

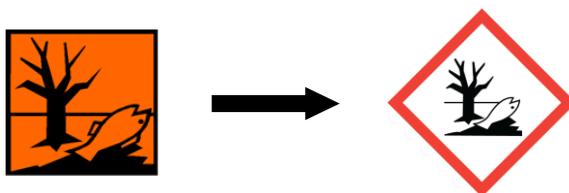
CLP / GHS: A new system of classification and labelling for chemicals

What is changing and why?

A new regulation is changing the way hazards are communicated for chemical products like paints, printing inks and artists' colours. The Classification, Labelling and Packaging Regulation ("CLP") brings the European Union/European Economic Area into line with the United Nations' Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS), and in time the old European system will be replaced completely by this worldwide standard.

You may already have seen new labels on chemicals, as CLP has applied to single substances – such as white spirit, used to clean paintbrushes – since 1 December 2010. 'Preparations' will now be known as 'mixtures'; these may already be classified, labelled and packaged according to the new criteria, and this will become compulsory on 1 June 2015. Products already placed on the market before that date can retain their old labels until the end of May 2017.

The old-style orange/yellow square symbols will be replaced by red-bordered diamonds, although many pictograms look similar and have the same meaning:



Some new pictograms are also being introduced to distinguish certain types of hazard. The pictograms are supported by **signal words**, with 'Danger' indicating a more severe hazard than 'Warning'. These replace the old 'indications of danger', such as Toxic or Harmful. Risk Phrases and Safety Phrases are replaced by Hazard Statements and Precautionary Statements respectively.



Danger



Warning

Are products becoming more hazardous?

No! Labels (and safety data sheets) will look different in future, but this does not necessarily reflect a change in the composition or performance of the products. There are however some differences in classification criteria between the old and new systems: these may lead to more substances and mixtures being classified as hazardous, whilst some hazard classifications may appear more severe under CLP, but it is only the method of describing the hazard that has changed. It is intended that CLP will enable suppliers to communicate the hazards of a product more precisely and effectively in future.

Some examples of changes you might see on paint or ink labels are shown overleaf.

More information on CLP is available at <http://echa.europa.eu/regulations/clp>

Old EU system		CLP	
Indication of danger	e.g. Toxic Harmful	Signal word	Danger Warning
Risk Phrase	<i>Flammable</i>	Hazard Statement	<i>Flammable liquid and vapour</i>
Safety Phrase	<i>In case of insufficient ventilation, wear suitable respiratory equipment</i>	Precautionary Statement	<i>In case of inadequate ventilation wear respiratory protection.</i>
(No symbol)	Flammable liquid		All materials with a flammability hazard will carry a pictogram under CLP
	Extremely flammable (F+) or Highly flammable (F)		
	Corrosive (C) – causes (severe) burns		Chemicals corrosive to skin, and/or corrosive to metals (<i>new hazard class</i>)
	Risk of serious damage to eyes		Serious eye damage is now indicated by the “corrosive” pictogram
	Irritant (Xi) Harmful (Xn)		Skin/eye irritation, skin sensitisation and some other acute effects
	Harmful (Xn) – serious damage to health by prolonged exposure		A new pictogram distinguishes chronic health effects, such as respiratory sensitisation
	Toxic (T) Very toxic (T+)		Acutely toxic chemicals carry the familiar “skull-and-bones” pictogram
	Specific health effects (carcinogenic, mutagenic, toxic for reproduction)		The new pictogram is also used for these serious chronic effects
	Toxic or very toxic to aquatic organisms (N)		Toxic or very toxic to aquatic life

Disclaimer: the table above is purely illustrative and is not to be considered as a translation of any product label - the criteria for allocation of label elements differ between the two systems.
This document has been developed to provide basic information for users and does not constitute legal advice. It is not a substitute for the relevant legislation; only the legal text of the CLP Regulation, (EC) N° 1272/2008, is deemed authentic.