

**Your rights  
explained**

# **Buying goods and services?**

Feel confident when  
you see this sign



# Looking for the best service?

**Everyone wants to feel sure that they'll receive the best possible customer service buying goods and services – particularly when spending larger sums of money.**

If a business is displaying the OFT Approved code logo, it means that they are a member of a trade body with a code of practice approved by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) which provides you with more consumer rights than are required by law. The OFT is a government consumer body - so you can be sure that the code has been rigorously checked if our logo is displayed.



## What does this mean to me?

The OFT Approved code logo is a way for you to find trustworthy businesses to deal with before you buy. If a business displays the logo you can be sure that they:

- will provide good customer service
- give you clear information about the goods or services they're selling
- will use clear and fair contracts
- will protect your deposits
- have straightforward and quick procedures for dealing with complaints
- are committed to treat you fairly if problems arise
- will offer free or low cost dispute resolution, such as arbitration or an ombudsman, if you can't agree how to sort out a problem.

## How does it work?

The trade body (such as a trade association) works with the OFT to agree a code of practice that is:

- fair to customers
- goes beyond what the law asks for
- easy to understand.

Before the businesses that are in the trade body can display our logo they have to prove to us that their code of practice is working. We require hard evidence that trade body members are following the code and that their customers are benefiting.

Only when we're completely sure that the code is working – by carrying out tests like mystery shopping and checking complaints information – do we give our approval to their code.

Trade body members can then display our logo – and you can be sure that you can trust them to deal with you fairly if problems arise.

## How do I know the standards will be kept up?

If businesses do not follow the code, their trade bodies can take away their membership. And the OFT can remove the approval (and use of the logo) if a trade body consistently fails to keep up the standards of their members.

We check that complaints are resolved properly and that trade bodies make sure that their members are keeping to their code of practice.

## How do I find businesses in my area that have signed up to an Approved code of practice?

You can go to our website **[www.oft.gov.uk/codes](http://www.oft.gov.uk/codes)** and search for businesses in your area. You'll find details here of what each code of practice promises, contacts for the trade bodies and a form for feedback.

You can also call us on **020 7211 8987**

Please also check **[www.oft.gov.uk/codes](http://www.oft.gov.uk/codes)** for the latest information about codes that have achieved approval.

## To find out more

To find out more about our Consumer Codes Approval Scheme

visit [www.oft.gov.uk/codes](http://www.oft.gov.uk/codes)

For consumer advice call **08454 04 05 06** or visit [www.consumerdirect.gov.uk](http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk)



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