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British Standard Specification for China tableware

Vaisselle en porcelaine — Spécifications

Porzellangeschirr

Foreword

This revision of BS 5416 has been prepared under the direction of the Furniture and Household Equipment Standards Policy Committee. It supersedes BS 5416 : 1976 which is withdrawn.

There is a wide variety of terms used to describe different types of ceramic tableware, many of which are not well understood. An important class of product is that characterized by low water absorption and a degree of translucency generally known as china in the UK and as porcelain elsewhere. For the purpose of this British Standard the terms 'china' and 'porcelain' are taken as being synonymous. Bone china is a particular type of china which fulfils the requirements set out in this standard but which has, in addition, a distinctive chemical composition which enables it to be precisely identified whenever necessary.

This standard specifies the two principal technical requirements that need to be fulfilled before a product can correctly be called china or porcelain viz. translucency and water absorption, determined by sampling from a consignment. It does not purport to have any relevance in the field of technical or industrial ceramics such as sanitary or electrical ceramics, nor does it cover any other aspects of fitness to purpose. It does not include any requirements for those characteristics which are matters of personal choice or which can be readily assessed by the purchaser at the point of sale.

Attention is drawn to Statutory Instrument 1988 No. 1647 The Ceramic Ware (Safety) Regulations 1988 which limits the amount of lead and cadmium which may be released from ceramic ware for contact with food.

Product certification. Users of this British Standard are advised to consider the desirability of third party certification of product conformity with this British Standard based on testing and continuing surveillance, which may be coupled with assessment of a supplier's quality systems against the appropriate Part of BS 5750.

Enquiries as to the availability of third party certification schemes will be forwarded by BSI to the Association of Certification Bodies. If a third party certification scheme does not already exist, users should consider approaching an appropriate body from the list of Association members.

Compliance with a British Standard does not of itself confer immunity from legal obligations.