

Nine Things You Might Not Know about the Union Label

It's Old: The first modern union label was created by the Carpenter's Eight-Hour League in San Francisco, which used a stamp in 1869 for use on products made by factories employing men on the eight- (as opposed to ten-) hour day.

It serves multiple purposes: protection against anti- or non-union shops that might otherwise profess union working conditions; part of a public-relations campaign to induce customers to buy union-made products; a sign of good workmanship and quality standards; a badge of union prestige to attract new members; and a warning against trespass by competitive unions.



Union label is also called a union bug: most of us have seen these on items made by union print shops (also known as Allied Printing Trades Council).



Many UAW vehicles have UAW labels: whether on a window or in the door panel, many UAW vehicles have our bug. You can always determine if your vehicle is union made by checking out the UAW buying guide on uaw.org/cars.

Look for the union label: this is the most famous jingle in the labor movement and was sung in a commercial widely seen in the late seventies by ILGWU members (International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, now UNITE HERE). Can you remember all the words?



They are everywhere: from washing machines to baked goods, from shoes to skyscrapers, from clothing to barber shops. They are evidence of quality goods and services produced by proud American workers. Find other union goods at unionlabel.org.

Buy Union week: the ten days following Thanksgiving are designated by the AFL-CIO as "Buy Union" week to encourage union members to look for union-made goods and services when buying Holiday gifts and other items.

Union made not the same as Made in the USA: Made in the USA is a label regulated by the Federal Trade Commission but these labels can be put on goods made in American Samoa or the Northern Mariana Islands – both places with a history of labor violations.

Is it still relevant today? "Union made" means the workers have a voice in their wages and working conditions. We "vote with our wallets" every time we make a purchase, and buying union made is a way to support workplace fairness and building the middle class.

