



Australian Government

Department of Health

# Introduction of tobacco plain packaging in Australia

## About plain packaging

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Since 1 December 2012, all tobacco products sold, offered for sale, or supplied in Australia must be in plain packaging.

The [Tobacco Plain Packaging Act 2011](#) aims to improve public health by:

- discouraging people from using tobacco products
- encouraging people to give up using tobacco products
- discouraging people from taking up tobacco use again
- reducing exposure to tobacco smoke

Plain packaging regulates the retail packaging and appearance of tobacco products to:

- reduce the appeal of tobacco products to consumers
- make health warnings more effective
- reduce the ability of the retail packaging to mislead consumers about the harmful effects of smoking or using tobacco products

### Part of Australia's tobacco control measures

Plain packaging is a key part of Australia's package of tobacco control measures, which include:

- laws to restrict internet advertising of tobacco products in Australia from 6 September 2012
- anti-smoking social marketing campaigns
- the 25% tobacco excise increase in April 2010
- increases in excise and customs duty on tobacco and tobacco-related products: 12.5% increases on 1 December 2013, 1 September 2014, and then annually to 1 September 2020
- a reduction in duty free concessions for tobacco products
- stronger penalties for tobacco smuggling offences
- updated and expanded health warnings under the [Competition and Consumer \(Tobacco\) Information Standard 2011](#)

The updated health warning standard, which started on 1 January 2012 and took full effect from 1 December 2012, requires health warnings to cover at least:

- 75% of the front of most tobacco packaging
- 90% of the back of cigarette packaging
- 75% of the back of most other tobacco product packaging)

# How the plain packaging law was developed

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## 2009 — evidence in support of plain packaging

The National Preventative Health Taskforce, a group of Australia's leading public health experts, set out extensive research evidence to June 2009 in support of plain packaging.

Read the [Taskforce reports](#) and [government response](#) on the Australian Government Web Archive.

## 2011 — market research of plain packaging

In 2011, we commissioned consumer and market research reports on:

- market testing of new health warnings and information messages for tobacco product packaging
- market research to decide effective plain packaging of tobacco products

The research reports informed the approach to the current graphic health warnings and the design of plain packaging for cigarettes.

Read the [research reports on tobacco plain packaging and graphic health warnings](#).

## 2011 — consultations with the public and stakeholders

To help us develop the tobacco plain packaging law, we held:

- formal public consultation processes
- targeted consultation with stakeholders

Find out more about the [public consultation on plain packaging of tobacco products](#) on the Australian Government Web Archive, including consultation papers and submissions.

## 2012 — plain packaging laws takes effect

The [Tobacco Plain Packaging Act 2011](#) received Royal Assent on 1 December 2011.

The Act took effect on 1 December 2012.

The [Tobacco Plain Packaging Regulations 2011](#) were made by the Governor-General in Council on 7 November 2011. These regulations set out plain packaging requirements for non-cigarette tobacco products.

## Find out more

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Find out more about [tobacco plain packaging](#) on the Health website, including:

- how to make a complaint about a potential breach
- resources for manufacturers, importers and suppliers