

What's on a label?

The labels on Boots cosmetic and toiletry products have been carefully designed to provide important information to the user. Some of the information is presented in a format required by UK and International regulations. Other elements are provided to assist users to decide on the right product to suit their needs and to provide advice on minimising the environmental impact of the product and its packaging.

The following brief guide outlines the information that can be found on a typical Boots cosmetic or toiletry product.

The Ingredients Listing

The European Cosmetic Directive ensures a common system for the ingredient labelling of cosmetic products is applied across all members of the European Union. One of the key benefits of full ingredient listing is that consumers know exactly what ingredients or chemicals are contained in that product thus allowing them to choose alternative products if they believe they have an allergy to a particular chemical.

Every cosmetic and toiletry product must have a full list of ingredients, which is visible to the consumer.

The listing must:

- Show all ingredients added to the product.
- Show ingredients in descending order of weight.
- Use the INCI nomenclature
- If there is no INCI name use the alternatives as shown below

There is no defined listing style however the text must be legible, indelible and visible.

To avoid difficulties with the different languages used across the member states COLIPA (the European industry association) have recommended using a common international nomenclature. This is known as the INCI system (International Nomenclature of Cosmetic Ingredients) and has been accepted for use by the EC.

Perfumes & Aromatic compositions

Currently perfumes, aromatic compositions and their raw materials do not need to be declared. Instead harmonised terms are used to show the inclusion of perfumes and aromatic compositions:

For "perfume" use "parfum"

For "flavour" (aromatic compositions) use "aroma"

However, perfumes and flavours that contain recognised allergenic components must declare their presence on the label.

Herbal/Natural extracts

If herbal extracts or natural extracts are used the common way that they are labelled on product ingredient lists is by their Latin name. Below are some common examples with their INCI names – further information on INCI names can be found on Herbal extract information fact sheet

Cera Alba – Beeswax,
Cocoa Butter - Theobroma Cacao
Lavender - Lavandula Angustifolia

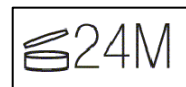
What do the symbols mean?

Ingredients listings can be lengthy and where it is impossible (due to small size of product or lack of packaging) for ingredient listing or other information to be displayed on the product, the information must be available on a leaflet, tag or card with the product. To inform the customer that additional information is available on these products a statement directing the consumer to this such as "see enclosed leaflet" should be made or the "Hand and book" symbol (across) is used.



Period after opening symbol

This symbol indicates the period of time after opening the product when the product can continue to be used without deterioration of performance or causing harm to the consumer. The period is measured in months.



Average Fill Symbol (e mark)

This indicates that the product has been filled within the tolerances determined by the average fill system allowing the product free movement within the European Community.



Aerosol labelling

Indicates that the product is highly or extremely flammable



Consumer warning highlighting the dangers of solvent abuse



The figure in the box indicates the total volume, including the propellant, of the container and the reverse 'epsilon' indicates that the product complies with the Aerosol directive. The actual quantity of the product in an aerosol is also declared alongside the e-mark.



Environmental labelling

Green Dot

A Green Dot on packaging indicates that a fee has been paid to a national organisation set up to collect and reprocess packaging waste. This scheme operates in several European countries (including Eire) but not the United Kingdom where a different system is in operation.



Tidy man

This is an international symbol advising the user to dispose of waste carefully and do not litter



Material identification

These symbols are commonly found moulded into the base of plastic packaging. They indicate the type of plastic the container is made from for recycling purposes. Each polymer is identified by a code number and its name.

