

## New Alcohol Wholesaler Registration Scheme

### What is the alcohol wholesaler registration scheme?

In response to the growing problem of counterfeit alcohol, the Government is in the process of introducing a new Alcohol Wholesaler Registration Scheme. The first stage has now been completed, and all wholesale sellers of alcohol were required to register with HMRC by 31 March 2016. These wholesalers will have received a Unique Reference Number (URN) as proof that they are legally able to sell alcohol to businesses.

### The new rules

The second stage starts on 1 April 2017. From this date it will be illegal for you to buy alcohol from a wholesaler who is not registered and unable to provide you with their URN (which you will be able to check online). Buy your alcohol from an unregistered business, and you may be liable to a criminal or civil penalty and your alcohol may be seized.

This two-stage process results in an unusual situation: between now and 1 April 2017, wholesalers can be penalised for selling you alcohol without having registered with HMRC, but it is still legal for you to buy alcohol from an unregistered wholesaler.

Also, there is one important exemption to this scheme. Retailers who make occasional trade sales of alcohol are excluded, meaning that if you buy your alcohol from a supermarket or off-licence, then they will not be registered and you don't have to check.



Source [visitbritain.org](http://visitbritain.org)

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