

Cloth Doll Creations UK

Cloth Doll Safety

Soft dolls are normally made using materials that you would use for clothing and *should* therefore be the safest toys available. However, if you are intending to make rag dolls for sale in the **U.K.**, there are a few things you should know.

Toys are defined in the Toys (Safety) EEC Regulations as 'a product or material which is clearly intended for use in play by children of less than 14 years of age'.

The Regulations require that toys must:

- not be made from flammable materials and must meet the British standards for low flammability.
- not have any sharp edges or points not have easily detachable parts which may cause a choking hazard to children under 3 years of age.
- not contain toxic substances or be painted with paints which exceed safety levels for heavy metals (e.g. Lead, Cadmium, Mercury etc.)

The Law requires that all toys must be safe and comply with Essential Safety Requirements. The Regulations require that a toy must:

- Comply with the Essential Safety Requirements detailed in the Regulations
- Be correctly marked or labelled
- Have a Technical File kept on them (see below)
- Should be accompanied by the appropriate warnings and indications of precautions to be taken for their safe use, including any age restrictions

There is a common standard throughout Europe published by The British Standards Institute as British Standard BS5665 (also known as European Standard EN71)

Please note: If you require further information than what you have read here, you must contact your local Trading Standards Office who will be able to send you copies of the references below to give you better clarification:

Anyone who *supplies* a toy and applies the CE mark is responsible for the safety of the finished product. Otherwise, dolls need to be clearly marked with 'THIS IS NOT A TOY' (see below)

- CE marking indicates that the materials used are *suitable for use on children's toys* I'm afraid I have no idea what the letters CE mean. It is not clear in the literature. I believe it refers to 'Conforms to European standards'. It certainly stands for a declaration of conformity to the toy safety legislation and a responsibility for its application as the toy maker.
- Information to include in your TECHNICAL FILES should be obtained by the manufacturers of each of the materials and products used in the making of that toy. (e.g. The cottons and calico materials; polyester stuffing; wool; fabric paints) It is the manufacturers' safety data sheets that you will need to obtain, which give the information on the flammability and toxicity of each of the products that you intend to use in the making of your toys.
- Labelling your soft dolls: If you do not intend to supply cloth dolls as toys, but wish to sell cloth dolls, you will not be required to keep these technical files. Your dolls should be marked clearly as 'Collector's Items: 'NOT TOYS' as they will not comply with the relevant safety standards.

Labels should still include safety information, such as 'Keep away from fire' or 'May contain sharp or small pieces which could cause choking'. You may consider it worth having fabric labels printed that can be sewn onto the doll with 'this is not a toy' together with your maker's name.

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Some Safety Reminders

1. When making dolls for children, make sure you count all the pins you use and count them back as you replace them in the pincushion.
2. Leather is not safe for dolls as children could suck or chew it.
3. Whilst PVA glue is suitable to use with children, using it to attach strands of wool as hair for a rag doll is not recommended as this could come loose and create a choking hazard. Also, when the doll is washed the hair will most likely fall out anyway. It is best to sew the hair very securely to the doll head, using a combination of machine sewing the strands together and then back stitching them in place on the doll's head.
4. Safe stuffing fibre: You need to look on the packet to see if it says it *is* washable, non flammable (flame retardant), non toxic and hypo/non allergenic. I use a high quality, lightweight Polyester filling because it passes the British and European safety standards: BS5852; BS1425; EN71 PT2.

NB: Kapok is a highly flammable fibre which clumps like cotton wool when wet. It has, consequently, been largely replaced by man-made materials which are flame retardant, hypoallergenic and machine washable.

Please remember: These pages are only here to point you in the right direction. If you require further information you must contact your local Trading Standards Office who will be able to send you copies of the references below:

[Further References/Leaflets:](#) [The Toy Safety Code](#) [Toy Safety](#) [How to Buy Safe Toys](#)

The Toys (Safety) Regulations 1995
DTI Note for Guidance 'Toys Safety'
BS5665 European Standard EN71 (Check BSI to check you have current version)

<http://www.toysadvice.co.uk/toy-safety-standards-uk.html>

http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/business/trading_standards/about_us.htm?url=cgi-bin/devon/con2list.cgi#safec

http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/business/Trading_Standards/Trader_Guidance/Toy_Safety_Regulations.asp

<http://www.wiganmbc.gov.uk/pub/ehcp/ts/Leaflets/Safety%20How%20to%20Buy%20Safe%20Toys.pdf>

<http://www.nbc4i.com/4yourkidssafety/1794580/detail.html>

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Symbols and Information

AGE WARNING



This pictogram began appearing on toys in 1995 and means Warning - do not give the toy to children less than three years, nor allow them to play with it. With the symbol or in instructions included in the pack will be given details of the hazard, e.g. "because of small parts". This symbol will gradually replace the current warning "not suitable for children under 3 years", which has often been confused with age advice - those discretionary guidelines used by the manufacturer to help the buyer match the product with a child's age, interest and ability.

CE MARK



Every manufacturer or first supplier in the Community must place a CE mark on his toy to indicate that it has been made in conformity with the essential safety requirements of the directive. It is an enforcement mark (not a sign of quality or safety) and was established to ensure free movement of product throughout the European Union - a sort of passport for toys. It has to appear, along with the first supplier's name and address "in a visible, legible and indelible form" on the toy or its packaging.

THE LION MARK



The Lion Mark was developed in 1988 by the BTHA to perform a function not covered by the CE Mark, namely, to act as a recognisable consumer symbol denoting safety and quality. To display the Lion Mark, a BTHA member must have signed a licence agreement with the Association which sets out the terms of its use. Failure to abide by these terms will lead to revocation of the licence.

The Lion Mark also indicates the member's adherence to the BTHA Code of Practice which includes rules covering toy advertising and counterfeiting. Unlike the CE Mark, therefore, the Lion Mark is truly a consumer symbol. It means that consumers can be certain that a toy which bears the Lion Mark is safe and conforms with all relevant safety information.

APPROVED LION MARK RETAILER



In 1991 the British Association of Toy Retailers (BATR) joined up with the BTHA to launch the Approved Lion Mark Retailer Scheme. Members of the BATR also follow a strict Code of Practice, which demands they only sell products conforming to BS EN 71. As such, BATR members can display the above sign in their shops. This does not mean that all products in the shop carry the Lion Mark but that all products meet the Toy Safety Standard.