



TM

**make it
safe**

BBSA®
BRITISH BLIND & SHUTTER ASSOCIATION



Legal requirements for internal window blinds

**Surveyor and installer guide for
made-to-measure blinds**

“Make it Safe”

says Mum of three, Rachael Maynard



“My daughter, Megan, became entangled in a window blind chain in her bedroom when she was two and a half years old. She spent four days in hospital on a life support machine before we knew she was going to recover. Something as simple as an unrestrained window blind cord or chain can present a real danger to young children but with awareness and by taking some simple actions, any hazard can be eliminated.

Make sure you always Make it Safe.”

It's the Law!

A golden statue of Lady Justice, the personification of the law. She is depicted as a woman wearing a crown with three stars, holding a sword in her right hand and a pair of scales in her left. She stands on a pedestal with a globe at its base.

Which products?

All internal blinds with cords or chains which could create a hazard

Where?

- All homes
- All public buildings
- Areas of commercial buildings where children aged between 0-42 months are likely to have access or be present

What?

- Limitations on cord and chain lengths
- The installation of safety devices on cords or chains
- Testing of safety devices
- Product warning notices
- Product instructions

The General Product Safety Regulations, 2005 place an obligation on all businesses to supply and professionally install safe products. BS EN 13120:2009+A1:2014, "Internal blinds - Performance requirements including safety", defines a safe product within these Regulations.



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Contents

Introduction	5
Fitting heights	6-7
Blinds with pull cords	8
Blinds with looped cords	9
Blinds with breakaway devices	10
Roman blind lift cords	11
Warning notices	12
Promotional support	13
Notes	14-15

www.makeitsafe.org.uk

Introduction



The 2014 changes to the child safety requirements of BS EN 13120:2009+A1:2014 place an obligation on all in the industry to sell and install compliant products.

The requirements affect all homes and all public buildings and possibly some areas of commercial buildings.

Surveyors

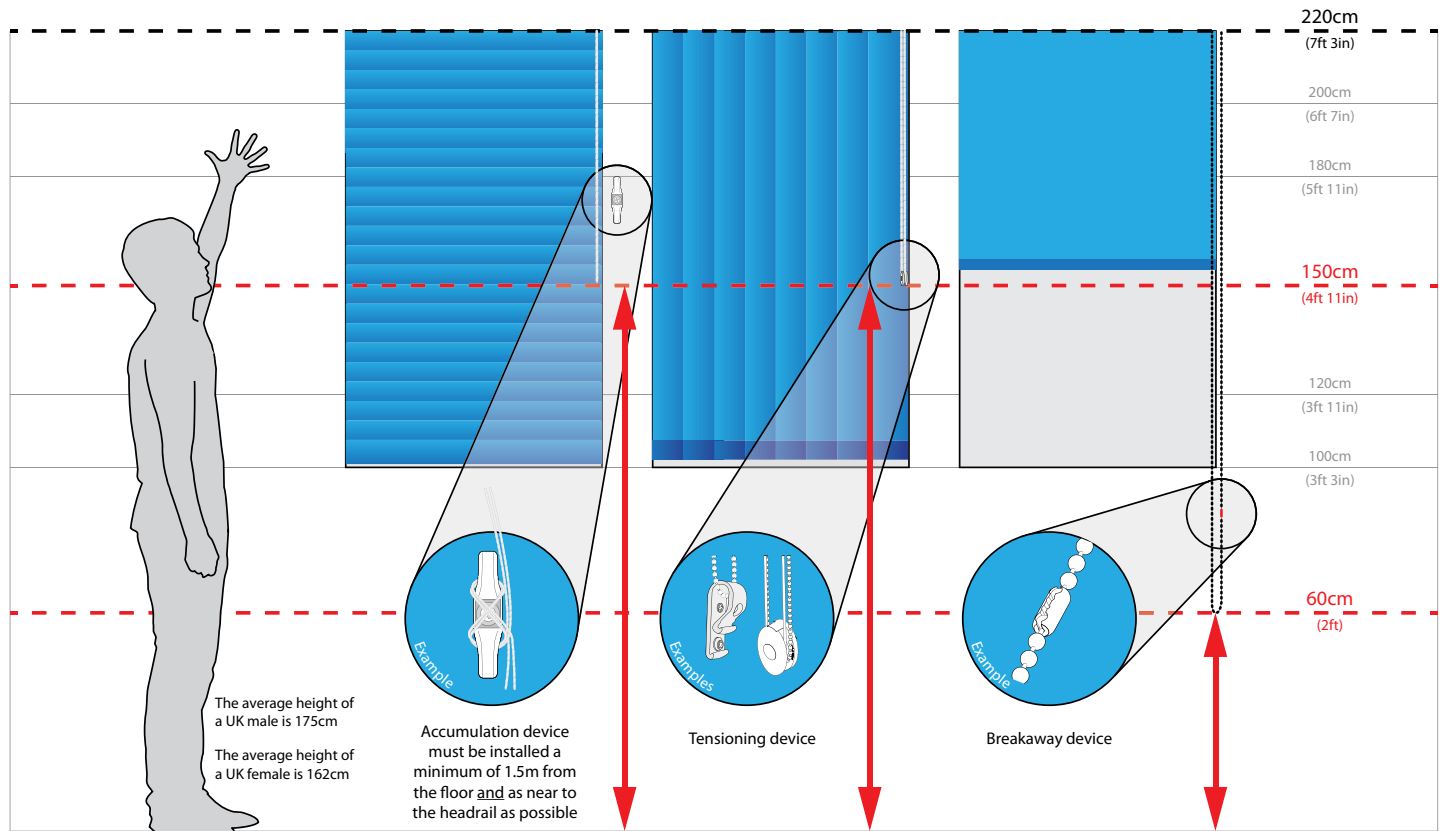
- **Sell inherently child safe products first - often called Safe by Design. This is especially important in childrens' bedrooms and play areas**
- If you have to use a blind that requires safety devices - either integral (built in) or non-integral (require separate fitting) you must advise the customer and agree how and where such devices will be used/fitted

Installers

You must install the blinds as required by the standard.

- Any supplementary safety devices must be securely fitted
- All warnings should be left on the product
- Product instructions must be left with the customer
- The customer should be shown how the blind and safety device(s) work

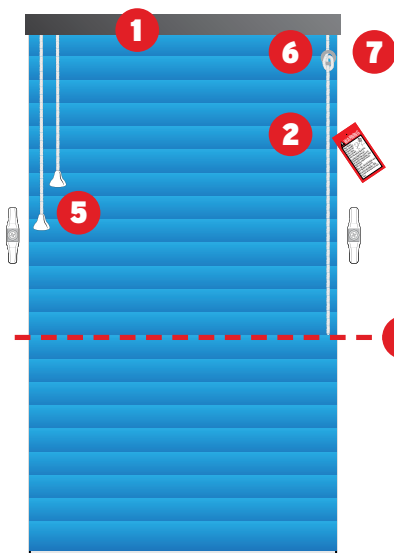
Maximum cord and chain lengths where fitting height is known



Source: BS EN 13120:2009+A1:2014

Blinds with pull cords

accumulation devices



Examples

Blinds with/
without cord
locks such
as venetian,
roman and
pleated

1. Name or trademark on the blind
2. General warning notice left on the blind
3. Product instructions left with the customer
4. Accumulation device securely fitted at least 1.5m from floor and as near to the headrail as possible
5. Non-tangle tassels. An accumulation

device also required if cords at lowest point (fully tilted) extend below 1.5m from the floor

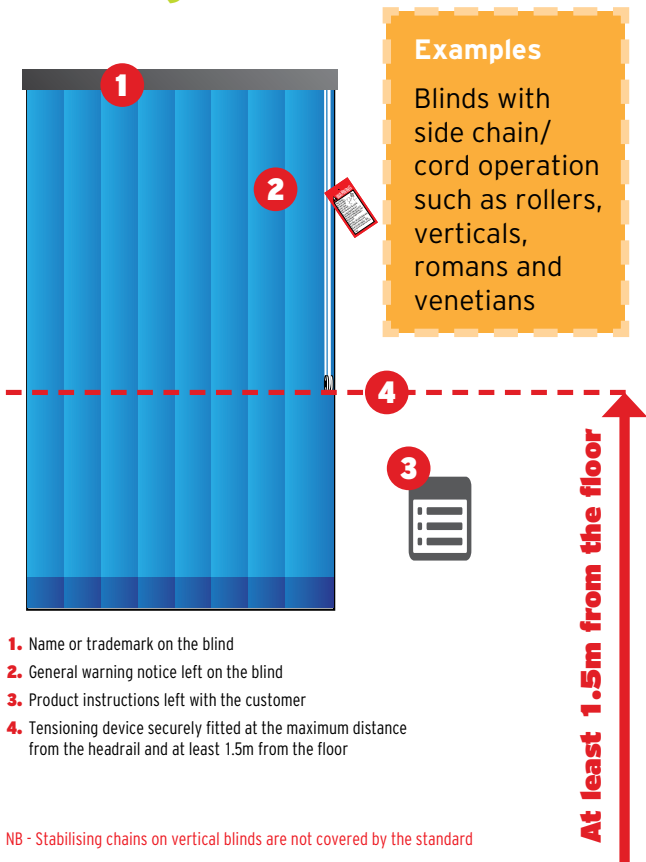
6. Cord stops to be fitted as close to the headrail as possible and not more than 50mm away, with the blind being in the fully extended position
7. If more than two pull cords (and less than 5) a breakaway system is needed (this may also operate as a cord stop - see 6 above).

NB - A blind with pull cords must not be fitted less than 1.5m from the floor

At least 1.5m from the floor

Blinds with looped cords/chains

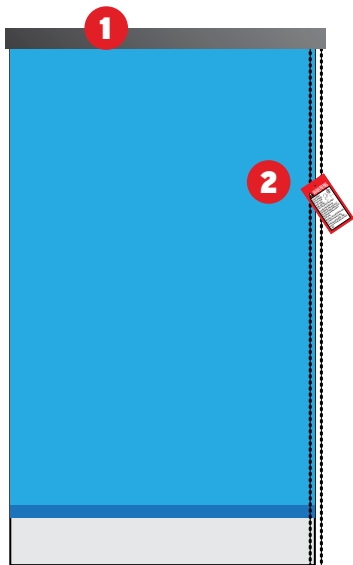
tensioning devices



NB - Stabilising chains on vertical blinds are not covered by the standard

Blinds with looped cords/chains

breakaway devices



Examples

Blinds with side chain/cord operation where the full length of the cord or chain does not go through the mechanism to fully raise/lower the blind

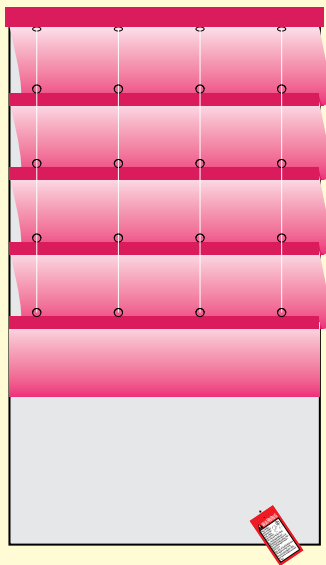


1. Name or trademark on the blind
2. General warning notice left on the blind
3. Product instructions left with the customer
4. Breakaway connector(s) installed and cord/chain at least 0.6m from the floor

**At least
0.6m from
the floor**



Roman blind lift cords



If the maximum distance between two consecutive attachment/retention points of inner cords is less than or equal to 200mm and it is not possible to insert the head probe then you should not need a breakaway system.

≤ 200mm

If the distance between the attachment/retention points does not meet the criteria above then a compliant breakaway system must be used on the lift/rear cords. Appropriate warning notices need to be attached.

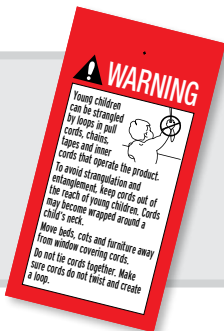
Operating cords and chains

The requirements for operating cords and chains will be dependent on the safety device(s) used - see information on this page. Instructions regarding the lift cord safety devices must be left with the customer.

Warning notices

General warning notice

Available from your supplier or the BBSA



Non-integral warning notice

Children can strangle if this safety device is not installed. Always use this device to keep cords or chains out of reach of children.

Available from your supplier

Warning notice (label) on packaging directed to the consumer

Available from your supplier or the BBSA



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The information should not form the basis upon which the reader makes any decisions or conclusions concerning their own rights or their obligations under the General Product Safety Regulations. The BBSA strongly recommends that the reader obtains detailed and specific legal advice from their own legal counsel concerning their position.

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