

E: How To Complain In Person

When something goes wrong with the goods that you have bought or when the services are sub-standard, knowing your rights as a consumer can put you in a stronger position and help you resolve the problem to your advantage.

To make a successful complaint, you need to know your legal rights as a consumer. You also need to know how to complain effectively by: -

- setting out your claim;
- approaching the right person;
- using appropriate language;
- stating your case clearly.

Before making your complaint, make sure you know what you want to achieve. Do you want a refund or compensation, or do you simply want an apology from the person or organisation to which you are complaining. Whatever it is, make it clear from the outset. You should seek advice on your legal rights. Read the relevant 'Know the Law' leaflet.

Top Tips

- only complain when you need to and when your complaint is justified;
- **stop using the item** – you may lose the right to reject the goods if you continue to use them once you discover they are defective;
- tell the trader as soon as you discover the fault;
- know your rights before you complain;

- complain to the right person, someone who has authority to resolve the problem. For example, this may be the owner of a small business or the manager of a large store;
- give the trader or organisation the chance to sort out your problem, before resorting to Court action;
- do not lose your temper, swear or become personally abusive. Be firm, polite, but insistent; explain what the problem is and how you want it resolved;
- be patient, sometimes it may take a little while to resolve even a simple problem;
- if your complaint is not resolved by talking to the trader then you will need to put your complaint in writing.

**For further advice on any of these issues, contact
Trading Standards on 01925 442678.**