

### Q2. What permanent flammability labels should I look for?

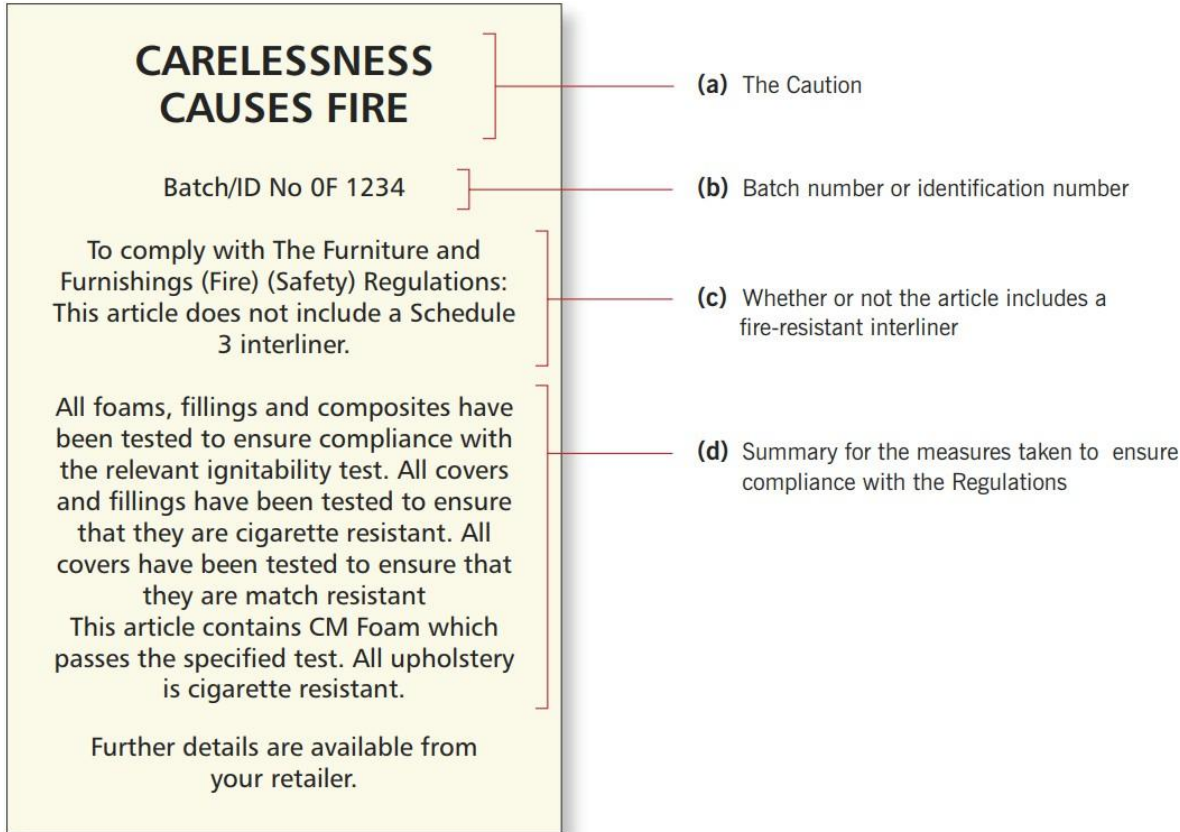
Permanent labelling on furniture assists enforcement officers and shows compliance with specific ignition requirements for covers and fillings. **Do not remove permanent labels from furniture.**

**Permanent labels need to be carried on all items of furniture** except for mattresses divans and bed bases. Furniture sold as a collection of items, such as three-piece suites, must carry a label on each individual item.

Permanent labels may be incorporated into other labels, for example, care labels.

Example labels to look for include:

**Example 1: A shorter label giving only the minimum information about the furniture**



**CARELESSNESS  
CAUSES FIRE** (a) The Caution

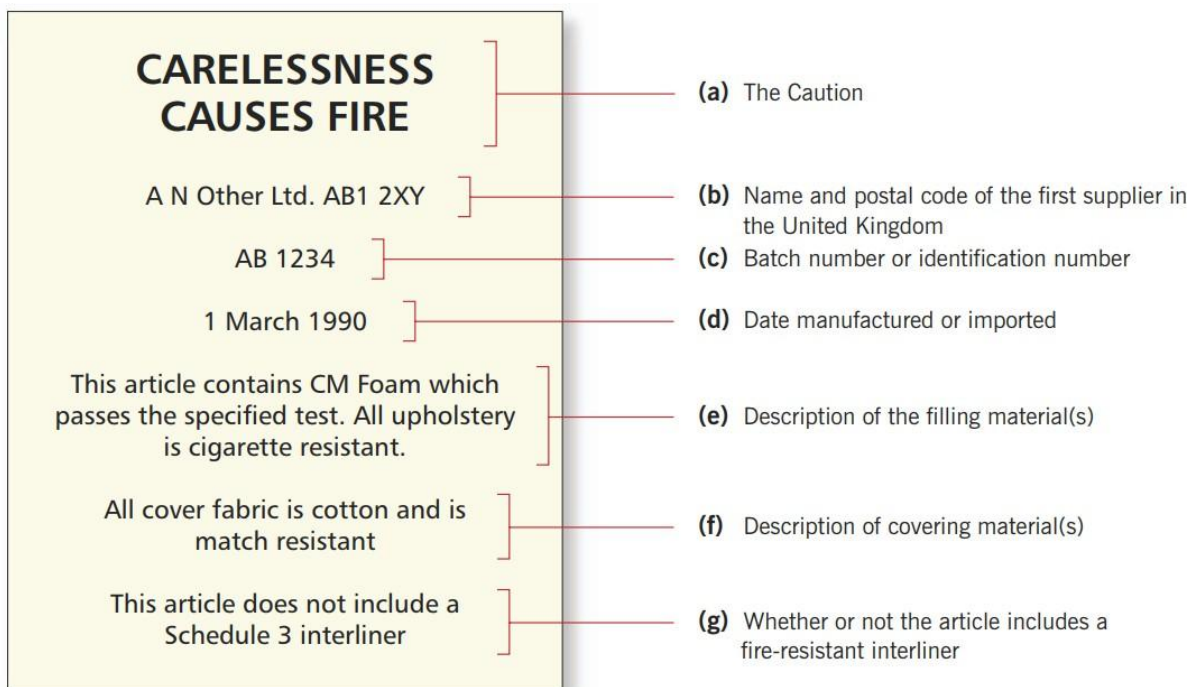
Batch/ID No OF 1234 (b) Batch number or identification number

To comply with The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations:  
This article does not include a Schedule 3 interliner. (c) Whether or not the article includes a fire-resistant interliner

All foams, fillings and composites have been tested to ensure compliance with the relevant ignitability test. All covers and fillings have been tested to ensure that they are cigarette resistant. All covers have been tested to ensure that they are match resistant  
This article contains CM Foam which passes the specified test. All upholstery is cigarette resistant. (d) Summary for the measures taken to ensure compliance with the Regulations

Further details are available from your retailer.

**Example 2: A label giving full information about the furniture**



**CARELESSNESS  
CAUSES FIRE** (a) The Caution

A N Other Ltd. AB1 2XY (b) Name and postal code of the first supplier in the United Kingdom

AB 1234 (c) Batch number or identification number

1 March 1990 (d) Date manufactured or imported

This article contains CM Foam which passes the specified test. All upholstery is cigarette resistant. (e) Description of the filling material(s)

All cover fabric is cotton and is match resistant (f) Description of covering material(s)

This article does not include a Schedule 3 interliner (g) Whether or not the article includes a fire-resistant interliner

### Q3. Can I donate furniture to charity without permanent flammability labels?

It's **illegal for charity shops to sell furniture without permanent flammability labels**, and as such they will not accept donations without correct labelling.

### Q4. Can I sell my old sell furniture without permanent flammability labels?

Yes, as an individual **you can sell your old furniture privately** on eBay etc. without flammability labels.

### Q5. What about flame retardants?

Where necessary fabrics are treated to ensure fire safety in accordance with the Furniture & Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations. Chemicals used must conform to European **Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) regulations** with regards to chemical safety.

As a consumer, if you have queries on flame retardants contact the **European Flame Retardants Association** your local **Trading Standards** or **Citizens Advice Bureau**.

### Q6. Can I purchase upholstery not treated with flame retardants?

It is possible if the product meets the full requirements of the **Furniture & Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations (see Q1)**. Speak to your manufacturer, supplier or retailer for advice on any products which are naturally fire retardant.

### Q7. I bought a mattress from a door-to-door salesman, is it safe?

We won't know whether the mattress is safe.

Our advice is **always to buy from a reputable manufacturer, retailer or supplier**. The **National Bed Federation** has a website full of bed buying advice for consumers, including what labelling to look for on mattresses (covered by British Standard **BS 7177:2008 Specification for resistance to ignition of mattresses, mattress pads, divans and bed bases**).

### Q8. What about furniture in rented accommodation?

**Landlords must ensure furniture and furnishings provided meet the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations (see Q1)**. Contact your local **Citizens Advice Bureau** or local authority if you have any concerns, or alternatively, the London Fire Brigade has **useful information here**.

## Q9. What about furniture in student accommodation?

Domestic landlords must ensure furniture and furnishings provided meet the [Furniture and Furnishings \(Fire Safety\) Regulations](#) (see Q1).

For student accommodation in halls of residence, contract furniture regulations apply under the [Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#). If you have concerns about the standard of accommodation in the halls, you should contact the University for advice.

## Q10. What about garden furniture?

The **Furniture & Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations** (see Q1) apply to upholstered outdoor furniture suitable for use in dwellings, including homes, conservatories, caravans etc.

The regulations don't apply to garden furniture which is unsuitable for use in dwellings (i.e. garden furniture which would not physically fit indoors), non-upholstered garden furniture (e.g. deck-chairs and parasols) and cover fabric of any removable canopy.

All upholstered cushions are required to satisfy the Regulations, each item should have a permanent label.

If you're looking for a reputable garden furniture manufacturer or distributor look for a member of the [Leisure and Outdoor Furniture Association \(LOFA\)](#).

## Q11. What about curtains?

Curtains do not come under the Furniture & Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations. However, under the [General Product Safety Regulations 2005](#) manufacturers, suppliers and retailers are obliged to **provide a safe product**. Report any product concerns to your manufacturer, supplier or retailer, or your local [Trading Standards](#).

## Q12. What about bedding?

Bed throws, blankets, quilts or bedcovers aren't covered by the Furniture & Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations. However, under [the General Product Safety Regulations 2005](#) there is an **obligation for manufacturers, suppliers and retailers to provide a safe product**. Report any product concerns to your manufacturer, supplier or retailer, or your local [Trading Standards](#).

## Q13. What about wallcoverings?

Wallcoverings are outside FIRA's area of expertise, however the [British Coating Federation](#) may be able to assist. Tel 024 7693 5390 989 or email [info@bcf.co.uk](mailto:info@bcf.co.uk).

## Further Resources

If you need any additional support, contact the most relevant organisation below:

### Consumer Support

#### British Standards Institute

W: <https://shop.bsigroup.com> E: [cservices@bsigroup.com](mailto:cservices@bsigroup.com) T: 0345 086 9001

#### Citizens Advice Bureau

W: [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk) T: 0808 223 1133

#### Trading Standards Institute

W: <https://www.tradingstandards.uk/consumer-help> E: [consumers@tsi.org.uk](mailto:consumers@tsi.org.uk) T: 0808 223 1133

### Associations

#### Association of Master Upholsterers and Soft Furnishers (AMUSF)

W: <https://amusf.org> E: [enquiries@amusf.org](mailto:enquiries@amusf.org) T: 07926 128899

#### British Coatings Federation

W: <https://coatings.org.uk> E: [info@bcf.co.uk](mailto:info@bcf.co.uk) T: 024 7693 5390

#### British Furniture Association

W: <https://www.bfa.org.uk> E: [info@bfa.org.uk](mailto:info@bfa.org.uk) T: 01295 724202

#### National Bed Federation

W: <https://bedadvice.co.uk> E: [help@bedadvice.co.uk](mailto:help@bedadvice.co.uk) T: 01756 556651

#### The Furniture & Home Improvement Ombudsman

W: <https://www.fhio.org> E: [info@fhio.org](mailto:info@fhio.org) T: +44 (0)333 241 3209

#### The Leisure and Outdoor Furniture Association (LOFA)

W: <https://lofa.co.uk> E: [info@lofa.com](mailto:info@lofa.com) T: 01952 977569

### Regulations

#### Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1988/1324/contents/made>

**General Product Safety Regulations** <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2005/1803>

**Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) regulations**  
[www.hse.gov.uk/reach](http://www.hse.gov.uk/reach)