



**SELLING SECOND HAND ELECTRICAL GOODS:**

# **A GUIDE FOR CHARITY SHOP MANAGERS**





## Charity Shop Managers: Your Guide to Selling Second Hand Electrical Goods

### Contents

### Page

<a href="#">Who is this Guide for?</a>	2
<a href="#">How selling electrical goods will increase your shop income and stock</a>	2
<a href="#">What the Trading Standards Institute says</a>	3
<a href="#">Case Study</a>	4-5
<a href="#">FAQ's – reselling electrical goods</a>	6-7
<a href="#">Selling second hand electrical goods - A Step by Step Guide for you</a>	8-9
<a href="#">Training and Equipment – what do I need?</a>	10
<a href="#">Samples: Shop posters</a>	11
<a href="#">Registered Charities: Extra benefits</a>	11
<a href="#">Free Guides available</a>	12
<a href="#">Charities we already help</a>	13
<a href="#">Contact us</a>	14
<a href="#">Special limited offer – 'Reseller Package' with equipment &amp; training included</a>	15
<a href="#">Other Services from First Stop Safety</a>	17

### Who is this Guide for?

You could be the Shop Manager or a member of staff who has responsibility for accepting and sorting through donations that come in from the public.

This Guide is jargon free, and will take you through the benefits of selling second hand electrical goods in your shop(s) as well as guiding you through the implementation of selling second hand electrical goods.

Making the decision to start accepting and re-selling second hand electrical goods is a simple one once you understand the reasons why it really helps charities, and how easy it is to implement.

### How Selling Electrical Goods Will Increase Your Shop Income and Stock

- Electrical items sell for significantly higher prices
- More appealing shop window will attract more customers to your shop(s)
- Demand for electrical goods is consistently high
- Electrical items sell quickly
- An additional source of stock/donations for your shop(s)

## What the Trading Standards Institute says about selling second hand electrical goods

Sellers of second hand electrical goods are responsible for ensuring the goods meet legal safety requirements. If the equipment you are selling complies with an acceptable standard - for example, a British/European Standard - it will normally meet safety requirements. This is usually shown by the CE mark (see below for more on this).

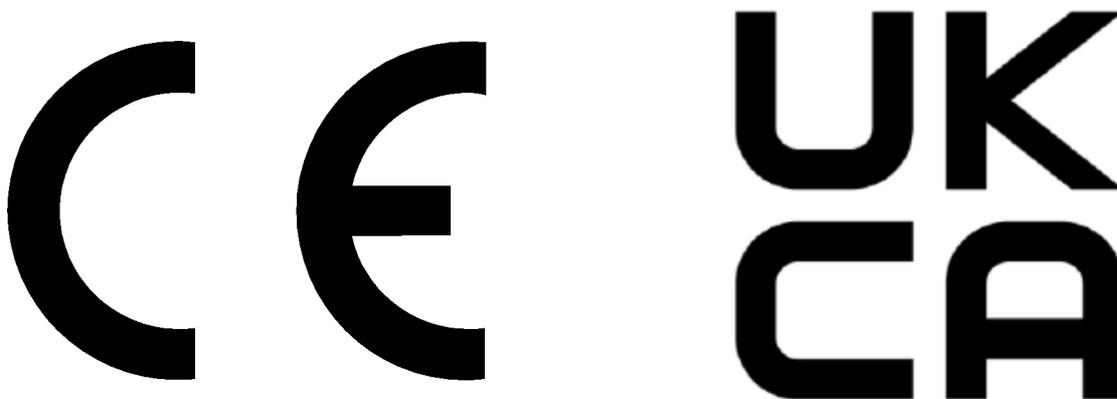
Only appliances correctly fitted with an approved plug with sleeved neutral and live pins and the correct fuse should be re-sold.

If you sell second hand electrical goods which are unsafe or incorrectly labelled and you haven't taken reasonable precautions to avoid this you may be prosecuted.

**NB Electric Blankets: The Trading Standards Institute and First Stop Safety advise that you do not sell these in your shop(s).**

### CE Marking

Since 1993 all new electrical equipment has had to bear the CE mark. This is the manufacturer's or importer's certification that the goods have been manufactured in accordance with the appropriate regulations.



### Post Brexit arrangements

Following Brexit, the CE mark is being replaced by the UKCA mark (Fig 1.7). All electrical appliances placed on the UK market from January 1st, 2023, must have this mark applied. Some manufacturers may introduce products for sale with the UKCA mark well ahead of this deadline.

## Case Study

### SUMMARY

This case study outlines the experiences of a number of charities that have started to sell donated electrical goods.

They were all enthusiastic about this move as it has had a significant impact on sales and satisfied customer demand.

They would urge other charity shops to get their staff trained and start selling.

This case study documents the experiences of some charities in selling donated electrical goods in their shops. In all, 5 charities were consulted, some operating nationally and others operating locally.

#### Charities contributing to this case study:

Save the Children

Age Concern

Walsall Hospice

Kirkwood Hospice

Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation

One charity saw an immediate increase of 25% in sales and expects this to go up to 50% soon.

#### Why sell electrical goods?

The key drivers for all the charities was the increasing number of electrical goods being donated, a need to increase revenue and demand from their customers for electrical items.

#### What factors prevented the shops accepting electrical goods

The shops knew that electrical goods had to be checked before being displayed in the shop for sale. Some were not in a position to do this as no one had the correct training. Bringing external electrical contractors had a number of disadvantages. The costs often made it uneconomical, and items had to be stored until the contractors visit. This wasn't always convenient and took up valuable storage space.

#### How did the shop get started?

All the charities interviewed had been helped by First Stop Safety. Staff had undergone training in checking electrical items for safety and been supplied with easy to use testers.

Most first made contact with First Stop Safety at the Charity Retail Association's annual conference. Some found the company by searching on the web or were passed on the contact details from other branches or charities already successfully selling electrical goods.



First Stop Safety at  
CRA Conference

## Case Study: Feedback on First Stop Safety

**“Brilliant”, “very good”, “very informative” and “marvellous”** were some of the comments made about the training provided by First Stop Safety. All the staff found the testers were very easy to use.



### **Did the shops see any downsides to selling electrical goods?**

Most of the charity shops surveyed reported no downsides to selling electrical items. One commented that some returns can be expected but they did not see this as a deterrent.

### **What advice did the shops have for other charity shops who do not sell electrical goods?**

All the charity shops contacted were very enthusiastic about what they were doing and would urge other charity shops to do the same. They considered it worthwhile as their revenue increased quickly and it satisfied customer demand for low cost electrical goods. **“Just go for it”** said one. **“Look outside the box”** said another.

### **Estimated increase in revenue**

Of the charities that monitored the additional income from selling donated electrical goods, figures of 25 to 30% increase in sales were reported. One charity expects this to go up soon to 50% of sales. Another reported that the impact to sales figures from selling used electrical goods was felt immediately.

**“I am glad that as a charity shop, we have started to do the electrical side. In this economic climate we have all felt the pinch with less donations coming in”** said a Shop Manager.

**“Once the public know that you take in electrical items and sell them, they come to us before they go to the larger stores. You would be surprised what really good stock comes in”** she added.

## FAQ's - Reselling Electrical Goods

**Q. I have heard you need to be an electrician to PAT test appliances, is that true?**

A. No, you do not need to be an electrician to PAT test. Anybody can do it after suitable instruction/training.

**Q. I have heard I need some electrical experience to PAT test and it's quite complicated, is that true?**

A. No, you do not need any electrical experience at all. PAT testing is not complicated as the majority of PAT testing is common sense and very straight forward.

**Q. What happens if an appliance develops a fault 6 months down the line and I PAT tested it and PASSED it before the customer purchased it?**

A. PAT testing is a bit like an MOT test on your car, you are just making sure that the appliance is safe to be sold on that day; you are not and can not be responsible for anything that could happen to it after then. It is important to keep a record of the items you have PAT tested in case you have to refer back to it.

**Q. I have lots of staff who accept donations including drivers. Do I have to train all of these staff to PAT test?**

A. On our training courses and training DVD we explain to visually inspect items for obvious faults and dangers before even using a PAT tester. This information can easily be passed on to these individuals who can then make an informed decision whether or not to accept a donation.

## FAQ's - Reselling Electrical Goods

**Q. Do I have to stick the green PASSED labels to an appliance before I sell it?**

A. It is a good idea to always label appliances. We can also show you how to keep a log of your PAT testing. However this is not a legal requirement.

**Q. What should we do with appliances that fail a PAT Test?**

A. If an appliance fails a PAT test we recommend you apply a red 'FAILED -DO NOT USE' label (which we can supply) and dispose of the appliance for recycling. Alternatively if the appliance is of high value it can be passed to an electrician for repair.

**Q. If I purchase a PAT Tester and/or training from First Stop Safety do I have any support or anyone I can speak to if I need help PAT testing?**

A. Yes. First Stop Safety offers a free and friendly technical support helpline open 9-5 Monday to Friday.

**Q. Apart from PAT testing is there anything else I need to make sure an appliance has before I can sell it safely and legally?**

A. Yes there is, but again we can help you with this. For example an appliance must have wiring instructions with it to be sold.

# Selling Second Hand Electrical Goods - a Step by Step Guide for you



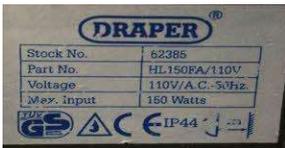
## Step 1: Is it an appropriate appliance for resale?

It is strongly advised not to offer second hand electric blankets for resale. If appliances cannot be checked for correct operation (eg washing machine, personal computer) then there is a strong risk that the customer may return these for faults.

## Step 2: Is the appliance in a reasonable state for resale?

If the appliance has been supplied in it's box and has instructions, then it is going to be easier to sell. If it is rusty and/or caked with grease then there is no point with proceeding any further.

## Step 3: Does the appliance have a rating plate?



There needs to be a label somewhere on the appliance (known as the rating plate) which will give some information about the appliance. This can be found on the base, rear or side of all appliances. Some appliances, say like mains extension leads, have this information moulded in. If this cannot be found then the appliance has to be failed.

## Step 4: Does the label have suitable approval markings?

All electrical appliances offered for sale, MUST have the CE/UKCA approval mark. If this is missing, then fail the appliance.



## Step 5: Do the Live and Neutral pins on the plug have insulation?



This is a picture of correctly insulated Live & Neutral pins on a plug. If this is not present, then the safest approach is to fail the appliance. (Some may advocate the changing of the plug to an appropriate one. However, an appliance without the correct plug is likely to be quite old and will quite likely have other safety related issues).

## Step 6: Are there any obvious faults with the appliance?

This is checked using a process known as Formal Visual Inspection. The 'Half Day PAT Course' run by First Stop Safety will give a step by step guide to this. This process involves checking the cable, appliance, outside of the plug, inside the plug and the fuse.

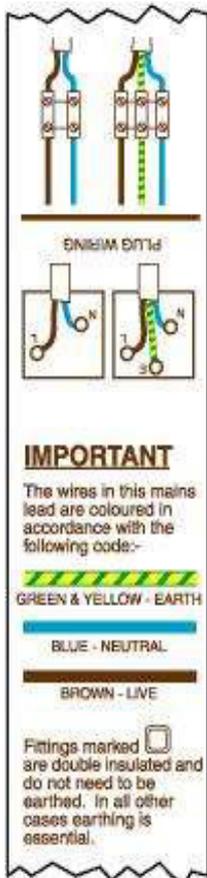
## Step 7: Does the appliance have the correct earthing and insulation?



The Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) process is the way to check this. The 'Half Day PAT Course' run by First Stop Safety will give a step by step guide to this. In addition, the delegate will be introduced to a very simple to use PAT tester which simply says PASS or FAIL when a test is done.

## Step 8: Are there clear instructions on how to wire the plug?

All appliances have to be provided with a plug. This can be either a moulded type or a re-wired type. These have to be supplied with a label that advises the user on how to re-wire this, in case they have to change the plug.



The label shown on the left here is available from [firststopsafety.co.uk](http://firststopsafety.co.uk). This is wrapped around the cable near the plug and is sticky backed.

## Step 9: Does the appliance work?

If the appliance is new, supplied in its original packaging, and has user instructions, then there is every likelihood that it will work normally. However, if a previously used appliance is supplied, then it is important to carry out a brief functional test to ensure that it is working correctly.

## Step 10: Is the appliance dangerous if used incorrectly?

If used appliances are supplied without clear user instructions, then an assessment has to be made of likely risks. It is a good idea to develop a set of generic instructions that can be supplied with appliances that ensures their safe use.

**Contact us for more information on our Portable Appliance Testing course aimed at organisations recycling and reselling electrical appliances.**

**First Stop Safety also supply an excellent safety poster prior to PAT testing and selling a second-hand electrical appliance.**



## Training and Equipment - what do I need?

Charity shop staff and volunteers can very easily start PAT testing electrical goods prior to re-sale. With the correct equipment and instruction selling 2<sup>nd</sup> hand electrical goods is perfectly safe, simple, straightforward and easy to implement.

### Equipment

A PAT tester is required so that you can test your items for electrical safety. Using a simple PASS/FAIL portable appliance tester (PAT tester) means that no interpretation of results is required, so anyone with the right instruction can carry out the test.



First Stop Safety manufacture the 'BattPAT', a PASS/FAIL tester which is very simple to use, lightweight, modern and comes with a Lifetime Warranty. It is one of the cheapest testers on the market, and perfectly suited for charity shops.

### Training

The person undertaking the PAT test will require some degree of training. However, this training needn't be complex or expensive. First Stop Safety has trained hundreds of charity shop staff and volunteers.

A half day tutor-led course or a distance learning course is ideal for charity shop staff. The distance learning course with online assessment is particularly suitable for those shops with a high turnover of volunteers, and purchasing additional tests is easy and low cost.

First Stop Safety delivers half day PAT training courses throughout the UK.





## Free Guides available

### [FREE GUIDE - Microwave Leakage Detection Leaflet](#)

This handy leaflet explains how to test for leakage enabling you to start accepting and re-selling donated microwave ovens in your charity shop.

### [FREE GUIDE - Guide to PAT Testing](#)

This 20-page guide has answers to Frequently Asked Questions on Portable Appliance Testing.



These free guides are available on our website  
[www.firststopsafety.co.uk](http://www.firststopsafety.co.uk)

Call us on 01904 791050 to order, for more information or simply  
some friendly advice.

## **Charities we already help**

**Here is a small selection of charities that we already help:-**

**Age UK**

**Barnardo's**

**British Red Cross**

**Cancer Research**

**Children's Society**

**MIND**

**PDSA**

**RSPCA**

**Salvation Army**

**Save the Children**

**Scope**

**YMCA**

## Contact Us

### TELEPHONE

Please ring **01904 791050** to speak to our sales team - we are open 9-5 Monday to Friday. You are welcome to call for some friendly advice, or simply more information on how we can help your charity.

### E-MAIL

[sales@firststopsafety.co.uk](mailto:sales@firststopsafety.co.uk)

### ONLINE

Via our website [www.firststopsafety.co.uk](http://www.firststopsafety.co.uk) You can buy online too.

### WRITE TO US

At 11 Glaisdale Road, Northminster Business Park, YORK, YO26 6QT

### FACEBOOK

Find us at [www.facebook.com/firststopsafety](http://www.facebook.com/firststopsafety)

### TWITTER

Join us at <https://twitter.com/#!/firststopsafety>

### YOUTUBE

See us at <http://www.youtube.com/user/firststopsafety>

## The Charity Shop Prime Package

The 'Charity Shop Prime Package' is currently available for our charity and hospice customers.

It is a highly popular package especially designed for anyone re-selling electrical goods.



### What is in the Charity Shop Prime Package

- BattPAT Tester, charger and test leads all fully calibrated
- Microwave Leakage Checker fully calibrated, easy-to-use, and an accurate meter for measuring leakage from Microwave Ovens
- Lifetime Warranty on both machines
- Hard carry case
- Product Verification Certificates
- 500 Reseller tested labels including 25 failed labels
- 500 Fuse Labels
- 1 Roll of 440 electrical wiring tape
- 25 "RF Emission Tested" and 5 "Failed" labels
- 2 "Customer Advice" posters
- Rechargeable NiMH batteries
- User Manuals
- "Master" Equipment Register form
- "Master" Test Record form
- Unlimited access to our Technical Support and PAT Testing Expertise

### How much does it cost?

This Package is available at £299\* + vat and delivery for a limited period.

\*price correct at 1<sup>st</sup> May 2022. Subject to review without notice.

**This Guide is intended to help you understand the responsibilities and procedures involved with accepting and re-selling second hand donated electrical appliances in your charity shop.**

**For more information or advice about accepting and re-selling second hand electrical goods please call First Stop Safety on 01904 791050.**

## **Other services from First Stop Safety**



**Helping charity shops sell donated  
electrical items safely since 1991**

### **Other services from First Stop Safety**

**Calibration  
Training  
PAT testing accessories**

**First Stop Safety  
11 Glaisdale Road  
Northminster Business Park  
YORK  
YO26 6QT**

**T: 01904 791050  
E: [info@firststopsafety.co.uk](mailto:info@firststopsafety.co.uk)**