

Important Information for Responsible Persons

of Public Buildings including Hotels, Holiday Lettings & Guest Houses and Commercial Buildings with child accessible areas.

Did you know that the law has changed?

Since 28 February 2014, all homes, publicly accessible buildings and some commercial buildings where young children are likely to be present must comply with the internal window blind safety requirements.

Internal Window Blind Safety Requirements

Introduction

According to Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) since 1999 there have been 33 fatalities where babies and young children have become accidentally entangled with internal window blind cords and chains.

In response, The British Blind and Shutter Association (BBSA) launched a campaign in 2009 called 'Make it Safe' to raise awareness and to help educate both the trade and consumers in the safe installation and use of internal window blinds.

Relevant product standards were reviewed and the new standards came into force on 28 February 2014 which is mandated in the Consumer Product Safety Regulations.

The Standard covers premises where children 0-42 months are likely to have access or to be present.

What?

Internal window blinds with cords and chains

Where?

All homes

All public buildings

Some commercial buildings

When?

Since February 2014

Are your premises compliant?

Even though internal blinds must be child safe by law, in reality there are thousands of buildings including hotels, guest houses commercial building reception areas across UK with blinds fitted before 2014 that are not compliant.

Make sure yours is not one of them!

Standards:

BS EN 13120:2009+AI:2014 – Internal blinds – Performance requirements including safety

BS EN 16433:2014 – Internal blinds – Protection from strangulation hazards – Test methods

BS EN 16434:2014 – Internal blinds – Protection from strangulation hazards – Requirements and Test methods for safety devices

Standards Requirements

In summary the Standards require:

- all safety systems and safety critical items of internal blinds to be tested
- all products to be either inherently safe/'safe by design' (contain no dangerous loops or free hanging cords) or for cords and chains to be provided with safety device(s) at the point of manufacture;
- all products containing cords/chains must be securely fitted with safety device(s) supplied during installation to eliminate any potential hazardous loops or entanglement
- all safety devices must be securely fitted at least 1.5m from the floor and as near to the headrail as possible (with the exception of breakaway devices – these can be as low as 0.6m from the floor)
- instructions must be left with the customer and all warning labels left on the product at the point of fitting

The installer/ instruction leaflet must inform you why the safety device(s) are necessary, how and where they need to be installed and how to correctly operate the blind.

Safety devices available:

- accumulation device for pull/tilt cords,
- tensioning device for looped cords/chains,
- breakaway device/tensioning device for looped cords/chains.

Curtain Tracks

In the absence of a standard for curtain tracks the requirements stated above are the same for corded curtain tracks.

Buying new internal blinds

The BBSA strongly recommends that you choose a window blind that is 'safe by design'/inherently safe meaning it does not use cords or chains to operate it or if it does, these are concealed or tensioned.

Contact a BBSA member or a Make it Safe Dealer who will be able to help you.

Visit our website and search for a member in your area.

www.bbsa.org.uk

Making existing blinds safer

Existing blinds installed before the child safety regulation came into force in 2014 may not be child safe. Make sure your premises are compliant by making the existing blinds safer and introducing suitable retrofit safety device(s).

Make sure a suitable safety device(s) compliant with BS EN 16434:2014 are used and the installation requirements for child safety are fulfilled. Every blind style can be made safer.

Contact a BBSA member or a Make it Safe Dealer who will be able to help you.

Visit Make it Safe website for further information and useful videos featuring how to make every style of internal blind safer.

www.makeitsafe.org.uk

The screenshot shows the 'Make it Safe' website. The header includes the logo, navigation links (Home, Residential, Public Buildings, Resources, Trade, Supporters, About Us, Contact Us), a search bar, and the BBSA logo. The main content area features a large image of a living room with a yellow sofa and a window with blinds. Overlaid on this image is a white box with the text 'Your guide to window blind safety' and 'Window blind safety advice for homes and public buildings'. Below this, there are two columns of text: 'Homes' and 'Public Buildings', each with a brief description of safety advice for those settings.

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BBSA
BRITISH BLIND & SHUTTER ASSOCIATION

make it safe

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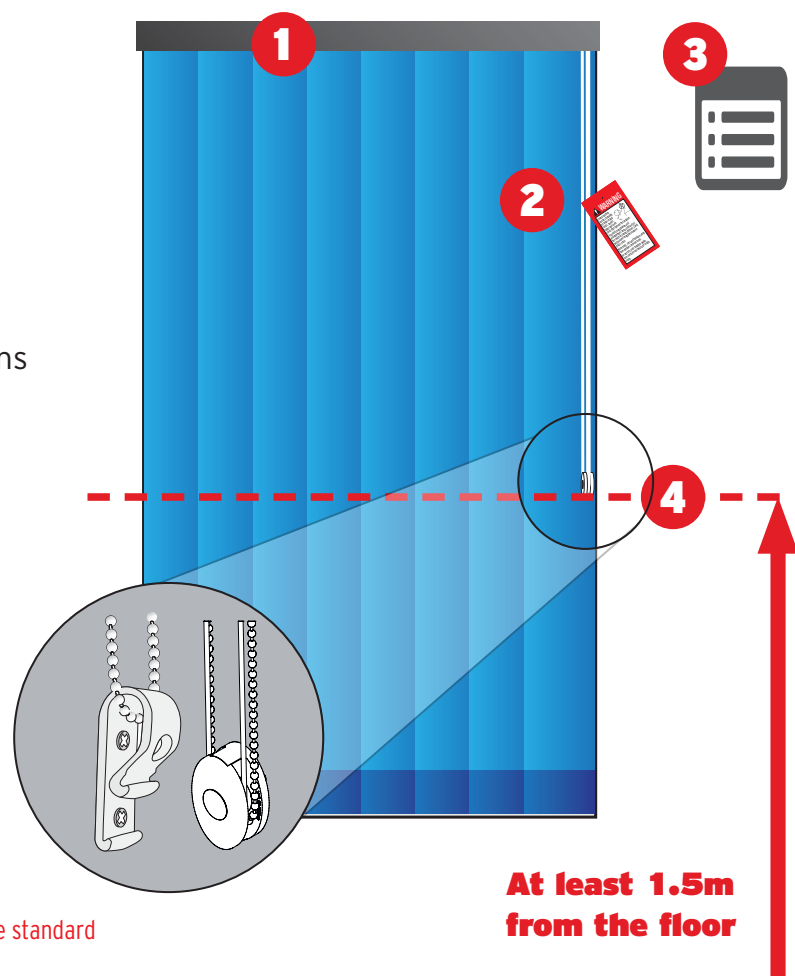
www.bbsa.org.uk
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Blinds with looped cords

Tensioning devices

Examples - Blinds with side chain/cord operation such as rollers, verticals, romans and venetians

1. Name or trademark on the blind
2. General warning notice left on the blind
3. Product instructions left with the customer
4. Tensioning device securely fitted at the maximum distance from the headrail to keep the cord/chain taut and at least 1.5m from the floor

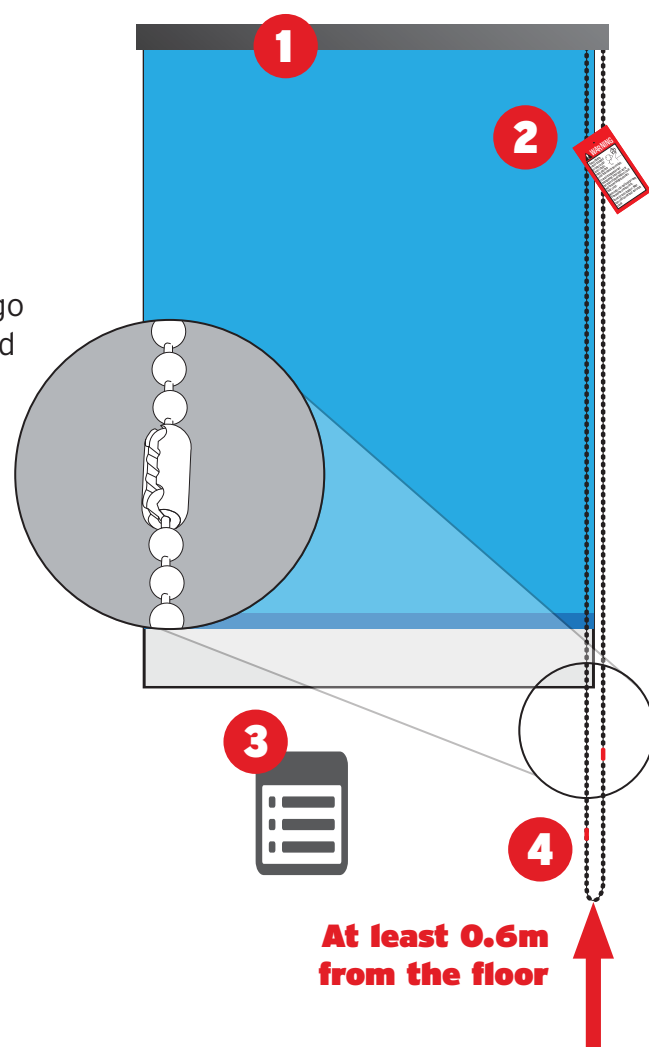


NB - Stabilising chains on vertical blinds are not covered by the standard

Blinds with breakaway devices

Examples - Blinds with side chain/cord operation where the full length of the cord or chain does not go through the mechanism to fully raise/lower the blind

1. Name or trademark on the blind
2. General warning notice left on the blind
3. Product instructions left with the customer
4. Breakaway connector(s) installed and cord/chain at least 0.6m from the floor

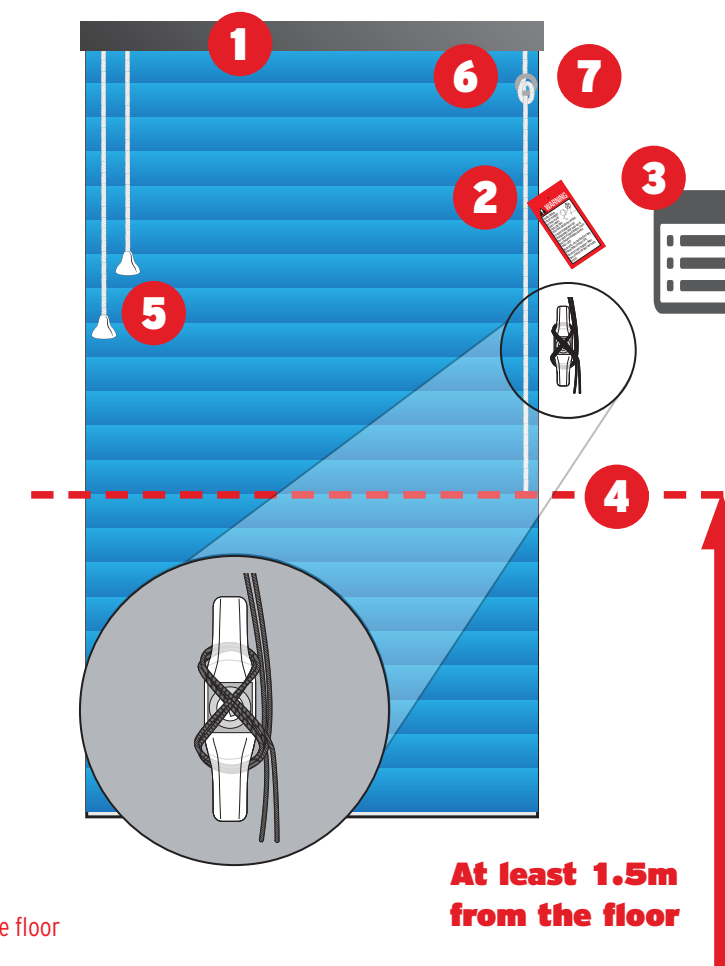


Blinds with pull cords

Accumulation devices

Examples - Blinds with/without cord locks such as venetian, roman and pleated

1. Name or trademark on the blind
2. General warning notice left on the blind
3. Product instructions left with the customer
4. Accumulation device securely fitted at least 1.5m from floor and as near to the headrail as possible
5. Non-tangle tassels. An accumulation device also required if cords at lowest point (fully tilted) extend below 1.5m from the floor
6. Cord stops to be fitted as close to the headrail as possible and not more than 50mm away, with the blind being in the fully extended position
7. If more than two pull cords (and less than 5) a breakaway system is needed.



NB - A blind with pull cords must not be fitted less than 1.5m from the floor

Roman blind lift cords

Operating cords and chains

The requirements for operating cords and chains will be dependent on the safety device(s) used as shown on this page.

≤ 200mm

If the maximum distance between two consecutive attachment/retention points of inner cords is less than or equal to 200mm then you should not need a breakaway system.

If the blind does not meet these criteria, a compliant safety system must be used on the lift/rear cords. Contact your local supplier.

