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Transporting, Handling and Storing Your Gas Cylinders

How many gas cylinders do you get from BOC each year? Even if it's only one or two, you'll want to move, handle and store them safely. Using pressurised gas requires care and knowledge, and gas cylinders are large, heavy and relatively unstable, physically. This information sheet gives you an essential guide to the fundamentals of transporting, handling and storing your gas safely.

Always transport your gas cylinders in an open or well-ventilated vehicle!

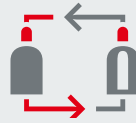


Transporting your gas

No matter how short your journey it's essential that:

- You refer to the British Compressed Gases Association Guidance Note 27 (GN27)
- You move the gas cylinder(s) in an open or well-ventilated vehicle
- The cylinder(s) are secured and do not stick out beyond the sides or the end of the vehicle
- Acetylene and propane cylinders are transported upright
- Cylinder valves are closed with no equipment connected
- All cylinder caps and plugs are fitted
- You carry a 2kg fire extinguisher
- You are carrying safety data sheets (SDS) for the gas in transit.

It is also important to know what gas you are carrying and that you are trained in potential hazards and appropriate emergency procedures. The Safety Data Sheet which is supplied with your gas cylinder will provide vital information about the product, including advice on transportation.



Handling your gas

On arrival at your destination, you should:

- Unload cylinders as soon as possible
- Never roll a cylinder along the ground. It can obscure or deface the description label and damage or even open the valve
- Use a cylinder trolley, having first checked the load is secured with no equipment attached
- Always wear protective gloves and footwear and avoid slippery or sloping surfaces
- Never turn your back on a free-standing cylinder, as they are not particularly stable
- Never attempt to catch a falling cylinder. Just get out of the way!

It is important to understand the different valves, caps and regulators on each cylinder:

- All cylinders containing gas at high pressure are fitted with a valve which must never be tampered with or removed



- PLEASE NOTE: valve outlets for flammable gases (e.g. acetylene or propane) are screwed anti-clockwise to tighten; but valve outlets for non-flammable gases (e.g. oxygen, argon) are screwed clockwise
- Each valve outlet is threaded to receive a pressure regulator suitable for the gas type (available from BOC Gas & Gear outlets). These should be screwed in by hand and then tightened with a regulator spanner.

Some important dos and don'ts:

- When cylinder valves are open or in use, a cylinder key should remain in the valve or nearby in case of emergency
- NEVER leave an opened spindle against the backstop; turn it back at least half a turn to avoid seizure in an open position
- With all cylinders, NEVER tamper with or attempt to repair them, or disguise damage, or mix gases in a cylinder or transfer (decant) gas to another cylinder or scrap a cylinder you don't own.



Storing your gas

Any gas cylinder on your premises must be stored safely:

- In a well-ventilated, covered area, preferably outdoors, on a level, well-drained surface
- Vertically and well-secured to prevent toppling
- Segregated according to their different properties (flammable, inert, etc.)
- Toxic gases must be stored separately
- Store your gases away from other materials such as fuel, oil, paint or corrosive liquids
- Keep empty cylinders apart from full ones when stored
- If you are storing gases that are liquefied or heavier-than-air, beware pockets of gas forming at low levels such as in drains, basements or ducts.

You should refer to the British Compressed Gases Association Code of Practice 44 (CP44) for information on safe cylinder storage.



Resources

The BCGA has published numerous guidance notes, codes of practice and information sheets. Visit bcga.co.uk to find out more about gas cylinder safety including:

- Guidance for the carriage of gas cylinders on vehicles (GN27)
- The safe use of individual portable or mobile cylinder gas supply equipment (CP47)
- Information for customers collecting gas cylinders (TIS8)

View and download BOC safety data sheets (SDS) on our website at boconline.co.uk/sds



This leaflet is part of the welder's toolkit: whether you need welding tips, gases advice or safety guidance, you'll find it in the toolkit!

For more welding advice, visit boconline.co.uk/welders-toolkit

From the welder's toolkit: you may also like...

- 10 safety tips for working with industrial gas cylinders
- Looking after your cylinder: how to prevent leaks
- Best practice for the safe transport of cylinders