

GTIN Allocation Rules - Made Even Easier User Guide

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Introduction

This guide provides a summary of the rules on GTIN allocation as defined in the GS1 Standards.

The guide provides an overview of the most important rules, and provides commentary and examples to ease interpretation of the rules. The guide does not replicate or replace the rules as defined in the standards. The full text of rules as contained in the standards should always be used as the normative reference.

Referenced standard versions in issue 2 of this guide

This issue of the user guide is based on the following standards:

- [GENSPECS] GS1 General Specifications v14, GS1 2014 (see <u>http://www.gs1.org/genspecs</u>)
- [GTAR] GS1 GTIN Allocation Rules April 2014, GS1 2014 (see <u>http://www.gs1.org/1/gtinrules/index.php/p=home</u>)



Section I - GTIN Allocation Basic Principles

This section provides a high-level overview of the foundational rules for the use of the GTIN. See the GS1 General Specifications sections **4.3. GTIN Rules** and **1.6 Allocation** for the full text of these rules.

1. Terms and definitions

[GENSPECS] 4.3.1.6. GTIN Allocation Definitions

The following terms may be useful when reviewing the GTIN Allocation Rules that are published on http://www.gs1.org/gtinrules:

- Trade Item Any item (product or service) upon which there is a need to retrieve pre-defined information and that may be priced, ordered, or invoiced at any point in any supply chain.
- Retail Consumer Trade Item The trade item intended to be sold to the end consumer at retail Point-of-Sale. They are identified with a unique GTIN-13, GTIN-12, or GTIN-8. (See the Section 2.).
- Trade Item Grouping A grouping of retail consumer trade items that is not intended for Point-of-Sale scanning. It is identified with a unique GTIN-14, GTIN-13, or GTIN-12.
- Non-GTIN Pack A packaging level for trade items where there is no trading partner requirement for Global Trade Item Number (GTIN) identification. If a GTIN is required, then this item becomes a retail consumer trade item or trade item grouping.
- Logistic Unit An item of any composition established for transport and/or storage that needs to be managed through the supply chain. It is identified with an SSCC (Serial Shipping Container Code).

2. General Rules

2.1. What makes one trade item different from another trade item?

The general rule for distinguishing trade items is stated below:

[GENSPECS] 4.3.1.1 Allocation General Rule

A Global Trade Item Number (GTIN) is used to identify any item (trade item or service) upon which there is a need to retrieve pre-defined information and that may be priced or ordered or invoiced at any point in any supply chain. A separate, unique GTIN is required whenever any of the pre-defined characteristics of an item are different in any way that is relevant to the trading process. As a guiding principle, if the customer is expected to distinguish a new trade item from an old trade item and purchase accordingly, a new GTIN should be assigned to the new trade item. This will ensure the product package and shelf edge label declarations should appear the same to the consumer. However, any law or regulation that contradicts these rules shall supersede these rules.

(...)

The GTIN Allocation Rules (see chapter 3) explain how to deal with common changes to pre-defined characteristics.



2.2. Who is responsible for allocating the GTIN?

The brand owner is usually responsible for allocation of the GTIN. See [GENSPECS] section **4.3.1.2.1**. Allocation and Responsibility for Branded Items.

Exceptions to this rule are listed in section **4.3.1.2.2**. Allocation and Responsibility Exceptions and Non-Branded Items.

2.3. How to deal with changes to the trade item?

There are two types of changes, permanent changes and temporary (parallel) changes.

- For permanent changes see [GENSPECS] section **4.3.1.3.5. Trade Item Changes**.
- For temporary (parallel) changes, also called variants, see section 4.3.1.3.4. Promotional Variants

The impact of permanent and temporary changes on trade item grouping level is defined in section **4.3.1.3.6.Variants for Trade Item Groupings**

2.4. How do GTIN changes impact master data alignment?

An important consideration in allocating a new GTIN to an existing trade item can be the requirement to update the related master data. [GENSPECS] section **4.3.1.5.1.Data Alignment Best Practice** provides guidance on this.

2.5. Is it allowed to reuse a GTIN?

As a general rule GTINs may be reused after 4 years:



However, GTINs allocated to <u>Regulated Healthcare Trade Items</u> shall never be reused.

See [GENSPECS] section 4.3.1.4. Lead Time in Re-Using a GTIN for all rules with respect to GTIN re-use.

2.6. How does a legal status change impact the GTIN?

When a company changes legal status as a result of an acquisition, merger, partial purchase, split, or "spin-off" the rules in [GENSPECS] section **1.6.1. Acquisitions and Mergers** apply.



3. Introducing the GTIN Allocation Rules

3.1. What are the GTIN Allocation Rules?

GTIN Allocation Rules are specific rules that apply to prevalent industry practices in the Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) industry.

The GTIN Allocation Rules are intended for global use. Exceptions may occur only when local regulatory or legal requirements mandate otherwise.

The rules in this guide apply to all trade items, with the following exceptions and restrictions:

- For <u>Healthcare</u> specific rules apply, which are not covered in the guide. The rules that apply to healthcare trade items can be found in the Healthcare GTIN Allocation Rules publication found at http://www.gs1.org/1/gtinrules/index.php/p=static/t=healthcare.
- For <u>Home Apparel and Home Fashion</u> the GS1 General Specifications describe some specific scenarios in addition to the GTIN allocation rules, which are not covered in this guide. See [GENSPECS] section 4.3.1.8. GTIN Allocation Considerations for Home Apparel and Home Fashion.

3.2. When to apply the GTIN Allocation Rules?

GTIN allocation rules can come into effect in two ways:

- 1. When a change is made to an existing trade item, with the existing trade item being replaced / phased out. The rule provides guidance on when to <u>allocate a new GTIN</u> which will replace the current GTIN.
- 2. When a new trade item or trade item variant is introduced that will co-exist with other trade items / trade item variants. The rules provide guidance on when to <u>allocate a separate GTIN</u> which will be used in parallel with the current GTIN.

3.3. How to interpret the GTIN Allocation Rules?

Besides the impact on the GTIN of the trade item as such, also the impact on higher level trade items used in distribution processes needs to be taken into account. For this reason many of the GTIN Allocation Rules define the impact of a change on two levels:

- 1. The Retail Consumer Trade Item level
- 2. The Trade Item Grouping level.



Section II – GTIN Allocation Rules

This section provides graphical examples for all of the GTIN Allocation Rules that can be found at <u>www.gs1.org/gtinrules</u>.

1. Different geographical market / different language

When would I use this?

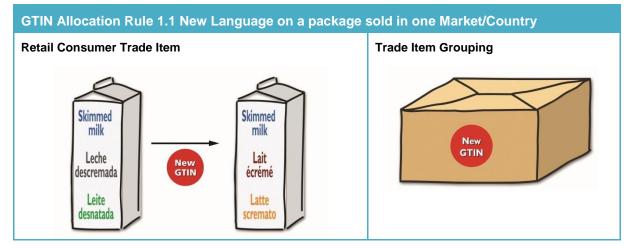
When introducing an existing trade item in a new geographical market, or when changing the language(s) used on the package of an existing trade item.

Rules

When there is only one language on the package, and that language changes, rule 1.1 applies:



<u>Rule 1.1</u> also applies when there are multiple languages on a package, and some languages are replaced with other languages. For example languages A, B and C on package are changed into A, D and E:







When an additional language is added on the package <u>rule 1.2</u> applies:

When an existing trade item is sold in a new geographical location, without impacting the languages presented on the package, <u>rule 1.3</u> applies:





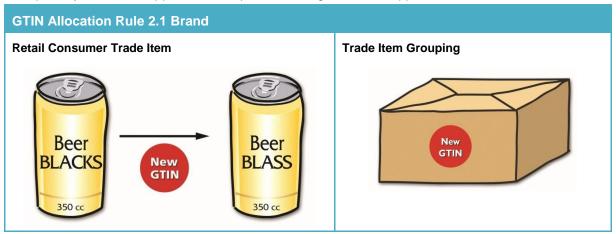
2. Different branding

When would I use this?

When making changes to the brand name or product name as it appears on the package.

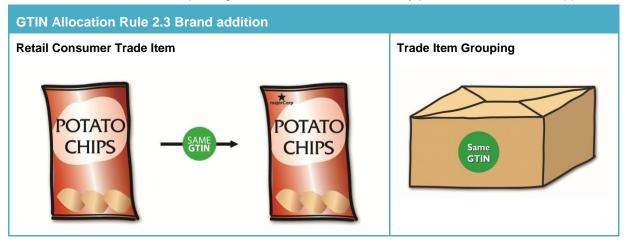
Rules

If the primary brand that appears on the product changes rule 2.1 applies.



A brand name change is significant since it will impact the way the consumer can recognize the trade item, and for example will impact the shelf edge label. In some cases also changes to a secondary or sub-brand name may require a new GTIN.

When a brand is added on the package in addition to a brand already present before rule 2.3 applies.



For example a corporate brand is added to the package but the existing product brand is still used as the primary brand to sell the product to the consumer.



For changes in product name and description that appear on the package <u>rule 2.4</u> applies.

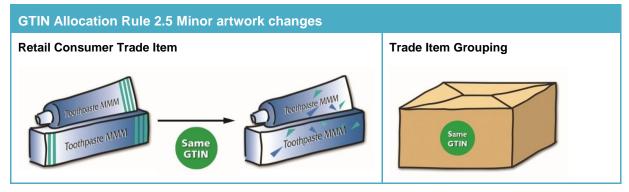


Please note that for healthcare items this rule does not apply, any change in product name or description will require a new GTIN. Also for other types of trade items local or regional regulations may require a new GTIN to be allocated when the product name changes.

When the graphics for the brand change, but the brand name remains the same, no new GTIN is required (see <u>rule 2.2</u>):



Artwork changes that do not impact the brand name, product name or product description do not require a GTIN change (<u>rule 2.5</u>):





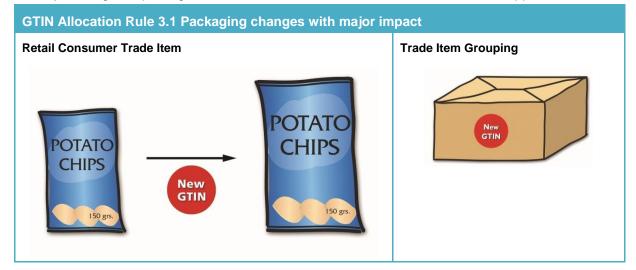
3. Different physical packaging

When would I use this?

When making changes to the physical dimensions of the package or to the packaging material.

Rules

For major changes to package dimensions at the retail consumer item level <u>rule 3.1</u> applies.



Such changes are significant for shelf management and for logistics systems.

For minor changes in package dimensions or packaging material at the retail consumer item level <u>rule</u> <u>3.2.1</u> applies.

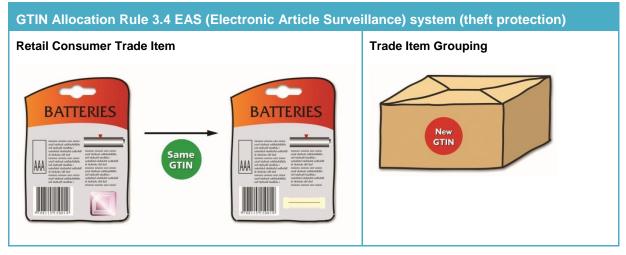




For minor changes in package dimensions or packaging material at the Trade Item Grouping level <u>rule</u> <u>3.2.2</u> applies.

GTIN Allocation Rule 3.2.2 A minor change in the packaging at the Trade Item Grouping level		
Retail Consumer Trade Item	Trade Item Grouping	
not applicable	MILK MILK MILK	

If the trade item is offered to customers with different theft protection mechanisms (in parallel) <u>rule 3.4</u> applies:



The different GTIN on Trade Item Grouping level will allow the customer to order the trade item with the right anti-theft protection characteristics.

GTIN Allocation Rule 3.5 The addition of an EPC/RFID Tag

Retail Consumer Trade Item

Image: Construction of an EPC/RFID Tag

If an EPC/RFID tag is added to a trade item rule 3.5 applies:



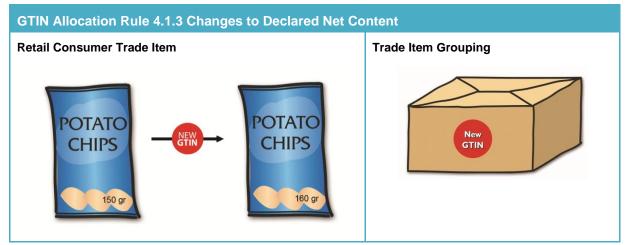
4. Changes to the product

When would I use this?

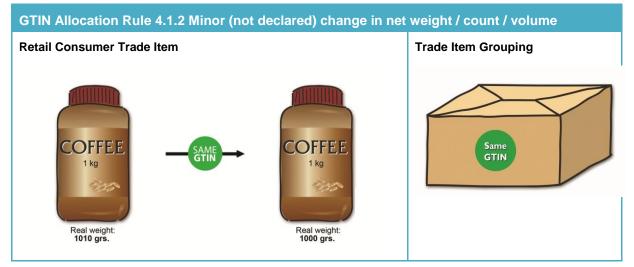
In case there are changes made to the product composition or to product information printed on the package.

General Rules

If there is a change in the net content (weight, volume or count) as declared on the package a new GTIN is required (see <u>rule 4.1.3</u>):

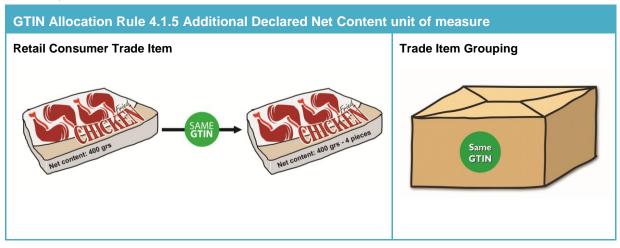


If there is a minor change in the net content (weight, volume or count), that does not impact the declaration on the package, no new GTIN is required (see <u>rule 4.1.2</u>):

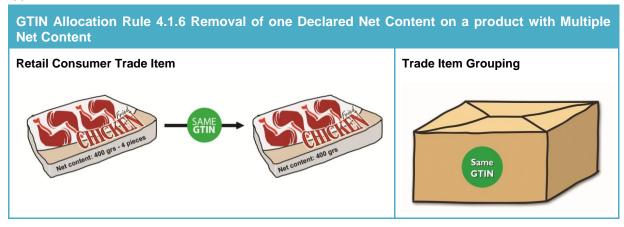




If the declared net content is specified in an additional unit of measure no new GTIN is needed (see rule 4.1.5):



If for a product with multiple net content declarations one of these declarations is removed <u>rule 4.1.6</u> applies.

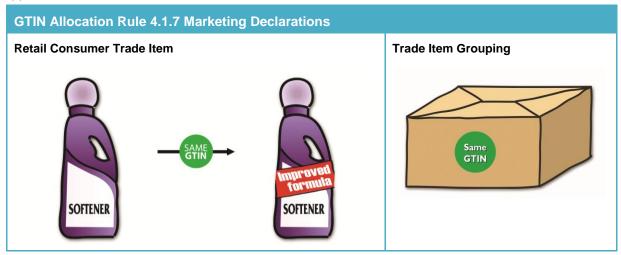


If a certification mark is removed from or added on the trade item package rule 3.6 applies.



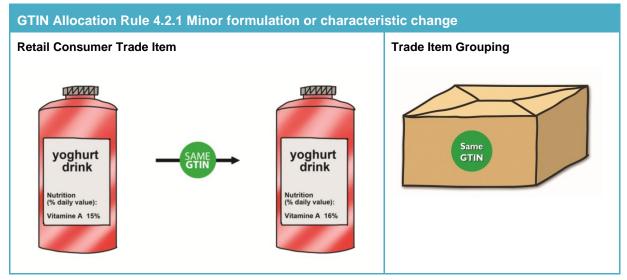


If any other marketing declarations change, not covered under any of the other rules, <u>rule 4.1.7</u> applies:



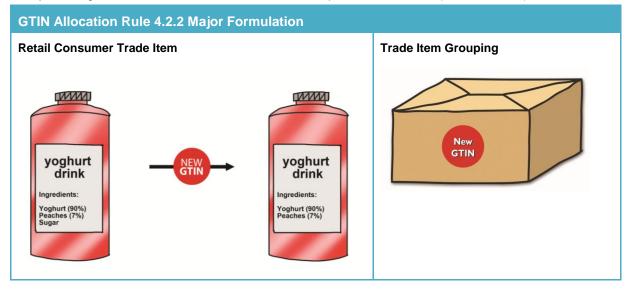
Rules for formulation or characteristics changes

For minor changes in the formula or characteristics of a trade item <u>rule 4.2.1</u> applies:

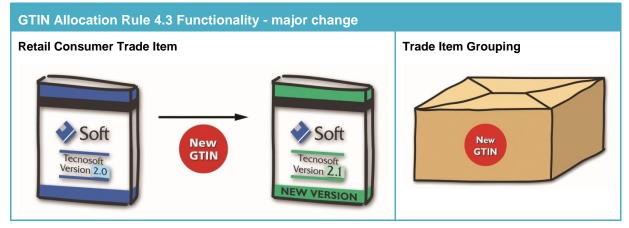




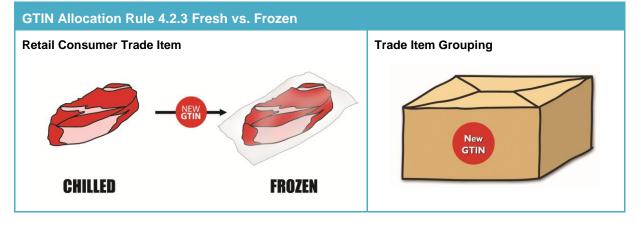
A major change in the formulation of the trade item requires a new GTIN (see rule 4.2.2):



Major changes in the functionality of a trade item also require a new GTIN (see rule 4.3):



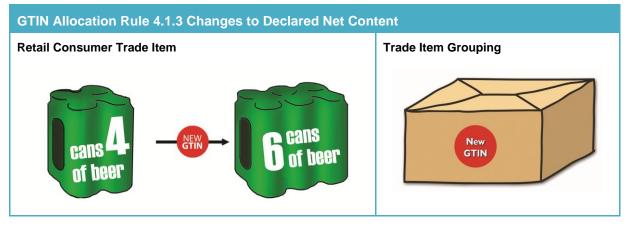
If the trade item refrigeration state changes a new GTIN should be applied as well (see rule 4.2.3):



Rules for changes in grouped retail consumer trade items

Retail consumer trade items may be composed of other retail consumer trade items, identified with their own GTIN. Two main types of groupings exist: 1. uniform groupings of the same trade item, 2. groupings of two or more different trade items (assortments).

If the retail consumer item is a uniform grouping of identical trade items, and the number of contained items differs, <u>rule 4.1.3</u> applies:



Within assortments a further distinction is made between pre-defined assortments, dynamic assortments, and random assortments.

GS1 General Specifications 2.1.1.7 Trade Item Assortments

Pre-defined assortments:

An assortment that comprises a fixed count of two or more different trade items, each identified with a unique GTIN that is declared on the package. The trade items contained within the assortment may be trade items of one or more manufacturers. When an assortment contains items from multiple manufacturers the GTIN requirements for the assortment is the responsibility of the organisation that creates the assortment. Any change in the configuration of the assortment is considered a new trade item.

Dynamic assortments:

An assortment that comprises a fixed count of a changing assortment of two or more different retail consumer trade items, each identified with a unique GTIN. All of the retail consumer trade items and their GTINs will have been communicated to the recipient before trading takes place and are declared on the package. The recipient has accepted that the supplier may change the assortment without any prior notice.

Random assortment:

An assortment that comprises items that are not uniquely identified on the package and are not marked for individual sale (e.g., a bag of individually wrapped lifesavers or colors of tooth brushes).



If the <u>retail consumer item</u> is a pre-defined assortment, and the composition changes, <u>rule 4.4.2</u> applies:



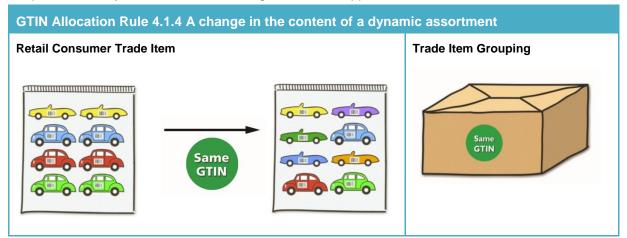
Note: Same GTIN is used for the individual trade items contained in the assortment. A new GTIN is required for the assortment and any levels above the assortment.

A special kind of pre-defined assortment is the <u>combination pack</u>, which is a mix of items usually not sold together. So it is a more ad hoc combination, but with a pre-defined composition. Here <u>rule 4.5</u> applies:



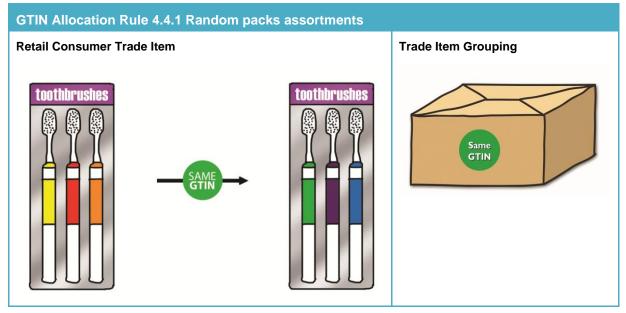


A <u>dynamic assortment</u> is a trade item composed of a varying configuration of trade items. If the composition of a dynamic assortment changes <u>rule 4.1.4</u> applies:



Note: The retailer has accepted that the assortment can change without notice.

A special kind of dynamic assortment is the <u>random assortment</u>, which comprises items that are not uniquely identified on the package and are not marked for individual sale, here <u>rule 4.4.1</u> applies:





Rules for changes in Trade Item Groupings

Trade Item Groupings are composed of retail consumer trade items, identified with their own GTIN. Two types of groupings are distinguished: 1. uniform groupings of the same trade item, 2. groupings of two or more different trade items (assortments).

If the Trade Item Grouping is a uniform grouping of identical trade items, and the number of contained items changes, <u>rule 4.1.1</u> applies:

GTIN Allocation Rule 4.1.1 A different declared count of trade items in a grouping		
Retail Consumer Trade Item	Trade Item Grouping	
same GTIN for the individual trade items contained in the trade item grouping		

If the Trade Item Grouping is an assortment of two or more different trade items, rule 4.4.2 applies:

GTIN Allocation Rule 4.4.2 Changes to a pre-defined assortment		
Retail Consumer Trade Item	Trade Item Grouping	
same GTIN for the individual trade items contained in the trade item grouping		

Note: New GTIN is required for the assortment and any levels above the assortment.



If the way the Trade Item Grouping is packaged on pallets changes rule 3.3 applies:

GTIN Allocation Rule 3.3 New / additional pallet layout to co-exist permanently with the original layout		
Retail Consumer Trade Item	Trade Item Grouping	
same GTIN for the individual trade items contained in the trade item grouping	Same GTIN	

This means the GTIN of the Trade Item Grouping does not change when the higher level pallet configuration is modified.

However, if the pallet itself has a GTIN (i.e. is a trade item), the GTIN of the pallet will need to change when the configuration of the pallet changes.





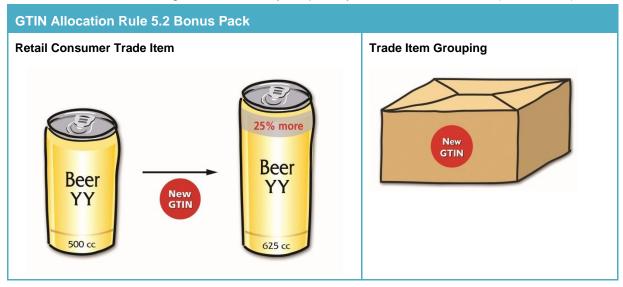
5. Promotional differences

When would I use this?

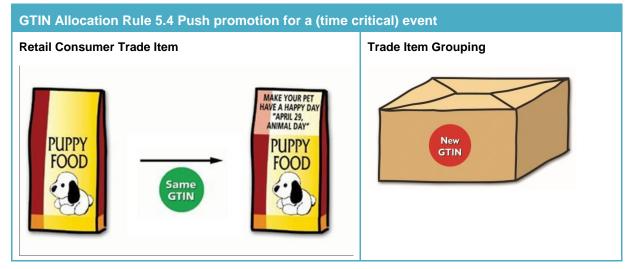
In case changes of a temporary character are made in order to promote the trade item.

General rules

If a trade item is sold in a larger size, even only temporarily, a new GTIN is needed (see rule 5.2):

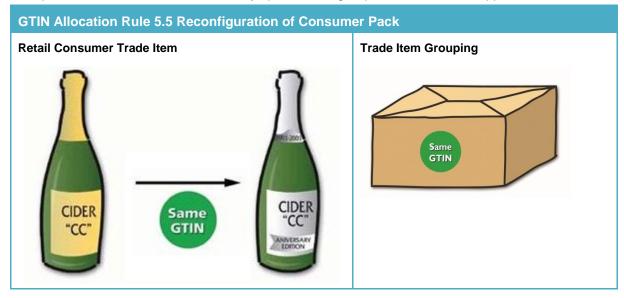


If a promotion variant such as a special edition of the trade item needs to be pushed to the market around a special date or time, the GTIN of the Trade Item Grouping level should be changed (see \underline{rule} <u>5.4</u>):

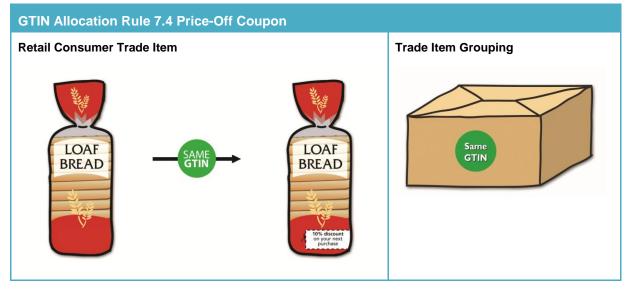




If the promotion variant does not have any specific timing requirements rule 5.5 applies:

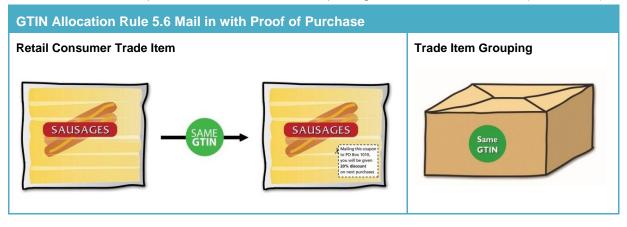


If a price-off coupon is included in the trade item <u>rule 7.4</u> applies:





Also when a mail-in coupon is added to the trade item package no new GTIN is needed (see rule 5.6):



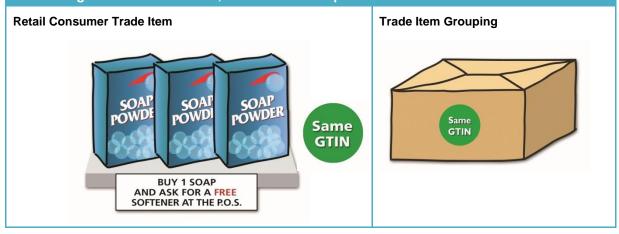
A new trade item that is first sold as sample in order to promote it will get its own GTIN. Later on, if the trade item is fully taken into production and no longer sold as a sample, the same GTIN can be maintained (see <u>rule 5.1</u>).



Rules for free gifts

If upon buying a trade item, another trade item is provided for free, and the item is not physically connected to the purchased trade item and the free item cannot be purchased separately, <u>rule 5.3.1</u> applies:

GTIN Allocation Rule 5.3.1 Free Item - Two retail consumer trade items, not attached or banded together where one item, which cannot be purchased



If upon buying a trade item, another trade item is provided for free, and the item is not physically connected to the purchased trade item and the free item can also be purchased separately, <u>rule 5.3.4</u> applies:





If upon buying a trade item, another trade item is provided for free, and the free item is physically connected to the purchased trade item, <u>rule 5.3.2</u> applies:



Note: If the sample inclusion causes the dimensions or gross weight of the trade item to change with more than 20% a new GTIN is required, <u>see rule 3.1</u>.

If upon buying a trade item, another trade item is provided for free, and the free item is physically contained in the purchased trade item, <u>rule 5.3.3</u> applies:

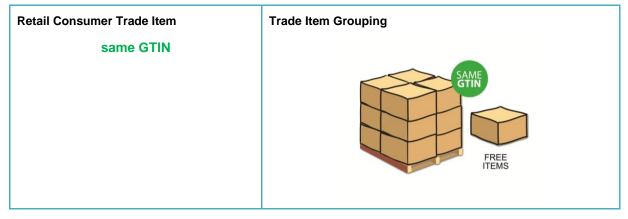




When purchased trade items include related but different items that are provided free of charge \underline{rule} <u>5.7</u> applies:

GTIN Allocation Rule 5.7 Merchandise Sold To Retailer With Additional Free Items		
Retail Consumer Trade Item	Trade Item Grouping	
same GTIN	FREE ITEMS inside cases	

When as part of a purchase more of the same trade item is provided for free, the same GTIN can be used for the additional items:





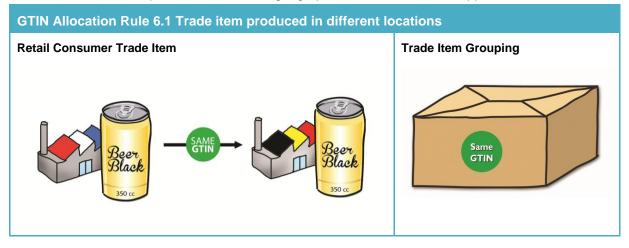
6. Production differences

When would I use this?

In case changes are made to the way the trade item is produced.

Rules

For trade items that are produced in different geographical locations <u>rule 6.1</u> applies:



If different manufacturers produce the same trade item under the brand of a retailer rule 6.2 applies:





7. Price differences

When would I use this?

In case changes are made to the pricing of the trade item.

Rules

If the retail price changes but the price is not present on the trade item package there is no impact on the GTIN (see <u>rule 7.1</u>):



If the retail price changes and is presented on a retailer specific price label rule 7.2 applies:



For any other price changes that are presented on the trade item packaging rule 7.3 applies:





8. Seasonal and vintage differences

When would I use this?

For trade items that have seasonal differences or vintage differences.

Rules for seasonal changes

For trade items that are modified for a specific seasonal event rule 8.1 applies:



Rules for vintage changes

For trade items such as wine and cognac vintage may impact the price, in which case <u>rule 8.2.1</u> applies:





In case the trade item vintage does not affect the price rule 8.2.2 applies:





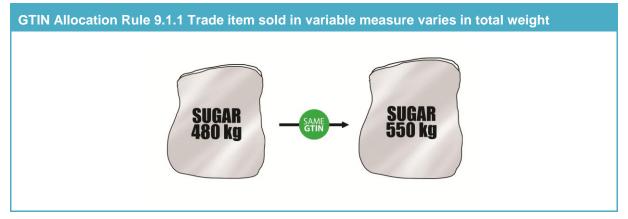
9. Upstream materials

When would I use this?

Upstream suppliers are those companies that typically supply or manufacture trade items that are supplied to other companies for further processing. Examples of such trade items include ingredients and packaging materials, and specific rules apply to such trade items. In these rules the concepts of retail consumer trade item and trade item grouping are not applicable, and only one trade item level is distinguished.

Rules for different logistical size

Variable measure trade items, meaning trade items that are not sold by quantity but by weight, length or volume, <u>rule 9.1.1</u> applies:



The GTIN of the variable measure item (in this example representing 1 kilogram of sugar) does not change, but the variable attribute of the trade item (this example the net weight) does change.

For trade items that are sold by quantity, and have different sizes or undergo a size change, <u>rule 9.1.2</u> applies:



The new material has a different thickness and therefore a new GTIN is needed.



If the trade item size does not change, but one or more of the packaging dimensions change with more than 20%, <u>rule 9.1.3</u> applies:



For smaller changes only changing the way the trade item needs to be handled <u>rule 9.1.4</u> applies.

GTIN Allocation Rule 9.1.4 Same trade item but different handling parameters

same GTIN

Rules for different substance

If the specification of the trade item changes rule 9.2.1 applies.

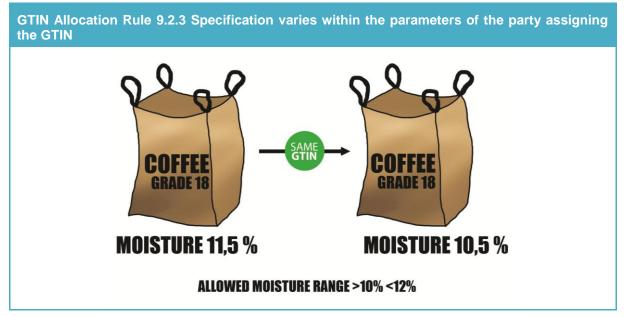




The grade of a trade item is a way to classify trade items by their composition and physical properties. For substantial variations in the grade of a trade item, meaning variations that fall outside of the agreed parameters, rule 9.2.2 applies:



If the formulation or grade vary within the agreed parameters rule 9.2.3 applies.

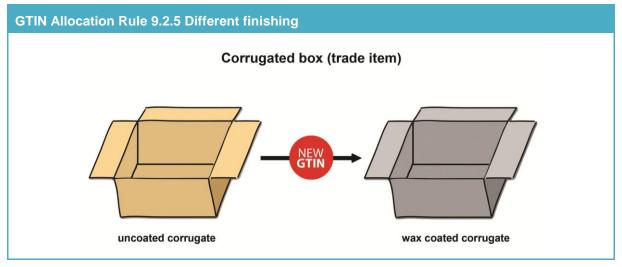




For pre-printed packaging material, in addition to the rules above, when the print design changes <u>rule</u> <u>9.2.4</u> applies:



If for each order the trade item may need to undergo different finishing / conversion steps <u>rule 9.2.5</u> applies:



Rules for different trading partners

When a new supplier will supply the trade item, and the GTIN is assigned by the supplier, rule 9.3.1 applies:

GTIN Allocation Rule 9.3.1 Change of supplier and GTIN assigned by supplier

new GTIN



When a new supplier will supply the trade item, and the GTIN is assigned by the customer, $\underline{rule \ 9.3.2}$ applies:

GTIN Allocation Rule 9.3.2 Change of supplier and GTIN assigned by customer

same GTIN

When a new customer will start buying the trade item, and the GTIN is assigned by the supplier, <u>rule</u> <u>9.3.3</u> applies:

GTIN Allocation Rule 9.3.3 Change of customer and GTIN assigned by supplier

same GTIN

User Guide

10. Fresh foods

When would I use this?

Fresh food trade items that are sold as loose items or that have final packaging / production / labelling steps within the store.

Rules

For trade items that are pre-packed and sold by weight, but contain a different number of portions or units <u>rule 10.1</u> applies:

GTIN Allocation Rule 10.1 Fresh pre-packed package item differs in weight	
Retail Consumer Trade Item	Trade Item Grouping
Net content : 4 pieces	not applicable

For trade items are sold per unit but in parallel also by weight <u>rule 10.2</u> applies:

GTIN Allocation Rule 10.2 Loose produce item is sold as an each (individual piece) then cut and sold weight

Retail Consumer Trade Item
Trade Item Grouping not applicable

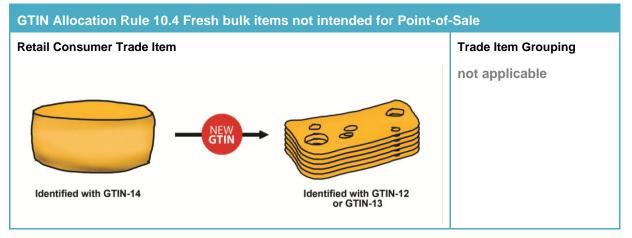
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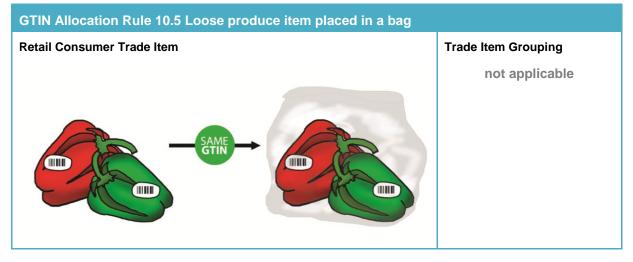
For trade items sold per unit or weight, but in parallel also sold as packed trade items, <u>rule 10.3</u> applies:

GTIN Allocation Rule 10.3 Loose produce item is sold as an each (individual piece) or weight.		
Retail Consumer Trade Item	Trade Item Grouping	
	not applicable	

For trade items that are supplied in bulk, and cut and packaged in the store before selling, <u>rule 10.4</u> applies:



If the consumer places various loose items (sold by piece or weight) in a bag, this bag does not require a new GTIN (see <u>rule 10.5</u>):







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