

GET IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME



KEEPING SAFETY

TOP OF MIND

The ASA receives complaints about advertising that shows dangerous, illegal or unsafe practices.

Understanding government safety regulations and preparing advertising in a socially responsible manner helps to prevent issues and support consumer trust in advertising.

Here are our **top tips** to make safety-responsible ads:

1 GET TO KNOW GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS

Knowing what's allowed and what isn't is the first step in avoiding potential complaints. Common regulations to check out are workplace health and safety, driving and the road code, and boating regulations, such as the requirements for wearing lifejackets.

2 CHECK YOUR HEALTH AND SAFETY

If you are investing in an ad campaign, consult a health and safety professional to make sure the scenes you depict are not likely to create a safety risk, unless there is justification for education.

3 AVOID CONDONING UNSAFE BEHAVIOUR

If showing dangerous or unsafe practices is a necessary part of your advertising, your ad must not condone or encourage it.

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4 MAKE EXAGGERATION OBVIOUS

Showing impossible but unsafe scenes may be acceptable, but make sure it's clear the scene is not real life.

5 TAKE SPECIAL CARE WITH CHILDREN

Children are a vulnerable audience and may not be able to easily distinguish reality and exaggeration. If your advertisement targets children, don't depict anything that could be dangerous to replicate at home, unless the purpose of the ad is to discourage that particular behaviour.

Need some examples? Here are just a few:

- Reckless activity on roads or activity in breach of road rules
- The absence of approved safety equipment such as helmets, seatbelts, lifejackets and car seats
- Alcohol consumption in unsafe situations such as while driving or taking part in sports
- Glorifying excessive speed
- Activity that does not reflect current workplace health and safety requirements
- Pranks that could go wrong; for example, sticking a knife in a toaster
- Young children unsupervised using kitchen equipment



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What are the rules around safety in advertising?

Safety falls under Principle 1: Social Responsibility of the Advertising Standards Code, specifically encouraging or condoning dangerous, illegal or unsafe practices.

Some of the Advertising Codes have specific rules around safety.

Rule 1 (b) of the Children and Young People's Advertising Code refers to the danger of featuring behaviour that could be copied.

Rule 1 (b) of the Therapeutic and Health Advertising Code covers claims around the safety and effectiveness of products, devices or services advertised.

The guidelines under Rule 1 (e) of the Alcohol Advertising and Promotion Code cover the need to avoid links between alcohol consumption and activities where the combination of which would be unsafe.

The rules apply to ads in all media.

Remember the spirit and intention of the Code

When interpreting the Codes, the ASA Complaints and Appeal Boards consider compliance with both the spirit and intention as well as the rules and principles of the Codes. When checking Code compliance, we think about what the consumer takes away from the advertisement rather than the intent of the advertiser.

Further help

We offer industry training on this topic, or you can contact the AdHelp Information Service for written information about the advertising rules and guidelines. For a more detailed look at the rules, head to the Advertising Codes.