
Products and related services — Information for consumers

*Produits et services connexes — Informations pour les
consommateurs*

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) are worldwide federations of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies and IEC National Committees). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO and IEC technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO or IEC, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO and IEC shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation on the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by the ISO Committee on Consumer Policy (COPOLCO).

This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition (ISO/IEC Guide 14:2003), which has been technically revised.

The main changes compared with the previous edition are as follows:

- mention of new purchase information labelling tools (e.g. QR codes or RFID tags), available on the packaging of the product;
- clarification of the relationship with ISO/IEC Guide 37, ISO/IEC Guide 41 and IEC 82079-1;
- consideration of the product information needs of vulnerable persons;
- content added on recycling and second-hand goods;
- improved treatment of risk, sustainability and privacy issues;
- addition of new clauses on performance and conditions of use and dependability considerations;
- deletion of obsolete content on purchase information bodies and purchase information systems.

Introduction

Product information for consumers is a vital part of any consumer product or service. Improving the quality of information increases the ability of consumers to make an informed purchasing choice. It helps to minimize the risk of incorrect or inappropriate purchases or contracts. Consumer uncertainties are reduced and consumer satisfaction is increased. Those who supply a high standard of product information, taking into consideration the needs of vulnerable consumers, enhance their commercial reputation and save time and money, by reducing enquiries, complaints and returns.

This document addresses the following:

- committees preparing standards for consumer products and related services;
- consumer product designers, manufacturers, technical writers, marketers, graphic artists or others engaged in the work of drafting such information;
- other bodies such as enforcement agencies or consumer ombudsmen.

The primary purpose of this document is to provide guidance to those responsible for drafting national or international standards on what information prospective purchasers require and expect for products and their related services. However, it can also assist those who write purchase information (e.g. suppliers), as well as enforcement authorities.

Aspects of product information can vary in various jurisdictions and/or industry standards or technical specifications. Suppliers can establish, implement and maintain a procedure to identify the applicable laws and regulations of the countries where the consumer products and related services are manufactured, imported, distributed and sold, in order to ensure that applicable legal requirements are taken into account.

A number of methods can be used (individually or in combination) to provide information to consumers about products and related services, in order to accommodate varying levels of ability:

- written or printed;
- online;
- verbal.

Online information is increasingly used by consumers for pre-purchase research and decision-making.

There is considerable scope for further standardization in the field of product information in terms of individual consumer products and related services, and even more so for groups of consumer products and related services.

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Products and related services — Information for consumers

1 Scope

This document provides guidance on the provision of information concerning products and their related services intended for consumers. It outlines general principles and recommendations for content, methods, formats and designs enabling consumers to compare and choose consumer products and their related services prior to purchase.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1

complaint

<customer satisfaction> expression of dissatisfaction made to an organization, related to its product or service, or the complaints-handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected

Note 1 to entry: ISO 10002 provides information on complaints handling in organizations.

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015, 3.9.3, modified — Note 1 to entry has been added.]

3.2

consumer

individual member of the general public purchasing or using property, products or services for private purposes

Note 1 to entry: The term “consumer” covers both customers and potential customers. *Consumer products* (3.3) and services can be one-time purchases or long-term contracts or obligations.

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010, 2.2, modified — Note 1 to entry has been added.]

3.3

consumer product

product designed and produced primarily for, but not limited to, personal use, including its components, parts, accessories, instructions and packaging

[SOURCE: ISO 10377:2013, 2.2]

3.4

consumer redress

compensation for economic *harm* (3.7), whether in the form of a monetary payment (restitution, damages, or other form of relief) or a conduct remedy with a restorative element (exchange of a good or service, specific performance or rescission of a contract)[SOURCE: OECD Recommendation on Consumer Dispute Resolution and Redress[35], modified.]

3.5

cooling-off period

period of time following a purchase during which a *consumer* (3.2) can change his or her mind and return the purchase

3.6

**guarantee
warranty**

written assurance issued to the purchaser of a product or related service by its *supplier* (3.19), promising to repair, refund or replace the product or related service within a specified period of time, if it is not of a specified quality

3.7

harm

injury or damage to the health of people or damage to property or the environment

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC Guide 51:2014, 3.1]

3.8

hazard

potential source of *harm* (3.7)

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC Guide 51:2014, 3.2]

3.9

instructions for use

information provided by the *supplier* (3.19) of a product to the user, containing all the necessary provisions to convey the actions to be performed for the safe and efficient use of the product

3.10

label

item, attached to a *consumer product* (3.3) (if practicable) or its packaging which displays information related to one or more characteristic(s) of the consumer product

3.11

life cycle

consecutive and interlinked stages of a product (or service) system, from raw material acquisition or generation from natural resources to final disposal

Note 1 to entry: The life cycle stages include acquisition of raw materials, design, production, transportation/delivery, use, end-of-life treatment and final disposal.

[SOURCE: ISO 14044:2006, 3.1, modified – The words “(or service)” have been added to the definition; Note 1 to entry has been added.]

3.12

marking

symbols, pictograms, warnings, logos, or inscriptions on the *consumer product* (3.3), *label* (3.10) or packaging to identify its type, which can also include short textual messages

3.13**purchase information**

information that describes the physical or functional aspects of a product which is given to a consumer prior to the purchase of a product to allow informed choice

EXAMPLE Function; price; physical characteristics; warnings; safety aspects; expected life; storage; safe disposal; sustainability; unique features; service information.

3.14**residual risk**

risk (3.15) remaining after *risk reduction measures* (3.16) have been implemented

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC Guide 51:2014, 3.8]

3.15**risk**

combination of the probability of occurrence of *harm* (3.7) and the severity of that harm

Note 1 to entry: The probability of occurrence includes the exposure to a hazardous situation, the occurrence of a hazardous event and the possibility to avoid or limit the harm.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC Guide 51:2014, 3.9]

3.16**risk reduction measure****protective measure**

action or means to eliminate *hazards* (3.8) or reduce *risks* (3.15)

EXAMPLE Inherently safe design; protective devices; personal protective equipment; information for use and installation; organization of work; training; application of equipment; supervision.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC Guide 51:2014, 3.13]

3.17**safety data sheet**

document that provides information on the properties of hazardous chemicals, how they affect health and safety in the workplace and how to manage the hazardous chemicals in the workplace

[SOURCE: ISO/TR 13329:2012, 3.29]

3.18**second-hand goods**

goods or components/parts that have been in service (leased, loaned or owned) and that are re-entering a market for sale, lease or use by a second or later end user

Note 1 to entry: For the purposes of this document, products that are rebuilt, refurbished or remanufactured within the context of the WTO concept paper^[34] are not considered to be second-hand goods.

Note 2 to entry: Second-hand goods do not include those goods that are sold for the first time but can have deficiencies or imperfections which can also be referred to as “seconds”.

[SOURCE: ISO 20245:2017, 3.7, modified — Note 2 to entry has been added.]

3.19**supplier**

organization or person that supplies a *consumer product* (3.3) or provides a service

EXAMPLE Designer, producer/manufacturer, importer, distributor, or retailer of a product or service.

Note 1 to entry: In a contractual situation, a supplier is sometimes called “contractor/vendor”.

[SOURCE: ISO 10377:2013, 2.24, modified — The words “that provides a service” have been replaced by “that supplies a consumer product or provides a service” in the definition; the words “or service” have

been added in the Example; the original Note 1 to entry has been deleted; the term “contractor” has been replaced by “contractor/vendor” in the Note to entry.]

3.20 vulnerable consumer

consumer who, either temporarily or permanently, is at greater *risk* (3.15) of *harm* (3.7) from products or systems, due to age, level of literacy, physical or mental condition or limitations, or inability to access product safety information

Note 1 to entry: ISO/IEC Guide 51 provides information about risk.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC Guide 51:2014, 3.16, modified — The words “who, either temporarily or permanently, is” have been added; Note to entry has been added.]

4 Purchase information

4.1 Objective of purchase information

The overall objective of purchase information is to provide information to consumers that will enable them to make informed decisions when purchasing a new or used consumer product, including assurance that adequate details are provided on using, assembling, installing, maintaining, storing and disposing of the product in a safe manner.

NOTE 1 ISO 20245 provides in-depth information about cross-border trade in second-hand goods.

NOTE 2 ISO/IEC Guide 37 and IEC 82079-1 provide information about instructions for use.

NOTE 3 ISO/IEC Guide 41 provides information on consumer needs in packaging.

NOTE 4 ISO/IEC Guide 50 provides information on child safety in standards.

NOTE 5 ISO/IEC Guide 51 provides information on safety aspects in standards.

NOTE 6 ISO/IEC Guide 76 provides information on consumer needs in services.

4.2 General principles

This clause provides a description of principles for conveying information to consumers (by written, printed or verbal means, or using online content) when they are considering whether or not to acquire a new or used product or service. In addition, it describes general considerations that apply to all. The principles are listed in [Table 1](#), under the following categories:

- use of language;
- presentation of information;
- business practice.

NOTE Purchasing includes buying products and related services, leasing products and related services, or obtaining products or services distributed with no financial transaction.

Table 1 — Principles for consumer information by category

Category	Principle
Use of language	Use clear, simple, unambiguous, relevant, complete language that is intelligible in the country of sale/access.
	Give the consumer information in the official language(s) of the region where the product is distributed.

Table 1 (continued)

Presentation of information	Avoid misleading or deceptive information that can create an erroneous impression of the product.
	Make information transparent and pertinent; avoid unnecessary detail which can distract the consumer from making an informed purchasing decision.
	Restrict the use of technical terminology to an absolute minimum.
	Promotional material should not contradict the principles in this document.
	Format should facilitate access to information.
	Information should provide traceability, e.g. the most common supply chain practice of a barcode with an embedded globally unique number, or a combination of serial number, batch or lot number, expiry date and production date.
	The consumer product identification should remain on the traceable item or attached to it until the traceable item is consumed, returned, destroyed or properly disposed of.
	Include information on assembly, installation, intended and safe use, intended age of user, maintenance, storage, life span and disposal of a consumer product needed to make a purchasing decision. This information is becoming crucial in the context of the blurring of public/private spheres of use and the Internet of Things.
Business practice	Specify conditions for entering or cancelling a contract, including cooling-off periods. This is particularly important if a consumer seeks redress or if contract cancellations entail additional costs and/or financial loss.
	Avoid preparing, adopting or applying material with a view to, or with the effect of, creating unnecessary obstacles to international trade.
	As privacy is a sensitive matter, convey how you are collecting information about the consumer. Consumers have the right to know why their data are being collected and how they will be used.
	Provide information to the consumer related to health risks and hazards in usage, storage and disposal of products.
	Give consumers the total price of a product, including any additional costs (e.g. periodic fees, service costs, subscriptions, connection costs and taxes). Price remains the main factor when making purchases. Consumers need to know the total price, as principal/basic information. They can feel cheated if they are drawn to a lower price of a product and services only to find out that the price is higher when they request more information. ISO 10008 provides related guidance in the online environment.
	Consider all relevant aspects of the life cycle of the consumer product or service, including sustainability aspects.

There are different types of information channels available for use. Depending on the product characteristics, product information can be on the consumer product itself, on packaging, in accompanying material, a database accessed from packaging to the internet, a toll-free call-in number, or in any combination of these forms.

For the purpose of comparison, where it exists, the provision of information should be based on standardized terms, validated data, normative documents or other commonly accepted agreements or practices.

Whenever information of a technical nature relating to the characteristics of a consumer product is made known to the public, the definition of these characteristics and the method of verifying the information should be based as far as possible on International Standards. If such standards are not available, national standards should be used. Conformity to the relevant standard(s) should be presented in a way that allows the consumer to identify which characteristics of the consumer product or service conform to the standard(s). The process of selecting and grouping together consumer-relevant characteristics and the underlying criteria can best be undertaken by a standards committee or another private body representing all interested parties.

4.3 Minimum content and presentation

The degree of interest shown by potential purchasers will vary, and it can on occasion be useful to provide the information on two levels:

- the first level of information is intended for those seeking a minimum amount of data on the key characteristics of the consumer product or service;
- the second level is for those wishing to know more details, e.g. concerning technical matters such as minimum contents (covered by first level), specific function, or limitations of the service or consumer product.

For consumers who require more information about a particular consumer product or service before making a decision to purchase or enter into a contract, the means to obtain that information should be made clear. Consumers should have access to relevant types of information which can aid them in making informed decisions about the purchase and maintenance of the product.

If practical, an accurate picture of the consumer product is helpful for the consumer to make an informed choice. It should include the following:

- a) identification of the consumer product or service including its characteristics, contents and materials (e.g. chemicals) and limitations for use;
- b) country or countries where the consumer product was manufactured or assembled;
- c) name and full address of the manufacturer or supplier;
- d) essential performance characteristics, conditions and any limitations for use (see 4.4);
- e) instructions for use, storage and maintenance;
- e) information about spare or replacement parts and how to obtain them;
- f) information about additional parts that are available for certain environments (e.g. guard devices);
- g) safety concerns, including known risks and hazards, and residual risks;
- h) guarantees/warranties;
- i) complaints-handling procedure(s);
- j) need for special (professional) installation;
- k) consumption of resources (e.g. energy required for use);
- l) expected duration of the life of the product (e.g. product testing, clinical trials);
- m) privacy implications of using the product;
- n) environmental issues and potentially negative impacts associated with the development, use, storage or disposition of the product, or any of its component parts (including recycling);
- o) a way to contact the supplier, e.g. mailing address, website and/or toll-free number;
- p) information regarding the dependability and/or reliability of the product, especially in comparison to similar products to give the consumer confidence in their choice (see 4.5).

The location, nature and content of the available purchase information should be clearly referred to on the first page of any document related to the consumer product or service. If relevant, a picture of the consumer product should be available. An accurate picture of the consumer product is helpful for the consumer to make an informed choice.

It is important to pay attention, where relevant, to the needs of vulnerable consumers who do not necessarily have access to printed information (literacy issues), electronic information (digital divide, poverty), or verbal information (physical isolation, language barriers).

NOTE 1 ISO 10002 provides information about complaints handling.

NOTE 2 ISO 10377 provides information about consumer product safety guidelines for suppliers.

NOTE 3 ISO 10393 provides information about product recall.

NOTE 4 ISO/IEC Guide 37 and IEC 82079-1 provide information about instructions for use.

NOTE 5 ISO/IEC Guide 41 provides information about residual risks in packaging.

NOTE 6 ISO/IEC Guide 50 and ISO/IEC Guide 71 provide information about vulnerable consumers.

NOTE 7 ISO/IEC Guide 51 provides information about managing risk for consumer products.

NOTE 8 ISO Guide 64 provides information about environmental issues in products.

4.4 Performance and conditions of use

Information should be included about the performance and conditions of use, in order to meet increased expectations of consumers. Performance information can include the type of use the product is intended for and whether it is suitable for an extended period of time. Compatibility information is important, especially with media products, as well as any limitations for use in application. Other factors can include acceptable ranges of temperature, humidity, pressure, load or energy consumption.

4.5 Dependability considerations

The importance of considering dependability aspects can vary significantly with the type of consumer product. For limited-use and time-limited products, it might not be necessary to provide much information to the consumer. For others, there are important things for the consumer to consider about reliability, maintenance and maintenance support requirements when buying a product.

NOTE IEC/TC 56, *Dependability*, defines dependability as including attributes of availability, reliability, maintainability and supportability. The International Standards developed by IEC/TC 56 are intended mainly for industrial purposes, but the basic principles apply equally to consumer products although the scope and implications are clearly somewhat different.

Manufacturers and vendors should be required to advise the consumer whether:

- the reliability of a consumer product is able to meet the needs of certain uses of that consumer product;
- there will be sufficient traceability for maintenance and recall support for a consumer in case of failure;
- there are maintenance requirements and documented procedures that are crucial to the continuing performance and reliability of the consumer product;
- spare parts will be available when needed;
- the consumer product has a certain lifespan before it becomes obsolete.

4.6 Second-hand goods

There are many issues with maintainability, portability of guarantees being transmissible with the sale of the used goods and other conditions that apply to the sale of the used product. The same product information for consumer rules also applies to second-hand goods.

The supplier in each country should be responsible for guarantees/warranties, replacements, exchanges or complaints handling for second-hand goods.

NOTE ISO 20245 provides further information in the case of cross-border trade in second-hand goods.

5 Methods of conveying information

5.1 Written and printed information

The following two methods of conveying information are often used in combination:

- a) linking a condensed statement which deals with a number of fundamental points to the consumer product;
- b) providing more wide-ranging information in catalogues, leaflets, websites or other material related to the consumer product.

Complete purchase information depends on the ability of consumers to receive and use both types of information. Each part should therefore be meaningful in its own right and should also correlate well with the other.

Specific information on complaints and consumer redress should be incorporated into any purchase contract and be readily accessible when a purchaser makes a decision about purchasing.

NOTE Conditions for cooling-off periods, returns, refunds, repairs and guarantees, late or non-delivery of goods, unfair contract terms and complaints can vary between countries.

5.2 Online information

5.2.1 General

When using online information for purchase, the link provided should take the consumer directly to the relevant page.

Particular attention should be given to the provision of online information about consumer products and related services. This method of conveying information offers purchasers easy access to extensive amounts of data. It can include interactive purchase information, as well as combinations of purchase information (including company websites, social media, video displays or clips) and methods of electronic payment.

When consumer product information is presented online, steps should be taken to ensure that online consumers can make an informed decision about whether or not the consumer product is safe and appropriate for them. To help consumers make a safe and confident purchase, the following should always be provided:

- clear consumer product descriptions;
- good quality consumer product images that consumers can zoom in on to see details of the labelling and any other relevant information;
- images of required labels, warnings and safety features;
- lists of ingredients;
- clear instructions for use;
- information as described in [4.3](#) (list of minimum information);
- electronic payment methods;
- verification and confirmation of purchase;

- dedicated complaints handling area of a website;
- online consumer reviews;

NOTE 1 ISO/TC 290, *Online reputation*, covers this area.

- full contact information (name, telephone, internet site and full address);
- information pertaining to the needs of vulnerable consumers.

NOTE 2 ISO/IEC Guide 71 covers the needs of vulnerable consumers.

5.2.2 Short description and guidance on linear bar codes, quick response codes and other machine-readable information

One way to secure electronic information is by using mobile devices, such as smart-phones, combined with machine-readable information which is printed or incorporated into the packaging.

The use of such technologies can disadvantage some vulnerable consumers, who do not necessarily have the means to access this information.

An example of such a method is the use of a quick response (QR) code, where the internet's uniform resource locator (URL) for the consumer product (or general information on the manufacturer) is printed onto the packaging or shelf display. Scanning the QR code with a mobile phone, along with any one of many software applications, can take the operator of the mobile phone to the ISO standards page. [Figure 1](#) shows an example of a QR code.



Figure 1 — QR code

Instead of a “standards” page, the landing can alternatively be the consumer product’s contents, known allergens, safety data sheet, preparation, assembly, operation and maintenance instructions, or any other information that can be linked with the consumer product. The manufacturer can also provide a coupon in the form of an optically readable symbol to be read at point-of-purchase.

In addition to optically-readable media such as a QR code, other packaging can incorporate near field communication (NFC) or radio frequency identification (RFID). The same information can be able to be delivered to the consumer via radio waves instead of optical imaging. A potential benefit of acoustically-readable media, such as NFC or RFID, is that the packaging can communicate to another device (e.g. a medicine cabinet, a microwave oven, or a refrigerator) to provide dosage, preparation and inventory information. A medicine cabinet equipped with a reader can verbally identify the medication and dosage instructions to the consumer.

When mobile access is desired for additional information on a consumer product, QR codes can be useful when encoded with the URL of the website where a manufacturer provides consumer product information and promotional information.

A number of International Standards provide specifications for machine-readable technologies.

NOTE 1 ISO/IEC 18004 and ISO/IEC 16480 provide more information about symbols used in QR codes.

NOTE 2 ISO 28219 provides information about labelling with machine-readable technologies.

NOTE 3 ISO 22742 provides information about marking requirements for consumer product packages.

NOTE 4 GS1 General Specifications^[32] specify requirements about consumer products destined for the retail marketplace.

NOTE 5 The standards of the Health Industry Business Communications Council^[33] or those of the GS1 guidance on consumer products destined for the healthcare marketplace provide guidance on healthcare-related consumer product information.

5.3 Verbal information

Verbal information is, in principle, a medium used to support the relationship between those who sell and those who purchase products and related services. It provides the means for consumers to obtain an increased understanding of what is available to be purchased. If information needs to be provided verbally, it should be given in a language understandable to the purchaser, and in a manner that respects the consumer's privacy.

The same principles apply to verbal information as for other forms of information.

It is important that telesales and customer contact centre agents speak slowly and distinctly. Where feasible, such operations should route calls to or from agents whose language and/or dialect matches that of the region where the customer is situated. Suppliers should take into account the different needs, circumstances and abilities of vulnerable consumers.

Checklists of the type of information to be provided during verbal exchanges of information can prove of value to both parties.

6 Formats and design principles

6.1 General

Any measure taken to increase the recognition by the consumer of purchase information is helpful. Consumers' identification with, and confidence in, purchase information increases as a result of familiarity with common formats and design principles.

NOTE ISO/IEC Guide 37 and IEC 82079-1 provide additional guidance regarding principles and recommendations on the design and formulation of information for consumers.

6.2 Principles

For the purpose of perception, recognition and comparison, the provision of purchase information should remove or minimize consumer confusion.

Purchase information should be provided in a wide range of accessible formats, and at different stages of the purchasing process, in order to ensure that consumers have every opportunity to see and understand the necessary information. It should be given in plain and commonly understood wording. If there are specific requirements dealing with the provision of information in detail, these should be met. Data should be provided using the International System of Units (SI), with pricing per unit (unit pricing), and on a common basis (preferably International Standards), and referenced. Individual data should be shown in relation to the ruling market data, e.g. by giving an individual performance figure in relation to a range of other consumer products and related services.

NOTE 1 ISO 21041 provides guidance on unit pricing.

NOTE 2 It is possible that some countries do not permit comparison of products with those of other manufacturers.

6.3 Use of diagrams, symbols and pictograms, scales and tables

Pictorial forms can be an important means of presenting information. They include, where possible:

- graphical presentations, such as overviews created by putting data into tables, which are a helpful means of making a consumer product or service more transparent;
- diagrams, tables or graphs which relate the actual value of an individual performance characteristic to the market-relevant range of performances.

Pictures, diagrams, symbols, scales and tables can be effective means for conveying purchase information, but their message should be unambiguous (see 4.3). Markings and symbols (if suitable symbols exist) should be specified in accordance with International Standards.

A single consumer product and related services which forms part of a closely related homogeneous group of consumer products and related services should be presented in the context of the group in order to make options and alternatives evident.

Where symbols and pictograms are used, they should have been objectively tested and independently shown to be understandable by prospective purchasers. Graphical symbols should conform to recognized standards, e.g. ISO 7000, ISO 7001 or IEC 60417. In addition, symbols, pictograms and markings should be explained in the instructions for the use of the consumer product.

NOTE Further detailed guidance is given in ISO/IEC Guide 37 and ISO/IEC Guide 74.

6.4 Legibility and uniformity

Legibility is an important element of product information. Attention should be given to the most appropriate location for the information.

Information should be easily visible and legible (with normal eyesight) from the distance at which users need to read it. Elements contributing to legibility include the viewing distance and angle, the style, size and colour of text font, the colour of the background and the brightness contrast between them.

NOTE 1 ISO/IEC Guide 37, ISO/IEC Guide 41 and IEC 82079-1 provide related information on legibility.

To emphasize warning notices and any other information concerning safety, the use of larger or different typeface or other means of increasing conspicuousness is recommended.

NOTE 2 ISO 3864 provides guidance on the use of colour to convey information on safety.

The use of typographies and colours can be an effective means of distinguishing purchase information from promotional material. Lettering should be in a size that can be easily read at the time of purchase and as specified in the appropriate national or International Standard. Owing to the relatively high incidence of colour vision impairment and other visual difficulties, coloured lettering on coloured backgrounds should be avoided and there should be strong contrast between the lettering and the background. It should be visible, permanent, in legible characters in contrasting colour to the background where it is printed or embossed. Use of Braille for blind and low vision consumers should be considered.

Written instructions (e.g. typeface, size, font size, font style, font colour, contrast, lay-out, background colour) should be as clear and as large as practicable in order to ensure the greatest possible legibility for all potential purchasers, including vulnerable consumers.

The ideal choice of font and other characteristics will be influenced by:

- constraints of the media (space available);
- design aspects (e.g. typeface, size, font size, contrast, font colour, layout, background colour);
- product type;