

REQUIREMENTS FOR FIRST AID KITS

What is required in a first aid kit? Who sets the standards for these requirements, and where can you find them? If you are an employer, you need to know the answers to these questions. You cannot simply assemble a few first aid items and call it a workplace kit, nor can you use just any first aid kit in the workplace. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires that employers use first aid kits that meet the standards established by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Z308.1-1998. The standards apply to both the container and its contents.

ANSI Z308.1-1998 updated the original standard, Z308-1978, changing it from a design-based to a performance-based standard. The current ANSI standard describes:

1. The classifications of first aid kits
2. Minimum content requirements
3. Required first aid products
4. Performance requirements for the containers
5. Marking and labeling requirements
6. Dimensions, quantity and labeling requirements for first aid products packaged by unit

There are three types of approved first aid kits.

- Type I kits are intended for stationary indoor applications and must be capable of being mounted in a fixed position.
- Type II containers are designed for portable indoor use and must have a carrying handle.



- Type III containers are required to be moisture-resistant and corrosion-resistant, because they are intended for use outdoors and in mobile industries. They must have carrying handles *and* be capable of being mounted in a fixed position.

All first aid containers are subject to a drop test in which a five-pound weight is placed inside, and the container is dropped four feet to a rigid surface without suffering appreciable damage.

What are the minimum requirements for a first aid kit? Both standards contain an appendix that refers to the ANSI standard Z308.1-1998. The standard requires all first aid kits to contain, at a minimum the items in the table below.



ITEM (MINIMUM SIZE OR VOLUME)	QUANTITY
Absorbent compress (32 sq. in. with no side smaller than 4 in.)	1
Adhesive bandages (1 in. x 3 in.)	16
Adhesive tape (5 yds. total)	1
Antiseptic (0.5g [0.14 fl. oz.] application)	10
Burn treatment (0.5g. [0.14 fl. oz.] application)	6
Medical exam gloves	2 pairs
Sterile pad (3 in. x 3 in.)	4
Triangular bandage (40 in. x 40 in. x 56 in.)	1
Source: American National Standards Institute	

Other items may be included in the first aid kit, but each optional fill item must comply with ANSI requirements. All unit items in the first aid kit must be individually wrapped or contained in individual applicators. The items must be kept clean and sterile. The standard also prohibits reuse of individual applicators, and all unit packages within the first aid kit must be labeled with:

1. The name of the item (must appear at least on the top panel and on one end panel)
2. The quantity
3. Instructions and/or illustrations for proper use
4. The name of the manufacturer, packer and distributor

All unit packages must be labeled in compliance with the Food, Drug & Cosmetic Act (and applicable state and federal regulations) and must include the following color code on at least one top panel and one end panel: blue for antiseptics, yellow for bandages, red for burn treatment, orange for personal protective equipment and green for miscellaneous.

Optional items for first aid kits include antiseptic towelettes, eye patches, eye wash, roller bandages and various sizes of bandage compresses. ANSI also recommends that each kit contain a CPR barrier with a one-way valve to protect first aid workers from direct contact with bodily fluids. Any over-the-counter drug product included in a first aid kit should be in single-dose, tamper-evident packaging with full labeling and should not contain any product known to cause drowsiness. Many employers buy large bottles of aspirin, ibuprofen or other over-the-counter tablets and make them available in first aid kits, but because the tablets are not individually wrapped and labeled, they do not meet ANSI standard.

ANSI Z308.1-1998 TYPE I (OR II OR III)

Caution: This kit meets ANSI Z308.1-1998 only when the required minimum fill is maintained, with first aid products marked “ANSI Z308.1-1998.”

REQUIRED MINIMUM FILL

1 absorbent compress, 4 in. x 8 in. minimum

16 adhesive bandages, 1 in. x 3 in.

5 yds. adhesive tape

10 antiseptic applications, 0.5g. each

6 burn treatment applications, 0.5g. each

4 sterile pads, 3 in. x 3 in. minimum

2 pairs medical exam gloves

1 triangular bandage, 40 in. x 40 in. x 56 in. minimum

Source: American National Standards Institute

CONTACT

For additional information, please contact:

Bob Lombard

Senior Vice President & Regional Director
Willis Pooling Practice
1755 E. Plumb Lane, Suite #269
Reno, NV 89502
775 323 1656 Ext. 19 (Office)
775 858 6335 (Cell)
lombard_bj@willis.com

David F. Brawner

Assistant Vice President & Senior Risk Control Consultant
Willis Pooling Practice
26 Century Boulevard
Nashville, TN 37214
615 872 3536 (Office)
615 587 1908 (Cell)
dave.brawner@willis.com