

British Standard Compliant First Aid Kits



Complying with BS 8599-1, Workplace First Aid Kits

In recognising the need to ensure that current workplace first aid provision is adequate and appropriate The British Healthcare Trade Association has been working with the British Standards Institute (BSI), to create a new British Standard for first aid kits in the workplace.

These enhanced kits are based upon the minimum requirements set out by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) in their approved code of practice L74. The contents of these new kits take into account more modern and functional products encompassing a wider range of common workplace risks and are therefore more comprehensive than the previous HSE compliant kits.

BS 8599-1 is the standard that sets the new minimum level that workplace first aid kits should conform to.

Although the HSE has not yet published a revision to the L74 guidelines, it has undertaken to do so at the earliest opportunity and this will refer to the new British Standard BS 8599-1.

The new standard like the previous L74 code of practice gives recommendations on the amount and size of the first aid kits necessary for the different workplace environments based on the category of risk and number of employees in the workplace.

Should the risk or numbers of employee deem it necessary the minimum contents as set out in the standard can be supplemented by additional items appropriate to the hazards identified by the risk assessment. This may result for example in increasing the number of burn dressings where a significant risk of a burn injury is likely.



What has changed ?



Increased number of disposable gloves, which are now required to be nitrile. Eliminating possible latex allergies whilst being far more dextrous than vinyl gloves.



Introduction of clothing cutters, to cut bandages and remove any clothing from around the wound.



Decreased number of Triangular Bandages, as they are no longer used for the immobilisation of limb injuries.



Introduction of an eyewash bottle for travel kits, ideal for drivers where dust or pollen gets in the eyes or in the event of a chemical splash where access to running water is not readily available.



Introduction of smaller absorbent wound dressings for finger injuries, where a plaster just will not cope.



Introduction of a resuscitation face shield, providing a protective barrier for first aiders administering mouth to mouth resuscitation.



Introduction of tearable non woven, hypoallergenic adhesive tape to secure bandages without using safety pins.



Introduction of a heat reflecting foil survival blanket, designed to keep the casualty warm in cases of clinical shock or exposure to cold temperatures.



Introduction of water based sterile gel burn dressings which do not require any pre-cooling with water and a conforming bandage to secure it.



Introduction of sterile saline wipes replacing the alcohol free wipes. These can now be used on broken skin.

What size kit do I need?

The size of the kit required is dependent on a combination of the level of risk and the number of employees in the workplace. The table below provides guidance for employers but does not replace the requirement to carry out a risk assessment.

This table is for guidance only and each workplace needs to evaluate its own level of risk.

Category Of Hazard	Number Of Employees	Number & Size of First Aid Kit
Low Hazard – e.g. shops, offices, libraries	Less than 25	1 Small Kit
	25-100	1 Medium Kit
	More than 100	1 Large Kit per 100 employees
High Hazard – e.g. light engineering and assembly work, food processing, warehousing, extensive work with dangerous machinery or sharp instruments, construction, chemical manufacture, etc	Less than 5	1 Small Kit
	5-25	1 Medium Kit
	More than 25	1 Large Kit per 25 employees

Special circumstances also need to be considered such as remoteness from medical services, special hazards such as the use of hydrofluoric acid and sites with several buildings. In these situations there may need to be more first aid kits than set out in the table.

BS 8599-1 British Standard Compliant Contents

Contents	Small	Medium	Large	Travel
First Aid Guidance Leaflet	1	1	1	1
HypaCover First Aid Dressings, 12x12cm	4	6	8	1
HypaCover First Aid Dressings, 18x18cm	1	2	2	1
HypaBand Triangular Bandages	2	3	4	1
HypaBand Safety Pins	12	12	24	12
HypaCover Eye Dressings	2	3	4	1
HypaPlast Washproof Plasters	40	60	100	20
HypaClean Sterile Wipes	20	30	40	4
HypaPlast Microporous Tape, 2.5cm x 5m	1	1	1	1
HypaTouch Nitrile Gloves (Pair)	6	9	12	1
HypaCover Finger Dressings	2	3	4	-
HypaGuard Face Shields	1	1	2	1
HypaGuard Foil Blankets	1	2	3	1
Burn Dressings, 10x10cm	1	2	2	1
Clothing Cutters	1	1	1	1
HypaBand Conforming Bandages, 7.5cm x 4m	1	2	2	1
HypaClen Sterile Eyewash, 250ml	-	-	-	1



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