

Direct marketing checklist

Businesses can use this checklist to help make sure their marketing messages comply with the law and don't annoy customers. It also includes an at-a-glance guide to the different rules on marketing calls, texts, emails, faxes and mail. It is primarily aimed at small businesses. For detailed advice, [see our full guidance on direct marketing](#).

Obtaining consent for marketing

- We use opt-in boxes
- We specify methods of communication (eg by email, by text, by phone, by recorded call, by post)
- We ask for consent to pass details to third parties for marketing, and name or describe those third parties
- We record when and how we got consent, and exactly what it covers

Using bought-in lists

- We check the origin and accuracy of the list
- We check when and how consent was obtained, and what it covers
- We don't use bought-in lists for texts, emails or recorded calls (unless we have proof of opt-in consent within last 6 months which specifically named or described us)
- We screen against the TPS
- We tell people where we got their details

Making calls

- We screen live calls against the Telephone Preference Service (TPS)
- We only make recorded calls with opt-in consent
- We keep our own do-not-call list of anyone who says they don't want our calls
- We screen against our do-not-call list

Sending texts or emails

- We only text or email with opt-in consent (unless contacting previous customers about our own similar products, and we offered them an opt-out when they gave their details)
- We offer an opt-out (by reply or unsubscribe link)
- We keep a list of anyone who opts out
- We screen against our opt-out list

At-a-glance guide to the marketing rules

Method of communication	Individual consumers (plus sole traders and partnerships)	Business-to-business (companies and corporate bodies)
Live calls	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Screen against the TPS• Can opt out	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Screen against the Corporate TPS• Can opt out
Recorded calls	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need specific consent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need specific consent
Emails or texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need specific consent• Or soft opt-in (previous customer, our own similar product, had a chance to opt out)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can email or text corporate bodies• Good practice to offer opt out• Individual employees can opt out
Faxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need specific consent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Screen against the Fax Preference Service (FPS)• Can opt out
Mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name and address obtained fairly• Can opt out	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can mail corporate bodies• Individual employees can opt out

This only gives a very broad overview of the marketing rules. For detailed advice, [see our full guidance on direct marketing](#).