

UK / EU Venue Permit Checklist

For Exhibition Stands — Creative Garage LLP

Your essential guide to exhibiting at NEC Birmingham, ExCeL London, Messe Frankfurt, DWTC Dubai and other major venues.

BEFORE YOU BOOK YOUR STAND

- Confirm stand size and hall allocation with the organiser
 - Review the organiser's Exhibitor Manual (issued 8–12 weeks before show)
 - Check if your stand requires a structural engineer's sign-off (typically required for stands over 4m high or with suspended elements)
 - Confirm whether the venue is a union labour venue (NEC, ExCeL) — this affects build crew requirements
 - Verify move-in and move-out dates and times
 - Check if a shell scheme is included or if you are building a space-only stand
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STAND DESIGN APPROVALS

- Submit stand design drawings to the organiser for approval (usually required 6–8 weeks before show)
- Ensure drawings include: floor plan, elevations, materials specification, and electrical layout
- Confirm maximum build height permitted in your hall
- Check if your stand has a second storey — additional structural calculations and fire safety review required
- Obtain organiser's written design approval before ordering materials

HEALTH & SAFETY DOCUMENTATION (UK)

- Prepare a Risk Assessment for the build, show, and breakdown phases
 - Prepare a Method Statement for stand construction
 - Appoint a competent Site Supervisor for the build
 - Ensure all contractors hold valid CSCS cards (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) — mandatory at NEC, ExCeL, and most UK venues
 - Confirm PAT testing certificates for all electrical equipment brought to site
 - Ensure fire extinguisher is available on stand if required by the organiser
 - Check if a fire risk assessment is required for your stand type
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ELECTRICAL & TECHNICAL PERMITS

- Submit electrical order form to the venue (not the organiser) — venues manage their own power supply
 - Ensure all electrical work is carried out by a qualified electrician (Part P certified in UK)
 - Obtain electrical sign-off certificate from venue electrician before opening
 - Check AV/IT requirements — some venues require advance booking for rigging, internet, and audio
 - Confirm if you need a rigging permit for hanging banners or overhead structures
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CONTRACTOR ACCREDITATION

- Register all contractors with the organiser's contractor accreditation system
- Submit contractor details (company name, contact, insurance) to the organiser

- Ensure all contractors have valid Public Liability Insurance (minimum £5 million in UK)
 - Obtain contractor badges / passes for all build crew
 - Check vehicle access and loading bay booking requirements
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MATERIALS & LOGISTICS

- Confirm venue's approved materials list (some venues restrict certain adhesives, paints, and fixings)
 - Check if carpet is included in shell scheme or needs to be ordered separately
 - Book freight forwarding if shipping materials internationally
 - Confirm customs documentation requirements for materials entering UK / EU
 - Arrange storage for empty cases and packaging during the show
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DWTC DUBAI — ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Submit stand design to DWTC Safety & Operations team for approval
 - Ensure all contractors are registered with DWTC's approved contractor list
 - Obtain DWTC contractor passes (separate from organiser passes)
 - Confirm working hours — DWTC has specific build and breakdown time restrictions
 - Check if a NOC (No Objection Certificate) is required for your stand type
 - Ensure all materials comply with UAE fire safety regulations
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MESSE FRANKFURT — ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Submit stand design to Messe Frankfurt's Technical Services team
- All electrical work must be carried out by Messe Frankfurt's approved electricians

- Confirm German technical standards compliance (DIN standards apply)
- Book cleaning services through Messe Frankfurt (mandatory for most halls)
- Arrange waste disposal — exhibitors are responsible for stand waste

TIMELINE SUMMARY



Milestone	Timeframe Before Show
Confirm stand space and size	6–12 months
Appoint exhibition contractor	4–6 months
Submit stand design for approval	6–8 weeks
Submit contractor accreditation	4–6 weeks
Submit electrical order	4–6 weeks
Book freight and logistics	4–6 weeks
Finalise Risk Assessment & Method Statement	3–4 weeks
Receive design approval confirmation	3–4 weeks
Move-in / build	As per show schedule

NEED HELP NAVIGATING VENUE REQUIREMENTS?

Creative Garage handles all permit submissions, contractor accreditation, and compliance documentation on your behalf — so you can focus on your exhibition goals.

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