



# Online and distance selling for businesses, a guide from GOV.UK from GOV.UK

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## 1. Overview

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You must provide certain information for your customers if you're selling goods online, through digital TV, by mail order or by phone, text message or fax.

### Before an order is placed

All distance sellers must follow certain rules before and after an order is placed.

You must display information such as:

- your business name (and address if you want payment in advance)
- a description of your goods or services
- the price, including all taxes
- how a customer can pay
- delivery arrangements, costs and how long goods will take to arrive
- the minimum length of their contract
- conditions for terminating contracts of over 1 year or open-ended contracts
- information about the customer's right to cancel

It's also good practice to explain who pays for returning goods if the customer cancels.

### After an order is placed

You must get in touch with your customer in writing after an order is placed and before the goods have been delivered.

You need to give them details of:

- how and when they can cancel an order and who pays for returning goods
- an address where complaints can be sent
- any guarantees or after-sales services you offer
- conditions for terminating contracts of over 1 year or open-ended contracts

There are extra rules if you're [selling online](#) or [selling overseas](#).

## Sale of Goods Act

All businesses that supply goods, including online and distance sellers, must follow the '[Sale of Goods Act](#)'.

## 2. Selling online

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As well as the [general rules for distance selling](#), there are some extra rules for selling online.

You must:

- list the steps involved in a customer placing an order
- acknowledge receipt of any orders electronically as soon as possible
- take reasonable steps to allow customers to correct any errors in their order
- let customers know what languages are available to them
- make sure customers can store and reproduce your terms and conditions, ie these can be downloaded and printed off
- give your email address
- give your VAT number (if your business is registered for VAT)
- give clear prices and delivery costs for your products

### 3. Selling overseas

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As well as the [general rules for distance selling](#), there are some extra rules for selling overseas.

#### Selling within the EU

You must charge VAT to [EU customers](#) if you'd do the same for customers in the UK.

#### Selling outside of the EU

You must not charge VAT for [customers outside of the EU](#). Instead, fill out a customs declaration when you ship the products.

You must keep 'proof of export' if you sell to customers outside of the EU. This includes:

- the customer's order - including their name, VAT number and delivery address
- internal correspondence
- sales invoices
- advice notes
- packing lists
- commercial transport documents
- details of insurance or freight charges
- bank statements
- consignment notes

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