

Withdrawal & Returns Compliance Checklist

Get the 14-day right of withdrawal right

Provide pre-contract information

Under the Consumer Rights Directive 2011/83/EU, you must give clear information before the consumer is bound by the contract. Missing information can extend the withdrawal period by up to twelve months.

- State that a 14-day right of withdrawal exists
- Explain the conditions, time limit and how to withdraw
- Say who bears the cost of returning the goods
- Set out the main characteristics, total price and delivery costs
- Provide your identity and contact details

Supply the model withdrawal form

Consumers must be able to withdraw easily. The directive provides a model form, and you should make it available.

- Include the model withdrawal form with your information
- Allow withdrawal by any clear statement, not only the form
- Offer an online withdrawal option if you choose to
- Acknowledge receipt of an online withdrawal without delay

Apply the 14-day period correctly

For goods, the period generally runs for 14 days from the day the consumer receives the goods, not from the order date.

- Count the 14 days from delivery for goods
- Handle multiple-item orders from the last item delivered

Extend the period by up to 12 months where information was missing

Record the delivery date so the deadline can be evidenced

Handle refunds on time

Once the consumer withdraws, you must reimburse them within 14 days, including the standard delivery cost.

Refund within 14 days of being informed of the withdrawal

Include the cost of standard delivery in the refund

Use the same payment means the consumer used, unless agreed otherwise

You may withhold the refund until goods are returned or proof of return is provided

Know the exceptions

The right of withdrawal does not apply to certain goods and services. Apply these carefully and only where genuinely relevant.

Personalised or made-to-order goods

Perishable goods or those that deteriorate quickly

Sealed hygiene goods once unsealed

Sealed audio, video or software once unsealed

Document and review your process

A repeatable, evidenced process protects you if a return is disputed.

Keep records of the information shown to each consumer

Log withdrawal requests and refund dates

Train staff on the exceptions and refund deadlines

Review your returns policy text against the directive annually

This checklist is general guidance and not legal advice. National implementations of Directive 2011/83/EU may add detail, so check the rules in each market you serve.

