

Tests and inspections

As an owner or the person making it available for use, you are responsible for making sure the following tests are carried out.

A new inflatable should have an 'initial test' to confirm it complies with BS EN 14960.

Make sure an annual inspection is carried out by a competent person. They should identify the inflatable and blower by their serial numbers and look at any previous inspection reports and certificates. They should also inspect any part of the inflatable and its equipment that may affect its safe operation. Owners can find out how to get their equipment tested from PIPA or ADIPS.

For further guidance, please see:

[www.playinspectors.com/
bouncesafe/](http://www.playinspectors.com/bouncesafe/)

[www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment/
fairgrounds/inflatables.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment/fairgrounds/inflatables.htm)



Bouncy Castles and Play Inflatables: Safety Advice

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Introduction to Bouncy Castles and Inflatables Health and Safety

The purpose of this leaflet is to offer guidance on how to avoid serious accidents when operating a bouncy castle or inflatable play at your premises.

The HSE supports two industry inspection schemes for inflatables run by PIPA and ADiPs. Most play inflatables will therefore display either a numbered PIPA tag or an ADiPs declaration of compliance (DoC) to show they comply with British Standard BS EN 14960.

Before renting, you can use the PIPA and ADiPs websites to check safety tests have been carried out and to find out what to do if the equipment has no PIPA tag or ADiPs DoC. Please be aware that you may be putting the public at risk if your inflatable does not have a PIPA tag or a ADiPs DoC.

Every inflatable operator must have suitable and sufficient insurance cover in place, including Public Liability Insurance. Before hiring, ask to see the company's public liability insurance certificate. As a hirer, you are not required by law to take out your own insurance but you may wish to take out Personal Liability insurance in the event that you are held liable if someone sustains an injury.

If you're buying or hiring any inflatable for private or public use you should make sure it also has instructions on how to operate it safely.

Setting up safely

- No inflatable should be used in winds above 24 mph (or above the maximum specified by the manufacturer)
- No inflatable should be used when internal inflation pressure is below the minimum, or above the maximum specified in the operations manual. Regular measurements of internal inflation should be taken using a suitable pressure measuring device such as a manometer.
- The blowers should be checked regularly to ensure that the fan blades are clear of debris and the non-return flap on the blower outlet is fully functional.
- When using the inflatable outside, all the anchor points must be used, with metal ground stakes at least 380 mm long and 16 mm wide, with a rounded top. They should have a welded metal 'O' or 'D' ring fitted to the end. The operator manual will tell you how many anchor points there should be. Regular checks must be done on the anchor points while operating.
- If ground stakes cannot be used because of the surface, use ballast with anchor points each weighing at least 163 kg and with suitable fixings to attach the guy ropes. The inflatable should be tightly secured to the ground. Alternatively, ground anchor bolts with a load rating of 1600N can be used with suitable fixings to attach the guy ropes. The ground anchor bolts must be installed in line with the manufacturer's installation instructions by a competent person and checked at regular intervals.
- The ropes used to secure the inflatable should be in good condition, never use improvised tow ropes. Where an inflatable is used on ground that would cause injury should the user fall from the device, suitable impact absorbing material should be provided.

Before Use

- Ensure that the correct blower is being used (the blower specification, including output, will be given in the operating manual)
- Ensure that there are no obvious signs of over-tension or sagging of the structure. Also check if the anchor points have been pulled out during inflation

- impact-absorbing mats are in position
- there are no holes or rips in the fabric or seams
- it looks symmetrical – if it looks misshapen or deformed there could be internal problems that make bouncing unpredictable and it should therefore not be used
- to ensure the safety of an inflatable in the event of a sudden loss of power, the deflation rate of the inflatable should be tested before each use by switching the blowers off and observing the inflatable deflate. This should allow sufficient time for users to be safely evacuated, whilst retaining its shape and rigidity so that users do not fall from the inflatable.

Safe use, supervision and monitoring

There should be constant supervision by at least one suitably trained person. Operating instructions must be supplied and should include the following:

- Restrict the number of users on the inflatable at the same time to the limit in the operator manual or on the unit label. Don't exceed the user height limit and keep bigger users separated from smaller ones
 - Make sure users can get on and off safely, with safety matting at the entrance that is no more than 2 inches deep
 - People should not wear shoes or glasses, and should empty their pockets of all sharp or dangerous items
 - Anyone obviously intoxicated should not be allowed on
 - Don't allow users to climb or hang on the walls
 - Regularly check that anchor points are still secure
- When operating the inflatable outside, use an anemometer to measure wind conditions at regular intervals, and visually check for changes in wind direction (such as looking at how the trees are swaying). Make sure you take readings in the direction of the wind.