

Product changes: When to change your products GTIN

A quick guide for when to change or retain a GTIN (barcode number)

General Rule

A separate unique GTIN is required whenever any of the pre-defined characteristics of an item are different in any way that is relevant to the trading process. The guiding principle is if the customer is expected to distinguish a new trade item from an old trade item and purchase accordingly, a new GTIN should be assigned. There could also be other requirements like regulatory compliance that should be kept in mind.

For further information, please refer to gs1.org/gtinrules

Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles should be considered by any brand owner when introducing changes to an existing product.

At least one of the guiding principles must apply for a GTIN change to be required



1. Is a consumer and/or trading partner expected to distinguish the changed product from previous/current products?



2. Is there a regulatory/liability disclosure requirement to the consumer and/or trading partner?



3. Is there a substantial impact to the supply chain (e.g., how the product is shipped, stored, received)?

Levels of Packaging

The GTIN Management rules define when GTIN changes are needed at the retail consumer trade item level (base unit) as well as on higher level trade items (e.g., case, pallet) that currently exist and are used in distribution processes.

Each rule uses the below legend to describe at what level(s) the GTIN must change.



Item



Case



Pallet

GTIN Management Rules

1. New product introduction

A product that does not currently exist or has not been available for sale and is an addition to the brand owner's portfolio/is new to the marketplace





Relevant Guiding Principles





Assign GTIN for...





Any new product requires the assignment of a new GTIN

2. Declared formulation or functionality

'Functionality' is the particular use or set of uses for which something is designed. 'Formulation' is a list of the ingredients or components used to create a trade item.



Relevant Guiding Principles





Assign GTIN for...





A change to the formulation or functionality that affects the legally-required declared information on the packaging of a product and also where the brand owner expects the consumer or supply chain partner to distinguish the difference. Both conditions must be met and requires the assignment of a new GTIN.

3. Declared net content

The amount of the consumable product of the trade item contained in a package, as declared on the label, which may include: net weight, volume, count, units, etc.



Relevant Guiding Principles



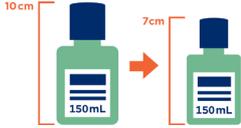
Assign GTIN for...



Any change (increase or decrease) to the legally-required declared net content that is printed on the pack, requires assignment of a new GTIN.

4. Dimensional or gross weight change

A change of over 20% to a physical dimension, on any axis, or gross weight, requires assignment of a new GTIN



Relevant Guiding Principles



New GTIN for...



5. Add or remove certification mark

A change to packaging to add a new, or remove an existing certification mark (e.g., kosher, UL or CE) that has significance to regulatory bodies, trading partners or to the end consumer, requires assignment of a new GTIN



Relevant Guiding Principles



New GTIN for...



6. Primary brand

The brand most recognisable by the consumer, as determined by the brand owner, and can be expressed as a logo and/or words.



Relevant Guiding Principles



New GTIN for...



A change to the primary brand that appears on the trade item, requires assignment of a new GTIN

7. Time critical or promotional product

A change to a product that is being promoted (including packaging changes and seasonal items) for a specific event or date, impacting the required handling in the supply chain to ensure the trade item is available for sale during a specified time period, requires assignment of a new GTIN.



Relevant Guiding Principles



New GTIN for...



8. Pack/case quantity

A change to the number of trade items in a case or a change to the quantity of cases in a pre-defined pallet configuration, requires assignment of a new GTIN.



Relevant Guiding Principles



New GTIN for...



9. Pre-defined assortment

A pack of two or more trade items that are combined and sold together as a single trade item (may also be referred to as a bundle).



Relevant Guiding Principles



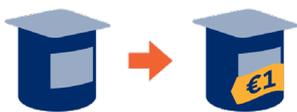
New GTIN for...



A change, addition or replacement of one or more trade items included in a pre-defined assortment, requires assignment of a new GTIN.

10. Price on pack

When the brand owner includes pre-pricing as part of the package graphics. This is not considered a price marked on a price ticket, sticker, ttt or anything that could be removed from the package or product.



Relevant Guiding Principles



New GTIN for...



Any addition, change or removal of a price marked directly on the product package (not recommended), requires assignment of a new GTIN.

Find out more about GTIN Management Standards and the individual rules for when you need to change your products GTIN in our Support Centre:

[My product is changing slightly - Do I need a new GTIN](#)