12 checks before you approve the factory

Use this list to test whether a factory can repeat a good shipment, not just pass a showroom tour. It covers site identity, audit scope, worker records, machine and chemical controls, traceability and CAPA. It is a buyer checklist, not an audit certificate or legal advice.

#	Check	What to request	Evidence that answers it
1	**Site identity**	Business licence, site plan and actual production address.	Does the address match the site that will make the order?
2	**Audit type and scope**	Social, quality, chemical and product-specific reports.	Which product lines and shifts are included?
3	**Current status**	Report reference, issuing body and scheme database.	Can the report be checked at source and is its date current?
4	**Worker records**	Payroll, attendance, contracts and private interviews.	Do the records reconcile, and were workers interviewed privately?
5	**Fire and egress**	Exit routes, alarms, drill records and maintenance.	Are exits clear and are drills evidenced, not just installed?
6	**Machine safety**	Guards, interlocks, lockout and maintenance records.	Are the guards and interlocks working on the machines used for your item?
7	**Dust control**	Extraction, filters, cleaning schedule and monitoring.	Is dust controlled at source, with maintenance and filter logs?
8	**Chemicals**	Inventory, SDS, segregation, labels and training.	Do the SDS match the actual inventory and storage?
9	**Traceability**	Purchase records, material declarations and batch IDs.	Can a finished carton be traced to material batch and inspection records?
10	**Foreign-body control**	Detection or screening step, reject log and response.	Is there a defined control step for your specification?
11	**Inspection**	AQL plan, critical dimensions, finish and defect log.	Does inspection cover the dimensions and finish you will approve?
12	**CAPA and change control**	CAPA log, owner, due date, closure evidence and change notice.	Is every finding owned, dated and verified before shipment?

Use the evidence, not the logo. A certificate image is a starting point. Confirm the legal entity, site, scope, date and current status with the body that issued the report. If the report names a different site or product, it does not answer the question.

How to score each line

Status	What it means	Next step
Pass	Evidence seen and it matches the site, item and date.	Keep a copy in the supplier file.
Partial	Evidence is pending, out of date or covers a narrower scope.	Request the gap and set a date before approval.
Fail	No evidence, evidence for another site or product, or a critical control is not working.	Do not approve. Open a CAPA and verify closure.

What to collect before the visit

Ask for the pack before scheduling the audit. A factory that can assemble it quickly is easier to review and less likely to hide a scope gap.

Area	Document or record to request
Legal entity	Business licence, factory address and site plan.
Audit reports	Social, quality and chemical reports with site, scope and date visible.
People records	Roster, payroll and attendance sample for the period under review.
Chemical control	Inventory, current SDS, storage map and training records.
Equipment	Machine list, calibration records and maintenance log.
Quality system	Inspection plan, AQL level, measurement records and defect log.
Traceability	Material purchase records, batch IDs and finished-carton mapping.
Corrective action	CAPA log with owner, due date, evidence and verification date.
Subcontracting	Process flow, subcontractor list and change-notification rule.

CAPA record: close the finding, not the email

A corrective action is not closed because someone says it is. Record the finding, the root cause, the action, the owner, the due date and the evidence. Add a later verification date and result. Keep the same record for the next audit.

Finding	Root cause	Corrective / preventive action	Owner	Due	Verified

Five questions to ask when the pack looks complete

1. Does the legal entity, site and production line match the goods you are buying?
2. Does the test report identify the exact item, material, coating and standard version?
3. Can a finished carton be traced to material batch and inspection records?
4. Is every finding owned, dated and verified, with evidence of closure?
5. Has the factory told you, in writing, when a site, line or subcontractor changes?

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This checklist is a buyer aid, not a certification, legal opinion or guarantee. Audit schemes, standards and local law change. Verify current requirements with the issuing body and your importer before placing an order.