

# Anti-Counterfeit Guide for Consumers



HP Anti Counterfeiting and Fraud (ACF) Programme for Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA)

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## Table of contents

- > [Avoiding fake cartridges](#)
- > [Avoiding fake computing products](#)
- > [Reporting possible counterfeits](#)
- > [Getting more information](#)

Counterfeit printing supplies and computing products can pose considerable risks to consumers, as fakes often do not meet HP's strict quality and safety standards. To steer clear of fraudsters and their risky products, simply follow the tips below.

Counterfeits can pose considerable risks, including:



Poor printouts



Reduced page yields



Malfunctioning products



Damaged printers



Unwitting dealings with criminals

## Avoiding fake cartridges

Original HP printing supplies, including HP branded and Samsung branded cartridges, are particularly at risk of being counterfeited.<sup>1</sup> Please carefully follow the steps below for examining suspicious products.

At a glance: How to check HP printing supplies



1. Check the HP security label



2. Compare the codes/dates



3. Look at the packaging



4. Examine the cartridge



5. Refrain from dubious offers



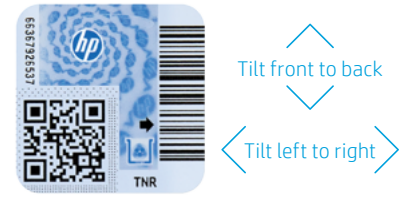
6. Report suspicions



### 1. Check the HP security label

#### The security label exhibits the correct holographic features

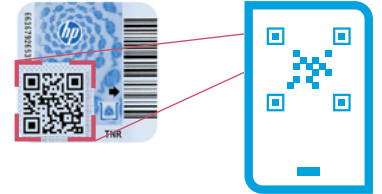
- > Tilt the box front to back: the 'hp' and '✓' symbols on the label should move in opposite directions.
- > Tilt the box right to left: the 'hp' and '✓' symbols on the label should move in the same direction.



#### Specifically for customers: Validate the label's unique code via smartphone

- > Capture the Quick Response (QR) code on the label with a QR code reader to get a direct response from HP.

Current HP toner security labels feature a barcode. The barcode supports the serialisation of HP toner cartridges and cannot help you determine if a product might be counterfeit.



#### Security labels are present and applied correctly

Check that all products that are supposed to carry a security label actually do carry one – and that the label is in the correct location, as indicated in the graphics below.

Hover your mouse over the security labels below and the marked areas on the ink/toner boxes for close-ups!

- > **All HP toner cartridges should have a label.** This includes regular HP toner cartridges as well as HP Neverstop kits. The label is generally stuck across the tear strip of the box. If you notice any such products without an HP security label, you have reason to be suspicious.



- > **Select HP ink cartridges carry a label** in HP's European and ISE markets (i.e. Africa, Europe, and the Middle East). Check a product against our security label overview for HP ink cartridges: You have reason to be suspicious if a security label is missing when it should be present. Note that all HP GT Ink Bottles for HP's ink tank printers generally come with a security label, too.



**Also make sure that the security label corresponds with the product** – for example, an ink label on a toner cartridge is suspicious, and vice versa.



- > **HP PageWide cartridges and HP large format cartridges generally carry a security label.** The HP security label used on these products is of the same design as the one applied to ink cartridges.



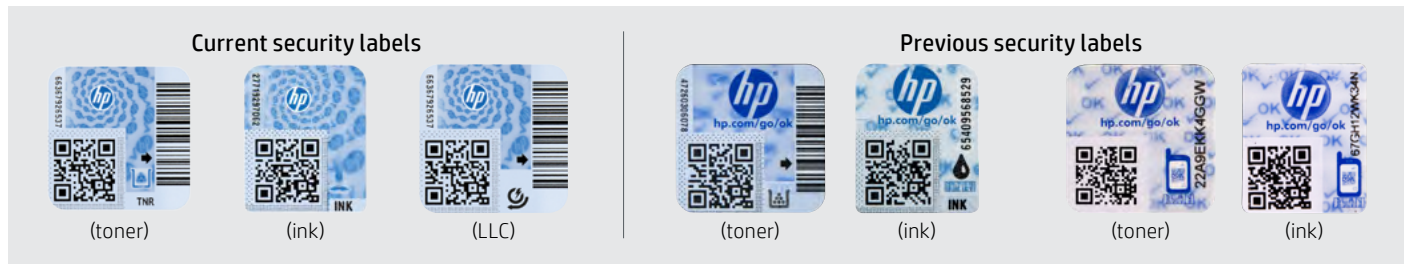
- > **Select HP Long Life Consumables (LLCs) come with an LLC security label,** e.g. fusers and Image Transfer Kits. If present, the label features the dedicated 'LLC' icon.



Get more details on how to check HP Long Life Consumables (LLCs), such as fusers and Image Transfer Kits, and Samsung branded toner cartridges in our respective one-sheet guides.

**Be aware of different variations of the security label**

Some older versions of HP’s security labels may still be in circulation; they generally have an image-shifting feature that can be checked similarly to the method described above.



**2. Compare the codes/dates**

**Codes/dates on box and cartridge match**

Original HP cartridges feature specific codes or dates on the box as well as on the cartridge it contains. If codes/dates do not match as described below, you have reason to be suspicious.

- > Toner: All original HP toner cartridges have a code on both the box and the cartridge itself, of which at least the first five characters match. Please ignore all further specifications present.
- > Ink, GT Ink Bottles, PageWide, large format: These HP cartridges feature the same ‘End of Warranty’ date on the box as on the cartridge itself (+/- 1 month).



**3. Look at the packaging**

**All products are delivered in original HP packaging**

- > HP generally recommends only accepting HP cartridges in unopened original HP packaging. HP’s packaging offers important protection against counterfeiting and can contain essential product information.
- > If you accept cartridges without their HP packaging, you might expose yourself to an increased risk of counterfeiting. In addition, sales of cartridges without their HP packaging might violate local product safety/customer protection laws if relevant information was included on the HP packaging.

**All packaging is of consistent quality**

- > Boxes and packaging materials used for original HP cartridges are of consistent and premium quality.
- > There should be no spelling or printing mistakes, no signs of wear and tear, and no indicators that the box may have been opened and re-sealed.



Please note that HP also offers supplies SKUs for (1) Supplies Big Deals (SBD), the so-called C-SKUs<sup>2</sup>, and for (2) Managed Print Services (MPS), the so-called Managed SKUs or M-SKUs<sup>3</sup>. These products can be recognised easily due to their comparatively plain white or brown boxes, respectively. Note that these products are intended to be sold to end customers by HP Authorised Partners only, i.e. (1) C-SKUs by accredited SBD Resellers and (2) M-SKUs by accredited Power Service Partners. However, HP cannot rule out that C-SKUs and M-SKUs are traded by non-authorised vendors and may be a disguise for counterfeit products.





#### 4. Examine the cartridge

##### The cartridge itself has to look clean and brand new

- > Original HP cartridges are always delivered unused.
- > There should be no damage, ink or toner leakage, scratches, or any signs of previous use on the cartridge itself.



#### 5. Refrain from dubious offers

##### HP sells products through contracted channel partners

- > To avoid counterfeit cartridges, HP recommends to only buy from trustworthy vendors, such as e.g. HP Authorised Partners.

##### HP sales practices are consistent and reliable

- > If an offer sounds 'too good to be true', it probably is. HP thus advises to refrain from any suspicious offers, including sales practices such as:
  - X Printing supplies offered at suspiciously low prices.
  - X Allegedly 'new' or 'enhanced' products offered exclusively by the salesperson's company.
  - X Unsolicited email offers (spam) or online offers with incomplete vendor contact information.
- > HP recommends avoiding offers for alleged 'grey market' or 'parallel imported' printing supplies<sup>4</sup>, which could be used as a pretext for selling counterfeit goods. Note that in the European Economic Area, Switzerland, and United Kingdom, grey marketing constitutes a trademark infringement.



##### Beware of attempts to gather packaging material for illegal re-use

Fraudsters sometimes try to get hold of used HP cartridge boxes or security labels, to illegally re-use them to disguise counterfeit cartridges. Please refrain from such schemes and report immediately to HP if you notice practices such as:

- ! Requests to open HP cartridge boxes without damaging the security label
- ! Offers to buy back or take back empty cartridge boxes
- ! Offers to buy back or take back removed HP security labels

When opening a cartridge box, please always use the tear strip or designated opening, which you can generally find close to the security label (if present) – this helps to prevent that boxes and security labels are illegally re-used.

Please also stay vigilant towards unsolicited, dubious offers to collect and allegedly recycle used cartridges. If you want to recycle used cartridges for the environment, you are welcome to use [HP's Planet Partners service](#), available in numerous countries worldwide.



#### 6. Report suspicions

##### Act when suspicious about a product or offer

- > Please report to HP's anti-counterfeiting experts as described below if you have any counterfeiting suspicions.

## Avoiding fake computing products

Computing products that are notably at risk of being counterfeited include, among others, laptop power adapters and batteries, USB flash drives, keyboards and mice, as well as memory cards. However, a wide range of other accessories or even entire PCs and laptops might also be subject to counterfeiting. To avoid illicit computing goods, please follow the steps outlined below.

### At a glance: How to check HP computing products



1. Look at the packaging



2. Check the products



3. Refrain from dubious offers



4. Report suspicions



### 1. Look at the packaging

#### HP uses premium packaging

- > Genuine HP products are shipped in high-quality, new HP branded boxes or blister packs.
- > There should be no blurry text and images, incorrect HP logos, product photos that differ from the actual item, or spelling mistakes.



### 2. Check the products

#### Genuine HP computing products are of high quality

- > Original HP products are always manufactured according to HP's strict quality standards. They generally bear distinct HP logos as well as a sticker that displays the product information in high-resolution print.
- > Goods that show signs of damage, scratches, or wear and tear could potentially be fake. Also, any product sticker stuck on haphazardly or featuring spelling or punctuation errors should be cause for doubt, as should incorrect HP logo labels.



### 3. Refrain from dubious offers

#### HP sells products through contracted channel partners

- > To avoid counterfeit computing products, HP recommends to only buy from trustworthy vendors, such as e.g. HP Authorised Partners.

#### HP sales practices are consistent and reliable

- > If an offer sounds 'too good to be true', it probably is. HP thus advises to refrain from any suspicious offers, including sales practices such as:
  - X Computing goods offered at suspiciously low prices.
  - X Sales of allegedly original HP products featuring descriptions like 'factory tested/factory testing', 'bulk packaging', 'new retail', 'factory-sealed retail packaging' or 'grade A cell'.
  - X Offers with photos showing mass manufacturing or packaging processes, or showing internal components.
  - X Sellers claiming to be a manufacturer associated with or endorsed by HP or allegedly offering 'equal quality and lower prices than standard HP products'.
  - X Unsolicited email offers (spam) or online offers with incomplete vendor contact information.
- > HP recommends avoiding offers for alleged 'grey market' or 'parallel imported' products<sup>4</sup>, which could be used as a pretext for selling counterfeit goods. Note that in the European Economic Area, Switzerland, and United Kingdom, grey marketing constitutes a trademark infringement.



### 4. Report suspicions

#### Act when suspicious about a product or offer

- > Please report to HP's anti-counterfeiting experts as described below if you have any counterfeiting suspicions.

## Reporting possible counterfeits

If you have checked the products as outlined above and your suspicions have become concrete, please report immediately to HP.



### What to keep in mind before reporting to HP

- > Please keep the suspicious product, its packaging, and any related documents such as invoices for further reference.
- > For your own safety, HP generally recommends not telling the vendor that sold the dubious goods about your suspicion.


HP is committed to protecting your privacy (see the [HP Online Privacy Statement](#)). We will use the information you report to act against counterfeiting, as and if appropriate. We may also contact you about your report, e.g. for follow-up questions. Reporting is voluntary and can be done without providing any personal information. All the information you provide to us will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law and will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.



### 1. Choose your reporting channel


Directly turn to HP’s experts in case of suspicions:

**Contact HP’s ACF team in any language**



**Email**

Write to [emea.anti-counterfeit@hp.com](mailto:emea.anti-counterfeit@hp.com).



**Web**

Visit [hp.com/go/anticounterfeit](http://hp.com/go/anticounterfeit) and click on ‘Report counterfeit’ – you can even report anonymously.



### 2. State the facts

This is what we need to know in order to effectively follow up on your suspicion:

- > Explain the reason(s) for your suspicion (e.g. suspiciously low price, dubious packaging).<sup>1</sup>
- > Provide the name and contact details of the vendor, if available.
- > Please indicate your contact details for potential follow-up questions – of course, you can also report anonymously, e.g. via the web.



### 3. Attach photos

Please follow these guidelines for providing pictures to HP’s ACF experts:

- > Include sharp digital photos of **all six sides of the product’s packaging** such that we can view the smaller text. Please also include a sharp, legible **close-up of the security label** (if present) and a picture of the product itself, if possible.
- > If possible, please use daylight or a well-lit room, and refrain from using your camera’s flash.



Example photos for reporting a suspicious toner cartridge



### 4. Submit your report

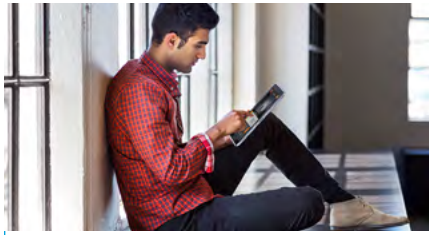
Send your information to our ACF experts, who will review your report and take appropriate follow-up action.

## Getting more information

HP offers multiple information resources that can help you steer clear of suspicious offers and counterfeit products.



[ACF pages on hp.com](#)  
Visit the anti-counterfeit pages on hp.com for further details, handy downloads, and to contact us



[Short ACF video clips](#)  
Inform yourself about central ACF topics in just a few minutes with spot-on clips and video tutorials



[Counterfeiting Essentials](#)  
Use the short summary of how to protect yourself from fake products for quick reference

<sup>1</sup> For printing supplies, please note that 'refilled', 'remanufactured', 'imitation' or 'compatible' cartridges are legitimate, as long as they do not infringe HP's or other third-party intellectual property rights. However, it is illegal to package or sell such products in a way that confuses or potentially confuses customers into believing that they are buying a brand-new genuine HP product, or a product that is associated with or endorsed by but not manufactured by HP, or in the event that a product is using HP's intellectual property without HP's consent. | <sup>2</sup> C-SKUs include selected supplies product numbers of PLs 5T, IU, and LS, i.e. products ending in "AC", "XC", or "YC". | <sup>3</sup> Managed SKUs include selected supplies product numbers of PLs 5T, IU, GL, GM, HF, and K6, i.e. (i) PLs 5T, IU, GL: products ending in "MC"; (ii) PL K6: products ending in "YC"; (iii) PL GM products ending in "AC" or "XC"; and (iv) PL HF supplies compatible with managed printers (PLs MC, G8, GQ). | <sup>4</sup> Grey market goods or parallel imports generally denote genuine, brand-name products that are sourced from one territory (country / economic area) and imported into another territory without the brand holder's consent (source: International Trademark Association INTA). For clarity, cross-border sales of legitimate HP products within the European Economic Area (European Union + Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway), Switzerland, and the United Kingdom (UK) are not considered grey marketing (status: Oct. 2020).

Learn more at  
[hp.com/go/anticounterfeit](https://hp.com/go/anticounterfeit)

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EMEA = Europe, the Middle East, and Africa

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