

Better safe than sorry

Product safety & the importance
of a valid declaration of conformity



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Assessment declaration of conformity

Want to hit the ground running? Then use the checklist below to check the validity of your product's declaration of conformity. It's important that you critically examine whether your declaration of conformity meets all requirements. It's best to do so before you buy the product or offer it for sale. If you've checked 1 or more boxes in the "No" column, then please contact the manufacturer for clarification. The manufacturer may not know that the declaration of conformity doesn't meet all the requirements and may still draw up a legally correct declaration of conformity.

Checklist declaration of conformity

Requirement	Yes	No
Is the declaration of conformity written in Dutch or English?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the document titled 'EC Declaration of Conformity', 'EU Declaration of Conformity', 'Conformity Declaration', or 'Declaration of Conformity'?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the name and full address of the European manufacturer or its authorised representative clearly stated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the product covered by the declaration of conformity clearly and unambiguously identified (e.g., by model, type, batch, or serial number)? Does this information match the details on the product or its packaging?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
For toys: Does the declaration of conformity include a clear full-colour image of the product?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does it explicitly state that the manufacturer/signatory 'assumes full responsibility'?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does it explicitly state that the product 'is in accordance with the relevant community harmonisation legislation'?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are all applicable CE directives listed? Are they the latest versions with the correct coding?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are all applied harmonised standards/specifications referenced in the declaration listed? Are they the most up-to-date versions with the correct coding?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
For medical devices from risk class IIa it is mandatory to list the Notified Body. Did you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the declaration of conformity signed? Are the name and job title of the signatory, as well as the place and date of signing, clearly stated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If applicable, is the declaration of conformity provided with the product (as a separate document or included in the user manual, for example)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Many items sold on the European market must have a CE marking. CE stands for Conformité Européenne and indicates whether an item complies with all applicable regulations. But how can you be sure if an item complies with those regulations? After all, as a bol partner, you're responsible for the items that you sell.

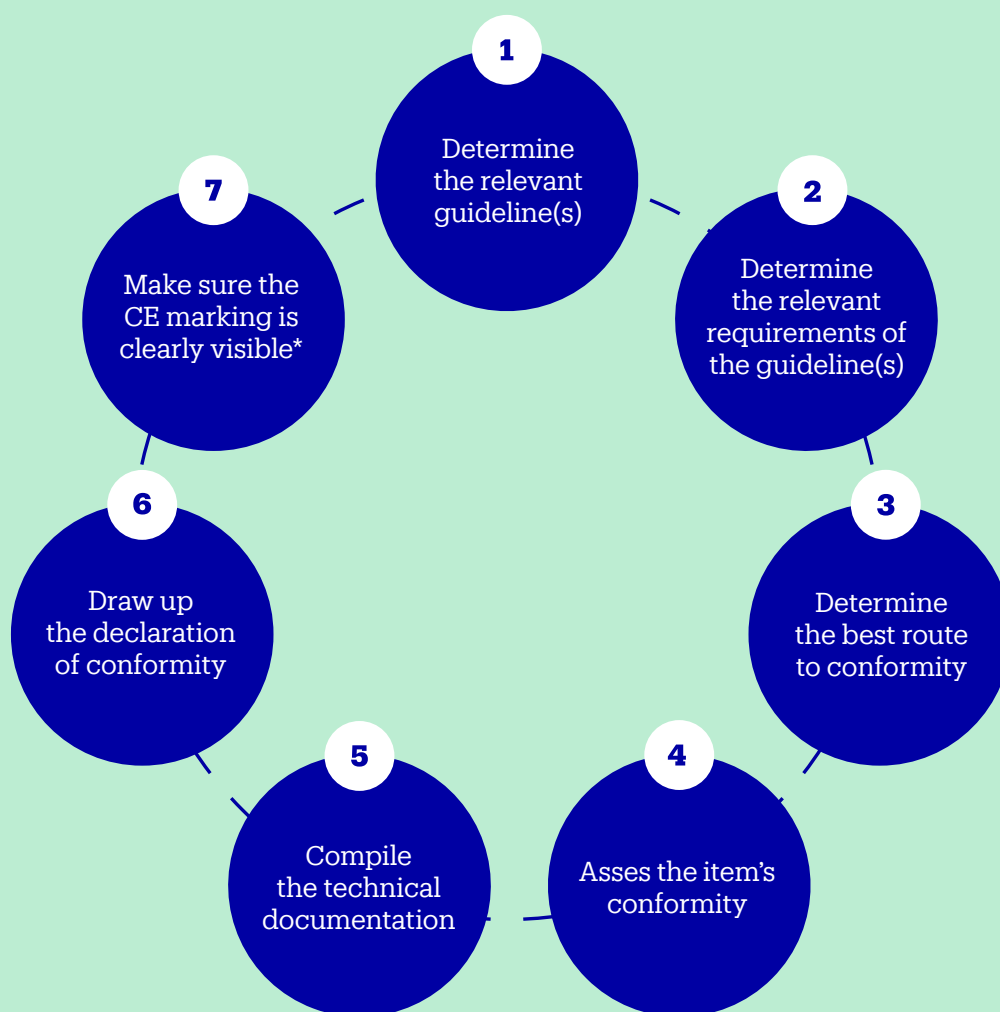
The declaration of conformity is a useful – and legally required – tool for this. In it, you will find a lot of relevant information about your item. Because authorities, such as the NVWA (The Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority) and bol, may ask you to provide a valid declaration of conformity for your item, we'd like to take this time to explain to you how you can check this document's validity and authenticity. This prevents issues due to liability or following inspections, or that your item is taken offline. This way, we make sure that you can continue to do business carefree and successfully.

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1. What is a declaration of conformity?

A declaration of conformity is a document that officially states that your item complies with the relevant European product guidelines and safety legislation. Sometimes, this document is also referred to as an EU Declaration of Conformity.

Drawing up the declaration of conformity is the final step in the CE-marking process. However, it can only be drawn up when all other steps are completed. The resulting document must be signed by the manufacturer, importer, or the European authorised representative of the item.



* The CE marking must be clearly visible, legible and permanently affixed.

Despite the legal status of the declaration of conformity, this document does not offer the end user any guarantee that the item is 100% safe. It does, however, provide a good insight into the manufacturer's expertise and good intentions. By checking the contents of the declaration of conformity, you can tell how well the manufacturer does/does not comply with the specific requirements of European guidelines.

1.1 Who is responsible for the declaration of conformity?

To answer this question, we have to first take a look at your role within bol. European guidelines distinguish between economic operators in the production and sales process:



Manufacturers

produce and market everything themselves



Importers

import from outside the EU



Distributors

buy from importers, sell to consumers

The production and sales process is the process that an item goes through from production to delivery to the end user.

Manufacturer

If you're selling an item that you've manufactured yourself, you're a manufacturer. If you have made (technical) changes to an item you purchased or if you sell an item that you purchased under your own brand name, then you're also considered a manufacturer. The full responsibility for the item lies with you, along with the associated obligations, such as drawing up the declaration of conformity.

Importer

Are you selling an item from a country outside the EU? And do you sell the item under the manufacturer's brand name? Then, you're considered an importer with all the responsibilities that come with it. The importer must make sure that the manufacturer has drawn up the technical documentation. The declaration of conformity is part of this documentation. The importer must be able to provide a copy when the authorities or bol request it.

Distributor

Do you sell an item that you've purchased from a party within the EU? For example, from an importer or a European manufacturer? In that case, you're considered a distributor, as long as the item is unbranded or bears the name of the manufacturer. Bol requests that distributors check whether a valid declaration of conformity has been drawn up for the item and may request to see it.

Each economic operator has different obligations when it comes to the declaration of conformity. In addition, these obligations may also differ per product group. For example, a manufacturer of medical devices has different obligations than a distributor of toys.

2. Which items require a declaration of conformity?

All items that contain a CE marking must have a declaration of conformity. An item containing a CE marking always falls under the directives of a certain product group.

The following overview shows which product groups fall under the CE-marking directives. Please note: this doesn't mean that each item within these product groups may be sold on bol. You can always find the most up-to-date information on [our Partnerplatform](#)

- Cable-car installations
- Construction items
- Electrical equipment
- Energy-related items
- ATEX items
- Explosives for civil use
- Gas appliances
- Medical equipment for in-vitro diagnostics
- Lifts
- Low-voltage equipment
- Machinery
- Measuring equipment
- Medical devices
- Outdoor equipment with sound emissions
- Personal protective equipment
- Pressure equipment
- Items that contain dangerous substances
- Pyrotechnic items
- Radio equipment
- Recreational vessels
- Toys
- Oil and gas-powered central heating boilers
- Non-automatic weighing instruments

You can find everything you need to know about the European directives for the product group [here](#).

The declaration of conformity as part of an item's delivery

For some items, such as machines, pressure equipment, and explosion-proof equipment it's mandatory to provide the declaration of conformity with the item. This is not necessary for items that fall under the Low Voltage Directive, the EMC Directive, and the Toys Directive. Items that fall under the Radio Equipment Directive (RED) must be provided with a full declaration of conformity or a simplified version with this exact wording:

I, [name manufacturer], hereby declare that the type of radio equipment [type of equipment] follows the 2014/53/EU Directive.

You can view the full text of the European declaration of conformity [here](#).

3. Why does bol ask about the declaration of conformity?

Bol distinguishes itself by offering a reliable, safe, and high-quality product range. That's why it's paramount that all items on our platform comply with the relevant laws and regulations. To be sure of this, checking the declaration of conformity is very important.

We'd like to help you get started so that you can meet your obligations. For example, on our Partnerplatform, you can "meet" reliable experts that can help you with product safety and conformity. This prevents issues due to liability or following inspections, or that your item is taken offline. This way, we make sure that you can continue to do business carefree and successfully.

You can find more information about product safety and conformity on [our Partnerplatform](#).



4. The declaration of conformity

You can find what your declaration of conformity should say exactly in the European directives. Please note: the content of the declaration of conformity can differ per product group and therefore per product.

4.1 The declaration of conformity's language

The declaration of conformity must be drawn up in at least 1 of the official languages of the EU. However, member states may require that the declaration of conformity must be available in their own official language(s). Bol will always ask for a Dutch or English declaration of conformity. So, please check this carefully.

4.2 What does a declaration of conformity look like?

This is an example of a standard declaration of conformity:

Declaration of Conformity **1**

2 **We**
Company name*:
Address:
Postcode:
City:
Country:
* For non-European manufacturers, mention of authorised representative

3 **We hereby declare that we are completely responsible and liable for this document and this item.**

4 **We declare that this document applies to the following item(s):**
Product name**:
Brand name: **6**
Model number***: **7**
**If applicable: Notified Body
***If applicable: risk class indication

5 **The abovementioned item complies with the following directives:**
XXX

8 **We have used the following norms and technical specifications: :**
XXX
XXX
XXX

9 **Signed by and for:**

[signature]

Name & job title	Signing date	Signing location
XXX	XXX	XXX

1. Title (English)
2. Name & address
3. Responsibility
4. Description item
5. Agreement
6. Notified Body
7. Risk-class indication
8. Norms
9. Signature

5. Common mistakes

1. Incorrect title

The declaration of conformity knows many names, sometimes with minor variations and other times with significant differences. It's also frequently mistaken for other documents, such as a 'certificate of compliance,' which typically originates from a non-European manufacturer. Please note: the correct use of 'EC' or 'EU' depends on the relevant directives. Directives issued from 2010 onwards use 'EU,' while those from 1994 onwards use 'EC' (with even older directives using 'EEG').

2. Mention of a non-European manufacturer

If an authorised representative has been appointed, they must be based in the EU. This must be explicitly stated in the declaration of conformity. Note: the representative cannot be an individual but must be a legally registered company or organisation. Additionally, the full name and address of this authorised representative must be clearly provided on the declaration of conformity. If the manufacturer is mentioned instead, they may be based outside the EU. Please also provide the manufacturer's full name and address on the declaration of conformity.

3. Taking full responsibility

As the manufacturer, you confirm that the item meets all relevant requirements. By drafting and signing the declaration of conformity, you officially declare this and assume full responsibility. Important: this must be explicitly stated in the declaration of conformity, using this exact wording: "We, [company name], declare that we take full responsibility for the item [x]."

4. Unclear product description

The declaration of conformity must clearly and unambiguously correspond to the item. This ensures traceability, particularly in the event of a recall. Simply put: each individual item requires its own declaration of conformity. However, for mass-produced items, a manufacturer may link a single declaration of conformity to a specific batch or production period to limit the impact of potential recalls.

5. Missing product image

For toys, a full-colour image of the product is mandatory. For most other items, an image is not required.

6. Failure to declare compliance with directives

If an item must comply with multiple directives, all relevant CE directives must be explicitly listed.

7. Outdated directives or incorrect references

Some manufacturers include the full, formal title of the directives, but this isn't necessary. The commonly used short name is sufficient, as long as the reference (or proprietary) standards used are also mentioned. These proprietary standards do not carry the same legal weight as European standards but must still be relevant. Obviously, merely listing them to appear compliant is not acceptable. By specifying the applied standards, the manufacturer establishes a 'presumption of conformity' with the directive(s).

8. Notified Body information

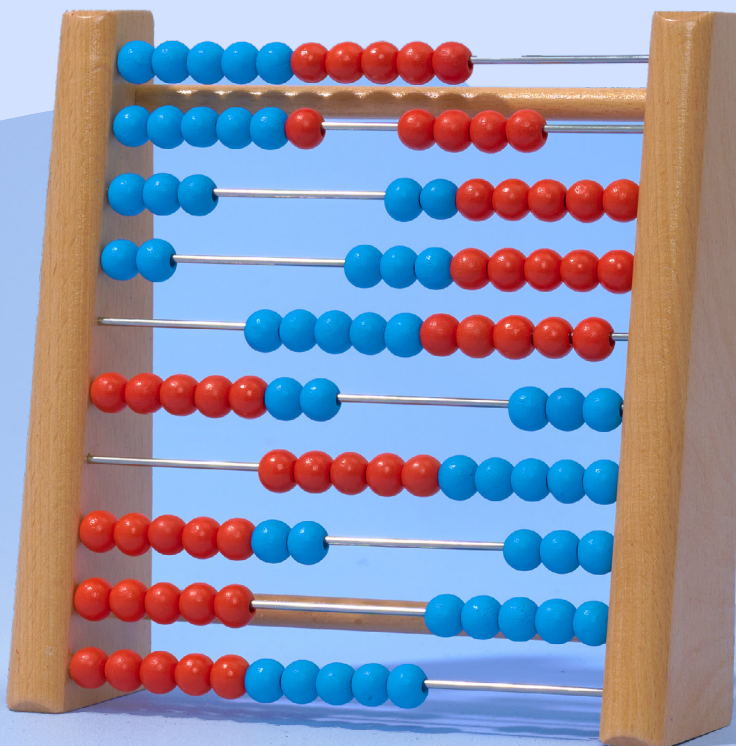
As the risks of an item increase, European product directives require that a so-called Notified Body must carry out certain control tasks on the design, manufacturing, and series production thereof. For example, a type examination or the supervision of a complete quality assurance system of the manufacturer. The Notified Body must be mentioned on the declaration of conformity with its identification number and an indication of the tasks carried out.

9. Signature of a non-European manufacturer

The declaration of conformity must be signed by an individual legally authorised to act on behalf of the manufacturer, such as a director or a senior manager in engineering or product development. The signature section must include:

- name
- job title
- date
- location
- signature

The signature date must correspond with the date on which the item (or the 1st in a series of items) was placed on the market.



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Would you like to learn more?

Do you still have questions about the declaration of conformity? Then please take a look at [our Partnerplatform](#) and our product-range policy