



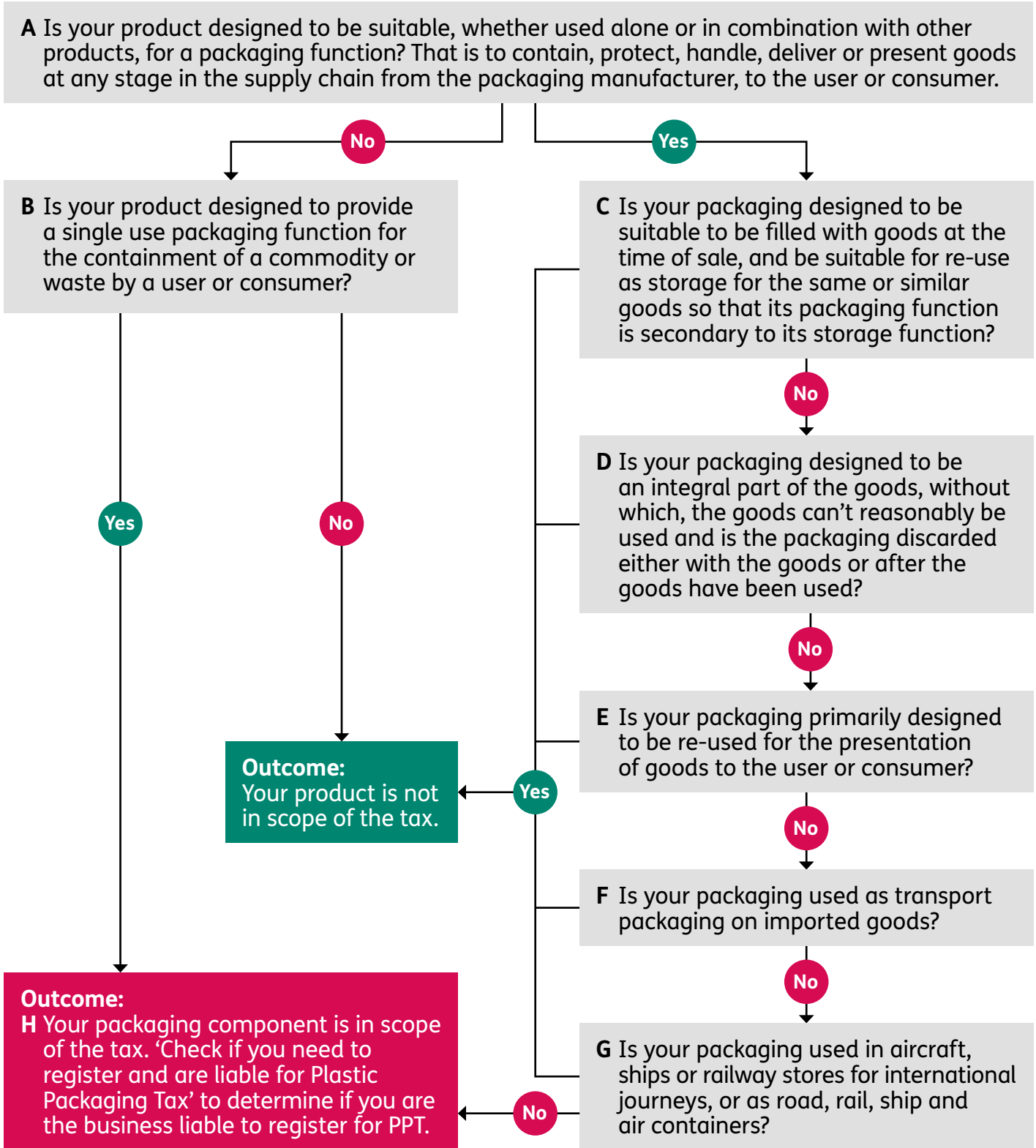
HM Revenue
& Customs

Check if your plastic packaging is in scope of the Plastic Packaging Tax



Plastic packaging tax is chargeable on plastic packaging components imported into and manufactured in the UK. If your plastic packaging component contains more plastic than any other material by weight, check if it is in scope of Plastic Packaging Tax.

Please use the further information given on pages 3-5 alongside this decision tree.



Further information for each decision tree step

If your packaging is made up of several packaging components, you must account for Plastic Packaging Tax on each component. Individual packaging components are generally manufactured separately before being assembled into a packaging unit. Examples include:

- bottles, caps and labels are manufactured separately before being assembled to make packaging units for drinks and liquids
- trays, boxes and plastic windows are manufactured separately before being assembled to make packaging units for certain foods, such as pies and cakes.

A packaging component is plastic if it contains more plastic by weight than any other single substance. For example, if a 10-gram packaging component is made of 4 grams of plastic, 3 grams of aluminium and 3 grams of cardboard, it will be considered to be a plastic packaging component for the purposes of this tax.

Plastic includes bioplastics, including biodegradable, compostable and oxo-degradable plastics.

Businesses that manufacture or import less than 10 tonnes of plastic packaging do not need to register for the tax. For more information on the 10-tonne threshold see 'Check if you need to register and are liable for Plastic Packaging Tax'.

A plastic packaging component will not be chargeable for the tax if it:

- contains 30% or more recycled plastic;
- is for use in the immediate packaging of a human medicinal product;
- is directly exported, or
- is permanently recorded as set aside for a non-packaging use (this includes products that are primarily used for something other than packaging).

However, businesses must still submit returns and declare these types of plastic packaging where the volume of plastic packaging components that they produce or import exceeds the 10-tonne threshold.

As you work through steps A to H to check if your plastic packaging is in scope of the Plastic Packaging Tax, you may find it helpful to refer to GOV.UK where you will find examples of products to support your interpretation of the guidance set out www.gov.uk/government/publications/examples-of-packaging-in-and-out-of-scope-of-plastic-packaging-tax.

Step A – Products designed to be suitable, whether used alone or in combination with other products, for a packaging function

These are packaging components that are designed to be suitable, whether used alone or in combination with other products, to contain, protect, handle, deliver or present goods at any stage in the supply chain from the manufacturer to consumer or user.

If the packaging component meets this definition it does not matter whether it is manufactured or imported for use in the supply chain of the goods or by a user or consumer. For example, cling film and parcel tape can be designed to be suitable for use in the supply chain or for use by the consumer.

Step B – Products designed for single-use for use by a user or consumer, in containing any commodity or waste

These are packaging components that are designed as single use packaging products (even where they are capable of being used on more than one occasion) for use by a consumer or user in containing, protecting, handling, delivering or presenting any commodity or waste. The tax will apply to products that meet this definition.

Step C – Packaging filled at the point of sale where the packaging function is secondary to the storage function

These are packaging components that are designed to be suitable to be filled with goods at the point of sale to the consumer or user and are suitable for re-use as storage for the same or similar goods to contain, support or preserve the goods throughout their lifetime. The tax does not apply to packaging that meet this definition.

Packaging components designed with the expectation that the packaging is discarded once the goods inside have been used or consumed are not considered storage and are in scope of the tax.

Step D – Packaging that is an integral part of the goods

These are packaging components that are:

- designed so that the packaging component is an integral part of the goods sold to a user or consumer (unless those goods are themselves a packaging component);
- necessary to enable the goods to be used by the user or consumer; and
- discarded with the goods or after the good has been used.

The tax does not apply to products that meet this definition.

A packaging component is not an integral part of the good by virtue of performing a packaging or storage function of the goods.

Step E – Packaging primarily for re-use for the presentation of goods

These are packaging components that are primarily designed to be used and re-used for the presentation of goods to a user or consumer, and have been permanently set aside for this purpose before or as soon as they have been manufactured or imported. A record of this setting aside must be kept. The tax does not apply to products that meet this definition.

Step F – Packaging used to transport goods into the UK

This is transport packaging (also known as tertiary packaging) that is used in the delivery of goods into the UK. Transport packaging is either:

- road, rail, ship or air container
- a packaging component that is used to both:
 - transport multiple units or grouped packaging
 - to prevent physical damage during transportation

The tax does not apply to products that meet this definition for example, plastic pallets and pallet wrap to secure consignments of products to pallets during the delivery of goods into the UK. For more examples, please see the packaging exemption guidance here www.gov.uk/guidance/check-which-plastic-packaging-is-exempt-from-plastic-packaging-tax.

This definition does not apply to:

- normal packaging around a sales unit
- packaging around a number of sales units
- unfilled transport plastic packaging imported as an item in its own right
- packaging used to:
 - prevent damage to a single good on import
 - transport goods within the UK
 - transport goods out of the UK

Step G – Packaging used in aircraft, ship or railway stores

Packaging components that are used in aircraft, ship or railway stores for international journeys are not subject to the tax. If the plastic packaging is subsequently imported (removed from the stores and released into the UK) then it will be in scope of the tax. You can find further information about what are classed as stores for this purpose in the [Excise Notice 69a: aircraft, ship and train stores](#).

Step H – The packaging component is in scope of tax

All plastic packaging components that reach this stage of the flow chart are in scope of the tax.

For further general information about Plastic Packaging Tax, please see ‘Check if you need to register for Plastic Packaging Tax’ guidance on gov.uk: www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-you-need-to-register-for-plastic-packaging-tax.

This guide is correct as of January 2022 and supersedes previously published versions. The contents of this is subject to change until Plastic Packaging Tax legislation is approved by Parliament.