



Workplace First Aid, BS8599-1 and the Law.

What does the law say?

The Health and Safety (First Aid) regulations 1981 states:

"An employer shall provide or ensure that there are provided such equipment and facilities as are adequate and appropriate in the circumstances for enabling first aid to be rendered to his employees if they are injured or become ill at work"

How does an employer meet the requirements of the law?

1. Do a risk assessment.

LOW RISK (e.g. shops, offices, libraries etc.)

HIGH RISK (e.g. light engineering and assembly work, food processing, warehousing, extensive work with dangerous machinery or sharp instruments, construction, chemical manufacture etc.)

2. Decide on the size and quantity of kits required to meet your risk needs assessment.

SMALL KIT USAGE GUIDELINES

LOW RISK Less than 25 employees

HIGH RISK Less than 5 employees

MEDIUM KIT USAGE GUIDELINES

LOW RISK 25-100 employees

HIGH RISK 5-25 employees

LARGE KIT USAGE GUIDELINES

LOW RISK 1 Large Kit per 100 employees

HIGH RISK 1 Large Kit per 25 employees

What standard first aid kits are available?

The only official UK standard for first aid kit contents is the British Standard BS8599-1.

The HSE provides some guidance on the type of items that should be in a first aid kit, but not the quantities. The old BHTA standard kit 10, 20 and 50 (often called HSE kits), are now obsolete and withdrawn. The British Standard BS8599-1 Compliant kits, now provide employers with a

means by which they can choose a kit that matches their risk needs assessment, while still demonstrating compliance with the spirit of the legislation.

Some employers may have diverse or unusual situations and will need to make bespoke provision for such risks, these situations however, are not likely to be typical. The BS8599-1 compliant first aid kits will be suitable for most situations.



What is included in a BS8599-1 First Aid Kit?

	SMALL	MEDIUM	LARGE	TRAVEL*
Burn Dressing*** Burn dressings cool the injury without requiring any prior treatment with water or other medium. The dressing does not dry out within one hour of application. Water based, sterile, soaked in a non-toxic gel, min. 100mm ² surface area.	1	2	2	1
Saline Cleansing Wipes Saline wipes allow for use on an open wound, whereas non-alcohol wipes can only be used to cleanse unbroken skin. Individually wrapped, sterile, min. 80mm ² .	20	30	40	4
Conforming Bandage These can be used as a form of dressing retention and also offer light support. Min. 7.5cmW x 4mL stretched.	1	2	2	1
Eye Pad Dressing An oval dressing pad, designed to fit the eye socket, attached to a continuous stretch bandage. Conforming bandage: min. 5cmW x min. 1.5mL stretched, or elasticated looped bandage, with an oval pad min. 7cm x 5cm.	2	3	4	1
Eye Wash Sterile sodium chloride 0.9% solution can be used for eye and wound irrigation where access to water may not be available. Min. effective volume 250ml, sterile.	-	-	-	1
Finger Dressing Ideal for use on finger cuts where a traditional plaster is insufficient. It provides a small low adherent pad attached to a stretch conforming bandage. Conforming bandage: min. 3.5cmW x min. 30cmL stretched, with dressing pad: min. 3.5cm ² .	2	3	4	-
Foil Blanket For retaining and maintaining body heat in cold conditions and in the treatment of injuries and patients suffering from shock. 130cm x 210cm.	1	2	3	1
Guidance Leaflet Provides brief first aid guidance.	1	1	1	1
Microporous Tape Comfortable multi-purpose paper tape with a microporous non-woven backing and low allergy adhesive. Ideal for securing dressings. Individually wrapped, supplied on a roll, 2.5cm x 5m (min. 2.5cmW x 3m for the travel kit).	1	1	1	1
Nitrile Gloves Nitrile gloves are latex-free and far superior in terms of protection, comfort and sensitivity. Conforming to BS EN 455-1 and BS EN 455-2, large (8-9).	6	9	12	1
Plasters, Washproof Assorted Ideal for minor cuts and grazes, sterile, with a water resistant island pad. Individually wrapped. Sterile, min. surface area 7.5cm ² , dressing pad not less than 20% of area.	40	60	100	10
Resuscitation Face Shield** Includes a one-way valve and provides a hygienic barrier when giving mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, minimising the risk of cross infection.	1	1	2	1
Safety Pins Assorted sized safety pins, primarily used to fasten bandages. Minimum length of 2.5cm.	6	12	24	2
Sterile Dressing Sterile dressings in two sizes are complete with conforming stretch bandage. HSE compliant, they include an attached, sterile, non-adherent pad to place over the wound and a long conforming bandage to secure the dressing in place. Available as an all-blue dressing for use in food preparation areas. 12cm x 12cm. Conforming bandage: min. 7.5cmW x min. 2mL stretched, with an absorbent pad min. 12cm x 12cm. 18cm x 18cm. Conforming bandage: min. 10cmW x min. 2mL stretched, with an absorbent pad min. 18cm x 18cm.	5	8	10	2
Triangular Bandage Multi-functional bandage, used to create slings and ideal for splinting. Min. of 20gsm non-woven material or cotton, not less than 90cm x 90cm x 127cm.	2	3	4	1
Universal Shears Blunt ended scissors that work traditionally with dressings and bandages, but are specifically designed and shaped to cut through clothing with complete safety.	1	1	1	1

* The quantities for the Travel Kit are appropriate for one person.

** A shield that can be used to protect a first aider from infection while administering mouth-to-mouth resuscitation to a casualty.

*** A Burn Dressing cools the burn injury without any prior treatment with water or any other medium. The dressing does not dry out within one hour of application.