



Business Advice

Distance Selling Regulations

What is Distance Selling?

A distance contract is one for the supply of goods or services where there has been no face to face contact between the consumer and a representative of the business. Common examples include sales by phone, fax, and mail order or via the Internet or TV.

What do the Distance Selling Regulations do?

They give consumers who enter into distance contracts rights in addition to their basic rights under the Sale of Goods Act. In short they are entitled to certain information in writing, to minimum performance standards and the right to cancel within a cooling off period.

How long is the cooling off period?

Subject to the exceptions described below, consumers have an unconditional right to cancel by giving you written notice within 7 days of the day after receipt of the goods.

If goods are sent unsolicited it is an offence to demand payment and the consumer is under no obligation to return the goods or to keep them safe.

What happens to businesses if they don't comply with the distance selling rules?

The regulations are enforced by local trading standards departments and the Office of Fair Trading who can apply for an injunction against businesses who don't comply.

Please note:

This advice is designed to provide basic guidance to consumers and traders. It is **not** a complete or authoritative statement of the law for further information contact your local area Trading Standards Office or visit The Distance Selling Hub <http://dshub.tradingstandards.gov.uk/>

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