

# Complaint process

## 7-step checklist

**Use this list to make sure you handle complaints fairly and follow all required steps.** It's particularly useful for complaints about a serious fault with a product or service. You can print it out and check off each step, or edit it on your computer or smartphone.

Step 1	Name of person handling it	Tick when done		
Tell the customer who will handle it from start to finish, eg you or a trusted staff member.				
<b>If it's not you handling it:</b>		Yes	No	Not sure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has your staff member handled complaints before?</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do they know the product or service well?</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do they know enough about consumer law requirements?</li> </ul>				
<p><b>TIP:</b> If you answer "no" or "not sure", think about how you will support them — or if you should take over. Check out <b>Training staff to handle complaints</b> on the <b>business.govt.nz</b> website.</p>				

Step 2	Tick when done
Record the customer's contact details, details of the problem, and other background information.	
<p><b>It's worth asking:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>when the problem arose</li> <li>if the problem could be due to overuse or incorrect use</li> <li>customer's version of what was said during the sale — and your staff's version.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>TIP:</b> Use our <b>complaint form</b> to record these details — including who is handling the complaint in your business.</p>	

For more, see **Consumer Protection's Business guidance** section

Step 3	Tick when done		
Once satisfied it's a valid complaint, work out what needs to be done to put it right.			
<b>For faulty products, this might mean:</b>	Yes	No	n/a
• Can it be fixed?			
• Will you send it to the manufacturer to be checked and/or repaired?			
• Any extra costs to cover, eg repairing damage caused by the fault?			
<b>For faulty services, this might mean:</b>	Yes	No	n/a
• Will you redo the work?			
• Any extra costs to cover, eg repairing damage caused by the fault?			

Step 4	Tick when done
Check if the remedy you plan to give meets your legal requirements.	
<b>TIP:</b> See <b>Obligations under the Consumer Guarantees Act</b> on the <b>Consumer Protection</b> website.	

Step 5	Tick when done
Discuss what will happen next with your customer.	
<b>TIP:</b> It's helpful to keep our <b>visual guide to what you must do for customers</b> handy.	

For more, see **Consumer Protection's Business guidance** section



Step 6	Tick when done
Do what you say you'll do, whether it's giving a remedy or not.	
<b>TIP:</b> Use our <b>complaint form</b> to record the details.	

Step 7	Tick when done
Work out what your business will do to prevent the problem from happening again.	
If necessary, tell your customer.	
<b>TIP:</b> See advice on <b>Analysing complaint data</b> on the <b>business.govt.nz</b> website.	

For more, see **Consumer Protection's Business guidance** section