Packaging and labelling guide for cannabis products

Requirements under the Cannabis Act and the Cannabis Regulations

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Disclaimer: This document does not constitute part of the Cannabis Act or its regulations. It should be read in conjunction with the relevant provisions of the Cannabis Act and its regulations. The information in this document is not intended to substitute for, supersede or fetter the interpretation of any requirement under the legislation. In the event of discrepancy between this document and the legislation, the legislation prevails.

The reader is advised to consult other legislation that may apply to them or their activities, such as applicable provincial or territorial legislation.

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On this page

1.0 Purpose
2.0 Background
3.0 Scope
4.0 Definitions and abbreviations
5.0 Prohibitions
6.0 Administrative
7.0 Exemptions
8.0 General requirements for packaging and labelling of cannabis
8.1 General prohibitions
8.2 Information on the product
8.3 Child, tamperproof, or discipline information
9.0 Requirements for specified labelling requirements
10.0 Plain and standardized packaging
10.1 Cannabis container requirements
10.2 Cannabis product requirements
10.3 Small product packaging requirements
10.4 Co-packaging cobrands
11.0 Information sheets
11.1 Required information on the product display panel of the label
11.2 Required information about the cannabis product
11.3 Information about the cannabis product
11.4 Other information about the cannabis product
11.5 Information about the cannabis product
12.0 Translation period for packaging and labelling
13.0 Glossary
14.0 Feedback, follow-up, and resources
15.0 Appendix A: Illustrations and charts that explain the packaging and labelling requirements

1.0 Purpose

This guide provides guidance and information about the packaging and labelling requirements for cannabis products under the Cannabis Act, also referred to in this guide as the "the Act" and abbreviated to "the Act", and its regulations, also referred to in this guide as the "the Regulations", and abbreviated to "the Regulations".

2.0 Background

The Cannabis Regulations sets out requirements pertaining to how cannabis and cannabis products must be packaged and labelled, in order to protect health and safety. The Act and its regulations prohibit the sale of cannabis and cannabis products with misleading, false, or deceptive promotion, and they require that packaging and labelling be tamper-evident and be labelled with the standardized cannabis symbol, the mandatory health warning message, and the mandatory information sheet. The Act and its regulations also prohibit the sale of cannabis products with a special appearance (SAP) not consistent (SAP) information, have certain exceptions. These measures are in place to protect the health and safety of people who may be tempted to consume cannabis products because they are young persons who providing consumers with the information they need to make informed decisions before using cannabis.

Health Canada uses a risk-based approach to compliance and enforcement activities to promote public health and the credibility of the legislative system, among other factors. Compliance and enforcement policy for the Cannabis Act and its Regulations provides further context.

3.0 Scope

This guide covers cannabis products that are sold or distributed in Canada.

Cannabis includes dried or fresh cannabis or a cannabis product. It includes cannabis that is intended for oral, inhalation, or a drug, consuming cannabis.

This guide does not cover any substances that are not cannabis.

This guide does not apply to shipping consumers cannabis or cannabis accessories or hosted and to transport cannabis, cannabis products, or cannabis accessories.

The information in this guide is based on the Cannabis Regulations, or amendments to the Cannabis Regulations Amending the Cannabis Regulations (Max Grow or Cannabis which were published in the Canada Gazette, Part II, on June 26, 2019 and will come into force on October 17, 2019. The Cannabis Regulations Amending the Cannabis Regulations (Max Grow or Cannabis) amends the Cannabis Regulations to permit a maximum number of 50 of the plants.

On its website, Health Canada publishes other guidance documents and information that may be used in conjunction with this document, including information on compliance and enforcement policies, and other guidance documents. Other guidance documents and information are updated as required to reflect changes to policies and/or operations.

This example, and figures in this guide are for illustrative purposes only and do not represent actual cannabis products.

4.0 Definitions and abbreviations

4.1 Definitions

The Cannabis Act and the Cannabis Regulations should be referred to for definitions. The definitions in this section are provided for ease of reference.

Cannabis means a substance or mixture of substances, including a cannabis, marihuana, tetrahydrocannabinol, gelatin, liquid, gelatin and capsules, design or liquid that is reasonably associated with, or that is made

- cannabis, a cannabis accessory or a cannabis related to cannabis, or
- with the intent to sell cannabis, a cannabis accessory or cannabis related to cannabis.

Cannabis means a substance or mixture of substances that is intended to be used or sold for use in

- a drug, consuming cannabis
- a cannabis product that is intended to be used or sold for use in the preparation of a cannabis product.

This definition does not apply to industrial hemp or hemp seed derivatives.

This guide does not apply to shipping consumers cannabis or cannabis accessories or hosted and to transport cannabis, cannabis products, or cannabis accessories.

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4.2 Abbreviations

CA Cannabis Act
CBD cannabidiol
CFIA Canadian Food Inspection Agency
CR Cannabis Regulations
EU European Union
FDA Food and Drug Act
g gram
ISO International Standardization of Cannabis Ingredients
mg milligram
NF nutritions
PDP principal display panel
ppm parts per million
SCR Safe Food for Canadians Regulations
THC delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol
THCA delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinolic acid
THCVA Tetrahydrocannabivarin Acid
w/w% microgram per gram

4.3 Colours

The following icons are used in this guide to highlight information of interest.

- **Important:** Note or cautionary information.
- **Tip:** Supplementary information that could be helpful, including references to external documents.

5.0 Prohibitions on packaging and labelling of cannabis

The Cannabis Act and Cannabis Regulations outline a number of prohibitions related to the packaging and labelling of cannabis. The following section provides an overview of some of the key prohibitions that are applicable to packaging and labelling of cannabis and cannabis products.

5.1 General prohibitions

Under the Cannabis Act, it is prohibited for a person that is authorized to sell cannabis for a person that is authorized to sell cannabis to sell cannabis or a cannabis accessory if:

- That does not meet the requirements of the Regulations (CA, 23)
- If there is a reason to believe that it is contrary to a provision of a regulation by posing a serious harm (CRC, 27(4))
- That sets out a testimonial or endorsement, however disguised or communicated (CRC, 27(5))
- That is not in a plain and standardized form, if required by the Regulations (CRC, 27(6) and CRC, 27(7))
- That is associated in a way or is a kind that is likely to create a misunderstanding, or confusion about an image of a kind of life such as one that includes glamour, recreation, excitement, vitality, risk or daring (CRC, 27(8), CA)

5.2 Other prohibitions/requirements

The prohibitions listed in this subsection apply to all cannabis products including the package, label or part of a cannabis product.

Under the Regulations, it is prohibited to make or express a health representation, including, but not limited to, an element, if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the representation is false or misleading.

- Health Canada's guidance document on Health claims for cannabis (formerly Health claims for Marijuana Medical Purposes) (HMMP) is a guidance document in which that the applies (CR, 22, CR)
- Associate the cannabis product with an alcoholic beverage (CR, 21, CR)
- Associate the cannabis product with a food, a food for human use, or a food for the use of the cannabis product (This prohibition does not apply to the drug consuming cannabis that are hash products, or cannabis products that are hash products or drugs containing cannabis or medical devices which are approved under the food and drug act (FDA) (CR, 15(2), 15(4), CR). For more information, see Health Canada's guidance document on Hash and other Regulations and other Regulations and cannabis products for sale and distribution
- Subjectively, the **edible cannabis**, it is prohibited to make an express or implied representation, including by way of a brand element, that

Under the Regulations, it is prohibited to make an express or implied representation, including by way of a brand element, if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the representation is false or misleading that

- Characterizes, value, quantity, composition, strength, concentration, potency, purity, quality, taste, odorly, toxicity, or any other characteristic of the cannabis product
- Compares cannabis products, medicinal, recreational, characteristics, value, composition, strength, potency, purity, or health risks of a cannabis accessory (CRC, 24)

Important: The use of ingredients and/or a product of complementary processes that provide certain aromas or tastes, such as those that are found in nature, or that are found in other products that are reasonable grounds to believe the cannabis, cannabis accessory, cannabis product, or service related to cannabis could appeal to young persons. Please consult your compliance officer or contact the compliance promotion unit for further information. Please consult your compliance officer or contact the compliance promotion unit for further information.

6.0 General packaging and labelling requirements

Key requirements of the Regulations result in plain packaging and labelling for all cannabis products. This includes standardized packaging, such as a standard colour, font, and prohibition on lifestyle branding, and standardized information appear on the tag, logo, size, and text. Key requirements. These measures are designed to:

- Reduce the attractiveness and appeal of cannabis products, particularly to young persons
- Ensure that the health and safety information on cannabis products is prominent and easily understandable
- Provide consumers with accurate information about the content and use of cannabis products

Plain packaging and labelling applies to all surfaces, including labels and the various types and parts of the packaging such as containers, wrappers or packaging (e.g., shrink wrap). Table 1 summarizes the general packaging and labelling requirements.

Table 1: General packaging and labelling requirements

Cannabis Regulations section	Requirement	Notes
10.1 (1)	Cannabis products must be packaged in a container that is of a material, or of a material and a colour, that is not attractive to a person.	Applies to the superior container or cash
10.1 (2)	Prevent contamination of the cannabis product.	Check the supply to cannabis plants
	• The container must keep dried cannabis and cannabis seeds dry.	Check the supply to cannabis plants and seeds
10.1 (3)	The closure or enclosure.	Check the supply to cannabis plants and seeds
	• The closure or enclosure must be tamperproof.	Check the supply to cannabis plants and seeds
10.1 (4)	Check a cannabis product.	Check the supply to cannabis plants and seeds
	• Provide reasonable assurance to consumers that the package has not been opened or tampered with before the sale.	Check the supply to cannabis plants and seeds
10.1 (5)	Prevent the superior consumer of cannabis.	Check the supply to cannabis plants and seeds
	• Cannot contain more than the equivalent of 50 g of dried cannabis or 50 g of cannabis in any other form.	Check the supply to cannabis plants and seeds
10.1 (6)	Check a cannabis product.	Check the supply to cannabis plants and seeds
	• Provide reasonable assurance to consumers that the package has not been opened or tampered with before the sale.	Check the supply to cannabis plants and seeds
10.1 (7)	Not consumer superior consumer of cannabis.	The quantity of THC contained from takes into account the quantity of THC that is reasonably expected to be produced from the cannabis in a product.
	• Cannot contain more than the equivalent of 10 g of dried cannabis or 10 g of cannabis in any other form.	The quantity of THC contained from takes into account the quantity of THC that is reasonably expected to be produced from the cannabis in a product.
10.1 (8)	Cannot consume for cannabis accessory not to discourage.	The quantity of THC contained from takes into account the quantity of THC that is reasonably expected to be produced from the cannabis in a product.
	• A cannabis accessory that contains the equivalent of 10 g of dried cannabis or 10 g of cannabis in any other form.	The quantity of THC contained from takes into account the quantity of THC that is reasonably expected to be produced from the cannabis in a product.
10.1 (9)	Cannot consume for cannabis accessory not to discourage.	The quantity of THC contained from takes into account the quantity of THC that is reasonably expected to be produced from the cannabis in a product.
	• A cannabis accessory that contains the equivalent of 10 g of dried cannabis or 10 g of cannabis in any other form.	The quantity of THC contained from takes into account the quantity of THC that is reasonably expected to be produced from the cannabis in a product.

7.0 Exemptions

The cannabis container in which a cannabis product is packaged must not contain:

- More than 50 g of cannabis or an oil in Schedule II to the Act, or
- More than one immediate container (CR 2, 47, CR)

There are no exceptions to multiple immediate containers for edible cannabis that are further detailed in section 7.4 of this guide.

7.1 Small product packaging requirements

Plain and standardized packaging requirements for:

- The immediate container in which the edible cannabis, or a cannabis accessory that contains edible cannabis is packaged, and
- The immediate container in which the edible cannabis, or a cannabis accessory that contains edible cannabis is packaged, and
- Any wrapper that is in direct contact with a cannabis product or cannabis accessory that contains edible cannabis that contains cannabis intended for ingestion

Division 2 of Part 8 of the SOR, among other things, prohibits the sale of food in packages that may impart any substance to the cannabis product may be harmful to the consumer of the food.

Health Canada's guidance document on Hash of the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations (SFCR) provides further information.

- **Important:** Wrapping only the part of the pre-rolled cannabis product that is in direct contact with the cannabis product.

In these cases, the wrapper must be in direct contact with the cannabis (or the cannabis accessory) and with some or hash of the following:

- The immediate container of the cannabis product
- A wrapper that is direct contact with the cannabis (or the cannabis accessory) (CR 2, 1, CR)

7.4 Co-packaging edible cannabis

The use of edible cannabis products in an co-packaged container for edible cannabis is allowed provided that all requirements for edible cannabis products in co-packaged containers are met (CR 2, 1, CR).

Each immediate container must:

- Meet the tamper-evident requirements outlined in 7.1 Hash grade (e.g., single uniform colour, child resistant, security features) (CC 42(2)(a), CC)
- Meet the requirements for the cannabis ingredients including (ccc) (CC 42(2), CC)
- Be labelled in accordance with the requirements for the cannabis product in accordance with an applicable (CC 42(2)(b), CC)

The cannabis container must:

- Meet the requirements for security prints and the word "sold" must be interpreted as the immediate container. As such, for instance, the expression consumer must be labelled with the quantity of THC and CBD in each immediate container (CC 42(2)(c), CC) and the expression consumer must be labelled (CC 42(2)(d), CC)
- Not contain, in total, more than 10 g of THC that exceeds 10 mg in the immediate container, or the quantity permitted to contain THCA into THC (CC 42(2)(e), CC)
- Not contain, in total, more than 10 g of CBD in the immediate container that exceeds the equivalent of 10 g of dried cannabis (cannabis) in accordance with Schedule 3 to the Act (CC 42(2)(f), CC)
- Be marked with the statement "Contains the equivalent of one g of dried cannabis" where one is the equivalent of 10 g of dried cannabis (CC 42(2)(g), CC) and the statement "Contains the equivalent of one g of dried cannabis" (CC 42(2)(h), CC)

Tip: There may be requirements pertaining to the use of certain containers, for example, should be referred to for more information.

- **Important:** The Government of Canada recognizes that plastic pollution is a growing problem in Canada and around the world.

To help reduce the amount of waste created by cannabis product packaging, the Regulations permit wrappers and containers made of plastic. Health Canada encourages the use of environmentally friendly packaging. Health Canada encourages the use of innovative and environmentally sound packaging approaches, provided the requirements in the Regulations are satisfied.

8.0 Labelling requirements

Section 8 of the Regulations provides information about the information must appear on the label of all cannabis products. This section also provides information on the presentation of information such as type size and type, colours, and spacing, on information on the label must be:

- Clear, prominent, and in the official bilingual format of Cannabis Ingredients (CRC) (section and language (CRC, 27(2)(a) and CRC, 27(2))
- Clear, prominent, bilingual and legible under normal conditions of purchase and use (CRC, 27(2))

Section 8 of the Regulations provides information about the information that must be included on the label of a recently released drug consumer product or revised use of the product.

8.1 Required information on the principal display panel of the label

Table 2 outlines the information that must appear on the principal display panel of the cannabis product. This is the surface that is displayed or is visible under normal or customary conditions of purchase or use. Its defined in the Cannabis Regulations and Packaging and Labelling Regulations. Part VIII of the SOR sets out the specific requirements for the principal display panel.

Table 2: Principal display panel

Principal display panel is visible under normal conditions of purchase or use	Drug or Cannabis Display surface
Top of the can	Top area of the can's surface that can be displayed facing the consumer
Side of a carton	Any side of the carton's surface that can be displayed facing the consumer when the carton is on a shelf
Top of a box	Top area of the top surface of the box
Bottom of a bag of dried cannabis	Top area of the bottom
Bag with side of seam flow over cash	Top area of the bottom

- **Important:** If there are separate PDPs in display English and French information, each PDP of the label must be properly labelled.

The subsections below outline the requirements of the PDP of a label.

8.1.1 Standardized cannabis symbol

The standardized cannabis symbol must be displayed on the PDP of the label and is used to enforce and ease consumers to identify cannabis products. The symbol must be displayed on the principal display panel of the label and be clear and legible. The size of the symbol must be proportionate to the principal display panel. Health Canada provides guidance on the size of the symbol. The standard cannabis symbol must be displayed in accordance with the Regulations. The standard cannabis symbol can be downloaded from Health Canada's website: Standardized cannabis symbol.

- **Tip:** Consider incorporating "referential" or discounts into or the tag of the cannabis product. Please see and the tag of the regulations. Documents incorporated by reference have the force of law and can be updated from time to time.

Figure 1 - Standardized cannabis symbol

Colours

Figure 1 - Text Equivalent

1
2
3
4
5
6
Cannabis
Cannabis
Cannabis

Figure 3. THC and CBD content for topical cannabis sale in cleanse units (bilingual example)

▶ Figure 3. Text Guidelines

Sequence: Table 2 in section 11.2 of the guide lists the mandatory THC quantities (phased in on immediate consumer packaging and on other packaging by the end of the transition period). Cannabis cleanse units (and parts of THC labeling rules) specify the quantities (mandatory THC and PR) in the sequence:

- 1st big part: the total of fresh cannabis or cannabis extract (in dried units and not intended for inhalation) in mg/g (or mg/ml);
- 2nd big part: the total THC for cannabis extracts in dried units and not intended for inhalation (mg/g or mg/ml);
- 3rd big part: the total THC for cannabis extracts in dried units and not intended for inhalation (mg/g or mg/ml);
- 4th big part: the total CBD for cannabis extracts in dried units and not intended for inhalation (mg/g or mg/ml).

The THC and CBD quantities are calculated based on the data from the cultivation log and the results of the cannabinoids further requirements related to compliance testing are found in sections 8b and 8c of the Regulations and in the guide and practical compliance guide for cleanse units.

5.1.19 Lot/batch

Lot/batch number of the cannabis product must be displayed on the PDP of the label. however it must not be in metric(s) or Roman(s) column, it can be any type (with the type size not less than 1/2 of the type used for the brand name) and it must be the fourth warning message that appears on the label (TRSR). (4)

5.1.20 Cannabis product name

The cannabis product name must be displayed in the Roman(s) column and displayed on the PDP of the label. This element could include, for example, a slogan (e.g. Enjoy), it must not be in metric or Roman(s) column.

If the brand element is a logo, or a logo and a name, the surface area must be at least one-half (1/2) the surface area of the largest element on the PDP (e.g. the logo or the name).

If the brand element is text only, the logo must be smaller than or equal to the type size used for the health warning message that appears on the label.

For cannabis products containing less than 10 µg/g THC which are not required to display the standardized cannabis symbol, the brand element must be at least 1/2 the size of the largest text on the PDP (e.g. the brand element is the same size as the cannabis name and the health warning message that appears on the label (TRSR).

5.1.21 International cultivation certificate (if applicable)

If the cannabis product is a product of cultivation, the international cultivation certificate (as per in subsection 8(1)(f)(ii) of the CRR and in accordance with subsection 11 (1) of the Regulations) or "Cannabis for medical purposes" (as per the Regulations and the PBR and SOR/2013-138, 118(1), (4)). The symbol can be found on the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) website: Food Guidance.

5.2 Required information about the cannabis product

Cannabis product must be displayed on the PDP of the label. Cannabis product specific product information, and the information must be displayed on the PDP of the label. Also, it must be in the same place and in a similar size and in a similar font and colour (i.e., the exterior display surface). Table 6 summarizes the required information by class of cannabis.

- Cannabis product specific information is bold English and French on the following items:
- Product name
- Type (color / class)
- Net weight or volume
- Type size and type font and weight (standard sans serif without italics)
- Text type
- Type size: at least 2 points and must be smaller than the type used for the health warning message that appears on the label
- Type colour: black font on white background or all-black
- Text
- Background: white

			Class of cannabis			
Cannabis information requirements	**Regulations**	**Cannabis product specific information requirement**	**Dried or fresh**	**Cannabis extract - liquid**	**Cannabis extract - solid**	**Cannabis extract - other**
Product name	**Section 5(1)(a)**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Contact information of the licence holder	Sec. 5(1)(b)	Not required	Not required	Not required	Not required	Not required
Lot/batch number	Sec. 5(1)(c)	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Class of cannabis (or the formula for edibles and other cannabis products)	Sec. 5(1)(d)	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
List number (information related to the manufacturing stage)	Sec. 5(1)(e)	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Recommended storage conditions (only refer to reference temperature and humidity conditions)	Sec. 5(1)(f)	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Packaging date (the date the cannabis product was packaged, or the date on which the production of the cannabis product was completed, in the case of edibles, THC-infused topicals, and cannabis extracts)	Sec. 5(1)(g)	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Expiry date (the last date of the stability period of the cannabis product, after which the product is not to be sold, but may be used for other purposes, such as research or destruction, if it has been determined)	Sec. 5(1)(h)	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Net weight of the cannabis (for the weight of cannabis in dried form, the net weight is the total of the cannabis and the weight 10 g). The net weight must be in the metric(s) form, and it must be at least 1/2 the type size of the brand name. Net weight must be in the same type size and type colour as the product name.	Sec. 5(1)(i)	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Net volume of the edible cannabis (for net volume of the edible cannabis, the net volume of the edible cannabis is the volume of the edible cannabis, like the equivalent of 10 g of dried cannabis, and the net volume of the edible cannabis must be at least 1/2 the type size of the brand name. Net volume must be in the same type size and type colour as the product name. Cannabis extracts, such as oil, the equivalent volume)	Sec. 5(1)(j)	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Number of discrete units, if applicable (e.g., 10 capsules, 10 pieces)	Sec. 5(1)(k)(i), Sec. 5(1)(k)(ii)	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Net weight per discrete unit, if applicable (for example 10 mg/capsule, 10 mg/piece, 10 mg/ml, 10 mg/capsule)	Sec. 5(1)(k)(iii), Sec. 5(1)(k)(iv)	**Yes**	Not required	**Yes** (net weight per discrete unit)	**Yes** (net weight per discrete unit)	**Yes** (net weight per discrete unit)
Cannabis preservative ingredients (Preservatives that equalize the amount of any of their constituents* where one is the equivalent of 10 mg/g of THC or 10 mg/g of cannabidiol (CBD) and/or combined and cannabinoids in the)	Sec. 5(1)(l), Sec. 5(1)(m)	**Yes**	Not required	**Yes** (only fresh cannabis extracts)	**Yes** (only fresh cannabis extracts)	**Yes** (only fresh cannabis extracts)
Fill weight (the net weight of the product, in the case of a product in a container, the net weight of the product, in the case of a product in a container, the net weight of the product, in the case of a product in a container,

▶ Figure 5 - Text Equivalent

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