



European  
Commission

# EU CONSUMER RIGHTS

GOOD FOR YOUR CUSTOMERS,  
GOOD FOR YOUR BUSINESS



# Know your customers' rights



Everywhere in the EU consumers have the right to fair treatment, proper information and redress if something is wrong with a product. Being aware of these rights will help you to preserve and increase your most valuable asset – your customers.

- > **Provide your customers with all the required information before they buy.**
- > **If there is a problem, solve it in compliance with the law.**

## *Repair or replace defective goods*



Any item you sell in the EU, either online or in a shop, must conform to how it is advertised and must work properly. If this is not the case, consumers have – as a minimum – the right to a free repair or replacement. If you cannot repair or replace a product, consumers are entitled to a refund or a price reduction (in some countries they may have a free choice between these remedies).

These rights are valid for a minimum of two years from the date of purchase or delivery to the customer. For the first six months, the responsibility of proving that the product was not defective when it was bought falls upon the trader. Thereafter, it is the consumer who must prove that the defect was there upon purchase. In some countries however these time periods are longer.

To check the rules in the Member States where you carry out your business, visit [ec.europa.eu/consumers/notification](https://ec.europa.eu/consumers/notification)

## *Provide the full story on what you sell*

When advertising, selling products or supplying services in the EU, the information you give must be accurate and detailed enough to allow customers to make an informed choice.

Make sure that the contract terms you use are fair and written in simple, clear language. If there is a dispute, any points that are not clear will be interpreted in the consumer's favour and unfair terms will not be legally binding.

So do provide helpful information about product characteristics, price, payment and delivery conditions, and your identity and contact details, as well as the duration of a contract and how to withdraw from it. This will help you to avoid costly disputes, customer disappointment, and even lost customers.



## *Refund online purchases sent back within two weeks*



To boost confidence in shopping online and make online sales more competitive, customers throughout the EU have 14 days to reconsider and withdraw from a purchase (without needing to provide a reason).

It's worth knowing that you only have to give a full refund for products returned that are suitable for resale. Customers are entitled to check the product, but not to use it. For instance, shoes can be tried on at home but not worn outside.

## Get your money back through the European Small Claims Procedure



If a problem – for example, a missing payment – is not settled between you and a customer, even with the help of a European Consumer Centre, then in some cases the Small Claims Procedure (in all EU Member States with the exception of Denmark) may be the solution. It is speedier and cheaper than traditional court procedures, and can currently be used for online transactions involving up to € 2 000. It works by just submitting a standard small claims form.

Above all, know and respect consumer rights – then there will be no need for litigation at all.

## Settle problems with customers abroad in your home country

Problems with customers from abroad can be costly for both sides. European Consumer Centres (ECC) can help clarify the legal rights of the parties involved and assist both sides in reaching a fair agreement. They can also advise you on what further steps to take if an agreement can't be found.



Discover more at [europa.eu/youreurope/business](http://europa.eu/youreurope/business)

Contact your nearest Enterprise Europe contact point [een.ec.europa.eu](http://een.ec.europa.eu)

#EU4Consumers