When using other services you must refer to the terms and conditions of your chosen courier company before sending dangerous goods within the UK or to international destinations.

Shipping dangerous goods by road, sea and other types of transport

The UK Government's website provides information and links to the internationally agreed rules for shipping dangerous goods by road and by sea.

www.gov.uk/shipping-dangerous-goods/rules-for-different-types-of-transport

Disclaimer: The information in this document is provided for guidance only and does not replace formal dangerous goods training where this is required.

Figure 1: GHS consumer labelling

The following consumer symbols indicate that a product is classified as dangerous goods:

Note: A product bearing the GHS corrosive label (depicted far right above) and none of the others shown here is NOT classified as dangerous goods if the signal word 'Danger' and hazard statement 'causes serious eye damage' applies.

Dangerous goods labelling (examples, not to scale)

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Dangerous goods

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Dangerous goods

Dangerous goods are defined by the United Nations (UN) as articles or substances that are capable of posing a hazard to health, safety, property or the environment and that meet particular classification criteria. The UN develops recommendations on how dangerous goods should be packed, the markings and labels that should be placed on the outer packaging and the documents that should be sent with them. These recommendations are implemented into the international requirements for each mode of transport to ensure that dangerous goods do not pose a risk to those handling them, the means of transport or its occupants. Other than specific consumer products that can be sent in mail within the UK, the requirements for sending dangerous goods within the UK are generally the same as for sending them internationally.

Identifying dangerous goods

Many chemicals are classified as dangerous goods. Some items such as fireworks and lithium batteries are also classified as dangerous goods. While many dangerous goods are only used in industrial processes, a lot are used daily by the general public, such as aerosols, perfumes, cigarette lighters, gas cylinders, fuels and some paints, glues and batteries.

Anyone who sends dangerous goods by any means of transport is responsible for determining whether or not the product is classified as dangerous goods and, if it is, for ensuring it complies with the transport regulations. For substances and mixtures, dangerous goods may be identified by contacting the manufacturer or supplier of the product to request a Safety Data Sheet (SDS). Section 14 will show whether the product is classified as dangerous goods when transported. Manufacturers and suppliers are required by EU legislation, known as REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation & restriction of CHemicals), to provide an SDS and many manufacturers publish them on their websites.

Other indications that a product may be classified as dangerous goods include; one or more consumer hazard symbols on the product container, or a dangerous goods hazard warning or handling labels on the outer packaging in which the product was received. The product or packaging may also be marked with a 4 digit UN number (e.g. UN1266, UN1950 etc).

If there are no symbols, labels or markings you should not assume that a product is not classified as dangerous goods.

For consumer and dangerous goods labelling please see Figure 1.

Shipping dangerous goods by air

Packaging, marking, labelling and documentation

Anyone who sends dangerous goods by any means of transport is responsible for ensuring that the goods are properly packed, marked and labelled, and that any documentation requirements are met. Failing to do so may result in prosecution.

Dangerous goods training

Anyone preparing packages or consignments of dangerous goods for transport by air must receive detailed training appropriate to their responsibilities. This training can be given by a CAA approved dangerous goods training organisation, or in other circumstances, can be delivered in-house. As a minimum the training meets the requirements of CAA publication CAP 483: Training in the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air, and covers the specific responsibilities of the person receiving the training. CAP 483 is available on the CAA's website at www.caa.co.uk/CAP483

A list of the current UK CAA Approved Dangerous Goods Training Organisations is on the CAA's website, www.caa.co.uk/Commercial-industry/Aircraft/Dangerous-goods/Dangerous-goods-training-for-non-airline-staff/

Sending dangerous goods in the post

With a few exceptions it is forbidden to post dangerous goods to international destinations, no matter what mode of transport is anticipated. Since 2013 some specific consumer products classified as dangerous goods have been permitted to be sent by post within the UK, or to/from the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man, but there are conditions that apply:

- quantity limits
- how they are packed
- how they are marked/labelled

These provisions apply to Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide services only. For further information, go to www.royalmail.com/sites/default/files/royal-mail-prohibited-and-restricted-items-jan-30-2017.pdf or www.parcelforce.com/sites/default/files/Parcelforce_contract_prohibitions_restrictions_0.pdf

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