Domestic or contract? Which *fire regulations* apply

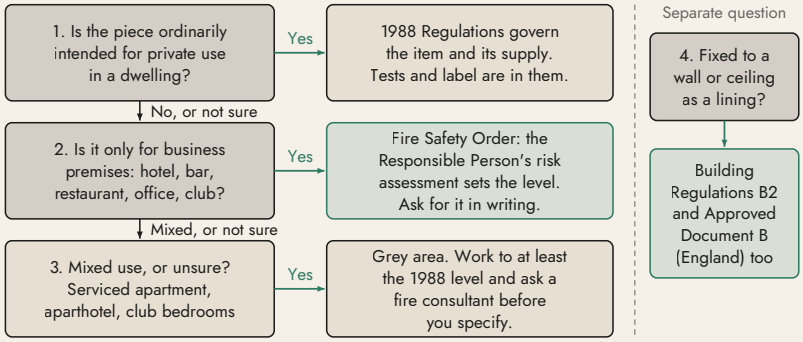
Furniture for a dwelling is governed by the 1988 Regulations and its supplier. Business premises are governed by the Fire Safety Order and the Responsible Person's risk assessment. Mixed use is a grey area.

Compliance guidance. This is guidance, not legal or fire safety advice, and it gives no advice on any particular premises. It reflects the law and policy as read on 5 November 2026: the 1988 Regulations (revised text, amended from 30 October 2025), the Fire Safety Order 2005 (England and Wales only), a consultation that closed on 23 June 2026 with no published outcome, and the FIRA and British Furniture Confederation guide (2010, updated 2011). Reform status moves: re-check before you rely on it, and take advice from a fire safety consultant or solicitor.

AT A GLANCE

Question	Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988	Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
What it attaches to	The furniture and its supply: furniture ordinarily intended for private use in a dwelling, including beds, divans, headboards, sofa-beds, cushions, mattresses and pillows (regulation 3(1))	The premises and the person who controls them. Not domestic premises, except the common parts and doors to them in a building with two or more dwellings (articles 2 and 6)
Who is responsible	Whoever supplies it: no person shall supply furniture that does not meet the requirements (regulation 15)	The Responsible Person: the employer for a workplace, otherwise the person in control of the premises for a business, or the owner (article 3)
Who sets the test	The Regulations: the tests are written into the Schedules (regulations 5 to 9)	The fire risk assessment (article 9). BS 7176, 7177 and 5867-2 are guidance, not requirements (Home Office guide)
Label	Permanent label on upholstered furniture (regulation 11, Schedule 7). Display label removed from 30 October 2025	None. BS 7176 asks for its own label for full compliance, as part of the standard
Typical premises	Homes, flats, holiday homes and furnished lets (FIRA guide, 9.5)	Hotels, restaurants, bars, offices, public buildings (FIRA guide, 9)
Where it applies	The United Kingdom (the 2025 amendments extend to England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland)	England and Wales only (article 1(4)). Scotland and Northern Ireland: own law, not read
Mixed use	Chalet hotels and similar: a grey area (FIRA, 9.5.2). Not less than this level; take advice	The assessment still sets the level: ask the Responsible Person and a fire consultant

Read on legislation.gov.uk on 5 November 2026 (revised texts). Regulation and article numbers are those instruments'. The FIRA guide is the FIRA and British Furniture Confederation guide (2010, updated 2011); its readings are guidance, not law.



Standard ranges sold to trade and homes: meet the 1988 Regulations (FIRA FAQ 3).

Which fire regime governs a piece: a decision flow. Drawn from the scope wording of the 1988 Regulations (regulation 3(1)) and the Fire Safety Order (articles 2, 3 and 6) and the FIRA and BFC guide (section 9). A guide to the question, not a ruling on any building. Original drawing by Make Bespoke Studio.

REFORM STATUS AT 5 NOVEMBER 2026

- SI 2025/531 in force 30 October 2025: baby and child products out, display label removed, 12-month time limit for offences.
- Consultation on domestic upholstered furniture (smoulder test, ending mandatory open-flame testing) closed 23 June 2026. No response published.
- It does not mention contract furniture or the Order. Whether it would reach BS 7176 is not addressed: ask a test house.

SPECIFICATION WORDING

RESPONSIBILITY AND LEVEL (BUSINESS PREMISES)

The Responsible Person under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 for [premises] is [name or role]. They have confirmed in writing, dated [date], the fire level for each space (hazard category for seating and mattresses, curtain type, lining class), recorded in the FF&E schedule [ref]. The Supplier supplies goods that meet that level for the exact build, evidenced as [evidence clause ref]. The Responsible Person remains responsible for the fire risk assessment and the level. Quotations are based on [reference, date]. If no level has been given, the Supplier asks before quoting and does not assume one.

ITEMS FOR A DWELLING, FURNISHED LET OR HOLIDAY HOME

Items [list or schedule refs] are for use in [a private dwelling / a holiday let]. They are to comply with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 as amended, including the permanent label (regulation 11 and Schedule 7). The Supplier provides a photograph of the label on [each item / a first-off item] and confirms in writing the source of each filling and cover and that they meet the tests in the Regulations.

MIXED-USE PREMISES

For [serviced apartments / aparthotel rooms / club bedrooms] at [premises] the fire regime and level are to be confirmed in writing by [fire safety consultant / Responsible Person] before order, with the reason recorded. Until then the Supplier prices [the higher of the 1988 Regulations and BS 7176 [Medium] Hazard] and shows any difference as an option. An item is not moved from one regime to another after approval except by written variation.

STANDARD RANGES, RECORDS AND CHANGE IN LAW

Items from the Supplier's standard range are supplied for [non-domestic use only] and the Supplier confirms they will not be supplied into the domestic market for this project. The Supplier holds the compliance file (written level, reports, label photographs) and makes it available for [6] years from [handover]. If the law, a standard edition or the Responsible Person's level changes between order and delivery, [the Client] notifies the Supplier in writing and the effect on the goods and the programme is agreed as a variation before work changes.

TERMS USED

Responsible Person

Under the Fire Safety Order 2005, article 3: the employer for a workplace; otherwise the person in control of the premises for a business or undertaking; or, if that person is not running a business there, the owner.

Domestic premises

In the Fire Safety Order 2005, article 2: premises occupied as a private dwelling, with any garden, yard, garage or outhouse not used in common by more than one dwelling.

1988 Regulations

The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988, SI 1988/1324: fire tests and labelling for furniture ordinarily intended for private use in a dwelling, as amended.

STANDARDS AND SOURCES

- Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (SI 1988/1324), revised; and the 2025 amending regulations, SI 2025/531: regs 1, 3 to 16 and Schedule 7 read 5 Nov 2026.
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (SI 2005/1541): articles 1 to 6, 8, 9 read 5 Nov 2026; England and Wales.
- gov.uk: Product regulation: fire safety of domestic upholstered furniture (consultation, 31 Mar to 23 Jun 2026); OPSS update 22 Jan 2025: read 5 Nov 2026; no response published.
- FIRA and BFC guide (2010, updated 2011); Home Office guide, sleeping accommodation (12 Sep 2023): read 5 Nov 2026.

Full guide: https://makebespoke.com/trade/technical/domestic-or-contract-fire-regulations. Make Bespoke Studio coordinates manufacture through its partner workshops. Figures are guidance only and your specification governs; some may be superseded, so contact the studio to verify.