



Recommendations BABM & COMEOS

PALLETS, DISPLAYS & PACKAGING

The ECR Belgium Working Party "Unit Load Identification & Tracking" has issued a first series of recommendations for pallets, displays and secondary / tertiary packaging. These recommendations have been made within the framework of consultation meetings held since 1997 between representatives of member companies from COMEOS (Belgian Federation of Distributors) and from BABM (Belgilux Association of Branded Products Manufacturers).

Follow-up is now being given by the ECR Working Party to the actual implementation of these recommendations.

Pallets

Types and dimensions

A decrease in the number of pallet types and formats contributes to the objective of higher logistic efficiency which manufacturers and distributors try to achieve.

The ECR Working Party recommends to use the so-called euro pallets (dimensions 80 x 120 cm) and its two derived dimensions (½ Euro [80 x 60 cm] and ¼ Euro [40 x 60 cm]), except for beverages and coffee as well as for heavy rotations of fresh vegetables and fruits, for which the industrial pallet (format 100 x 120 cm) is recommended.

Per dimension at least two or three types should be accepted.

Re-use

For environmental and security reasons, it is recommended to have re-usable pallets and to avoid as much as possible the use of one-way pallets.

Pallet height

The ECR Working Party deems that a pallet height of maximum 1.85 m (pallet included) is the best compromise for reasons of security, comfort and efficiency.

However, in case of lightweight goods (pallets with a weight of less than 500 kg), the height can be exceeded in accordance with the retailer.

Accessibility

The ECR Working Party underlines that a maximum and universal interchangeability is to be guaranteed within the Belgian and European context.

Loading

For pallet loading, the ECR Working Party recommends to level the load (equal heights), to work with full pallet layers, without overhang, and to avoid sagging of the load.

With regard to auxiliary devices, the ECR Working Party proposes the following guidelines:

- Priority should be given to an optimum stacking scheme.
- The use of auxiliary devices should be avoided as much as possible, however, without hampering the stability of the entire load.
- One should be able to attach and remove auxiliary devices without damaging the goods.
- After removal the load has to be sufficiently stable to allow for order picking.
- As for the intermediary layers, the use of materials such as cardboard and paper is to be preferred.

The ECR Working Party recommends a maximum weight of 1000 kg for euro pallets and a maximum weight of 1250 kg for industrial pallets.

Quality

With regard to the purchase and repair of pallets, the ECR Working Party recommends to appeal to certified pallet producers and repairers; this for reasons of security and in order to secure a qualitatively good pallet park. The European organisation of EUR pallets, EPAL, has worked out a system for certification and control of EUR pallet producers and repairers. In Belgium this quality control is done by the Belgian National Railways (NMBS). The Belgian EUR pallet producers and repairers (members of Febelhout) are grouped in Belepal. Belepal is EPAL's official national committee for Belgium.

A list of certified manufacturers and repairers is available at Belepal (c/o Febelhout v.z.w., Allée Hof-ter-Vleest 5 B.1., B-1070 Brussels, tel. +32 2 556 25 55, fax +32 2 556 25 70, jan.dietvorst@febelhout.be). For more information on EPAL: Hauptstrasse 16, A-8502 Graz-Lannach, Austria, tel. +43 31 36 82 74 60, fax +43 31 36 82 74 64, info@epal-pallets.org.

Displays

The ECR Working Party has formulated a series of recommendations for displays (dimensions, presentation and construction) that are intended for the display of goods in the point of sale. If however it's in the interest of the parties to deviate from one or more recommendations, they are free to bilaterally agree on this.

1. Pallet types and dimensions

First, a distinction is made between a display pallet and a mother pallet:

A display pallet = the carrier on which a display is built. Generally this is "a pallet on the mother pallet", but it might as well be the "mother pallet" as is.

A mother pallet = the transport pallet (that can carry several 'display pallets' **or** that serves as 'display pallet'). As for the latter case, it's acceptable for the mother pallet to be **both** 'display pallet' and 'transport pallet' (meaning; in that case the display is built directly on the mother pallet).

Transport of displays always requires a mother pallet. The mother pallet does not necessarily have to belong to a pool. But the display pallet is recommended to belong to a pool.

Acceptable dimensions for a display pallet:

- 30 * 40 cm (if bilaterally agreed)
- 80 * 60 cm
- 40 * 60 cm
- 100 * 60 cm (for beverages and coffee)
- 80 * 120 cm (can also be a mother pallet)

Acceptable dimensions for a mother pallet:

- 80 * 120 cm
- 100 * 120 cm

2. Identification of the logistic unit

Every logistic unit containing displays needs to be labeled with a **logistic label**. This GS1 logistic label needs to fulfill all requirements mentioned in the [GS1 Guideline for labeling logistic units](#).

3. Identification of the display as such

Each display in the logistic unit needs to be labeled with at least 1 display label. The display label **minimally needs to contain** the following header information:

- The identification code of the display as trade unit (GTIN-13 or GTIN-14) encoded in a barcode (EAN-13, ITF-14 or GS1-128)
- A description of the display/trade unit

Optionally the display label may contain additional information such as:

- the supplier name
- and information on content level.

If the display is ready for use, attention should be paid to not putting the label on a side that is visual for the consumer when the display is in the point of sales. But it is also acceptable to just put the display label on the cover (instead of directly on the uncovered display).

4. Identification of the consumer unit

The indication of pricing will be done at the request of the retailer concerned. The products in the display are preferably put on the **original shelf tray pack**; they are also equipped with the **normal barcoding** (cf. GS1 barcode guideline), hence facilitating the placing of the remaining goods in the shelves after the display action.

5. Height, weight and loading

a. Weight & height

The maximum weight of the mother pallet cannot be more than 1000 kg, each display pallet is limited to 500 kg for 80*60 displays and 250 kg for 40*60 displays. The recommended maximum height, mother pallet included, is 185 cm.

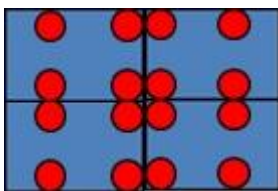
b. Displays & Placement

The displays are to be of solid quality, constructed in a safe and well-balanced way. They will also have to retain their stability during transport, manipulation and sale of the products. Preferably, the heaviest goods are placed at the bottom.

The use of false mass (generally at the bottom) is to be restricted to a minimum and in no way the stability of the display may be hampered. To allow transport and manipulation, the display often carries an over-packaging. This over-packaging needs to be easily removable in the Point of Sale.

Every display (except for field displays and unless the customer decides differently) needs to be put on a display pallet (or a mother pallet but then we consider the mother pallet to be the display pallet) so that it can be manipulated separately. Manipulation of the display pallets should be possible with a **fork-lift in order for all displays to be taken off together in a stable way**.

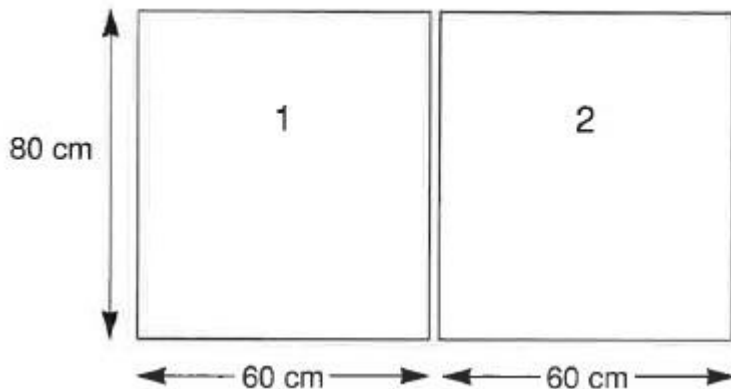
(See illustration below that shows the 40*60 displays on a EURO pallet)

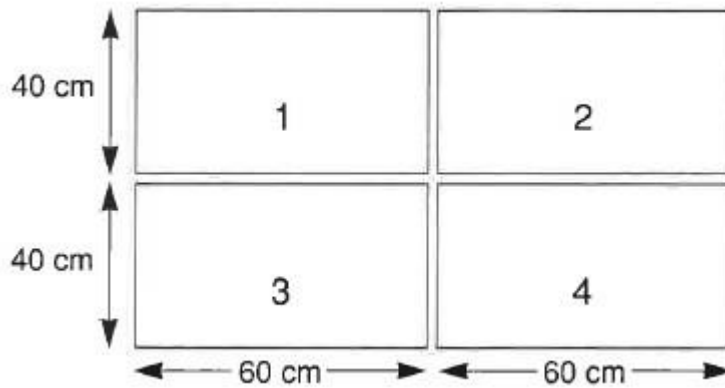


For reasons of stability, the weight of the displays should be concentrated to the middle as much as possible (except if automatic manipulation does not allow to do so).

It is recommended to place the facing:

- on the long side (60 cm) in case of 40 x 60 cm displays
- on the long side (80 cm) in case of 80 x 60 cm displays





It is not recommended to place 5 40*60 cm displays together on a 100*120 mother pallet, this is difficult to work with.

It's highly recommended for the dimensions of the uncovered displays *not* to exceed the outer borders of the display and/or mother pallet.

6. Attachment of displays to the display pallet

a) Staples

Using staples to attach the display to the ¼ display pallet is strongly discouraged (and even not allowed by some retailers). This practice causes additional costs in the supply chain, the staples need to be removed before the pallet can be used again. Most display pallets offer the possibility to attach the display via a click-on system. Using staples also causes unsafe working conditions, when the staples fall on the floor in the Point of Sale and when the display needs to be broken down.

b) Glue

Using glue to attach the display to the display pallet or to attach the products to the display is strongly discouraged. Removing the glue causes additional costs in the supply chain. Quite often the pallet is no longer usable afterwards.

c) Shrink-wrap, carton wrap or strapping

It is recommended to shrink-wrap or carton wrap every display separately. On top of that, the displays should be shrink-wrapped or strapped together. This wrap needs to be attached from the bottom upwards. The shrink-wrap should be transparent so that the goods can easily be identified. Only for goods that require protection from the light an exception is made. Alternatively the display can be strapped to the display pallet.

7. Attachment of 'display pallet(s)' to the mother pallet

Strapping

The displays are either strapped to the mother pallet (which is most preferred), or shrink-wrapped (which is less favorable). Stability always needs to be ensured for transport.

8. Materials used and environmental protection

In view of qualitative and environmental prevention objectives, the recommendations read as follow:

- Too much cardboard and plastic foil should be avoided in order to decrease the amount of waste material, however, without harming the solidity needed for transport.
- To ensure an optimum ratio between the number of products and the volume of the over-packaging.
- To use fully or partially recycled materials.
- To use materials free of heavy metals (e.g. inks and varnishes without heavy metals, cadmium-free synthetic pallets,...).
- To avoid multi-material types that are difficult to assort and to recycle.

- With regard to over packaging, it is recommended to choose in function of the possibilities for recycling (over packaging that can be completely recycled is better) and to use polyethylene (PE) foil.

9. Display Content and quantity

The content of the display needs to correspond to the ordered products and quantity. The displays should be designed in such a way that the products are within easy reach, that is to say that when the outer wrapping is removed, as many products as possible must be visible.

When using a 40*60 cm pallet, products are often **visible and accessible** on the 60 cm side. It is recommended to make the products visible from the 40 cm sides also, in order to enable optimum commercial installation at the top of an aisle.

Where there are different flavors or varieties (e.g. jam, chocolate etc.) of the same product, these variations can be grouped on the same pallet. Some product families such as candy bars or barbecue sauces allow combinations.

10. Breaking down displays in the store

Make sure that when building the display on the display pallet, it should be easy to break it down in the store itself.

Secondary & Tertiary Packaging

Dimensions

Standardisation of packaging is of great importance for an efficient transport of the product from the producer via the distribution centre to the point of sale (integral supply chain approach).

When developing new packaging, collomodular dimensions are to be preferred. These collomodular dimensions are:

600 x 400	600 x 200	600 x 100	
400 x 300	400 x 200	400 x 150	400 x 100
300 x 200	300 x 100		
200 x 150	200 x 100		
150 x 100			

The tolerance is - 6 % and + 0 %.

When determining the collomodular dimensions, the divergence in minus of 4 % will be taken as a standard, this amongst other things to avoid that the packaging will bulge and taking into account the dimensions of the basis pallet.

Identification

For the identification of "Unit Loads", we refer to the "Manual for labelling of logistic units and for datacommunication in the context of traceability."

www.gs1belu.org/nl/logistiek-etiket

Re-usable crates

For re-usable secondary/tertiary packaging too, it is recommended to limit the number of re-usable crate pools to two or three. The crates must be compatible so that they can be piled up.

The labels on the crate have to be washable. Therefore, it is recommended to use glues that are water dissolvent. Formats are limited to 60 x 40 cm and 30 x 40 cm.

Roll containers

With regard to roll containers, it is also recommended to have a pool system and to limit the number of pools to maximum three. The internal surface should be compatible with the dimension of two crates.

Dollies

They should also be compatible with the dimensions of crates.

The weels of roll containers and dollies should respect the noise standards while rolling. The weight of the roll containers and dollies should respect human ergonomics.

Palletbox

They should be compatible with the dimension of two crates and should be in accordance with the HACCP standards.

*Update on 'displays' approved by the ECR Belgilux Committee on 04/06/2015.
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