

Plush Toy Manufacturer Selection Checklist

How to use this tool: Use this checklist when evaluating any plush manufacturer. Score each potential partner from **1 (Poor) to 5 (Excellent)** on each criterion, then total the scores at the bottom to determine their suitability as a manufacturing partner.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE (1-5)
<p>1. Certifications verified</p> <p>Current ASTM F963 and CPSIA test reports provided within 24 hours of request.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>○ ○ ○ ○ ○</p>
<p>2. MOQ fits your stage</p> <p>If you need 500 units, a 5,000-unit MOQ manufacturer is not your partner.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>○ ○ ○ ○ ○</p>
<p>3. Sample quality matches claims</p> <p>Order a paid sample before committing. Photos on a website mean nothing.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>○ ○ ○ ○ ○</p>
<p>4. Communication response time</p> <p>Do they reply within 24 hours on business days? Slow communication during the sales process predicts slow communication during production.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>○ ○ ○ ○ ○</p>
<p>5. Client references provided</p> <p>Ask for 2-3 references from brands similar to yours (similar size, similar product type). Call them.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>○ ○ ○ ○ ○</p>
<p>6. Factory transparency</p> <p>Will they share factory location, photos, and audit reports? "Trade secret" excuses are a red flag.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>○ ○ ○ ○ ○</p>
<p>7. Packaging capabilities</p> <p>Can they handle your packaging requirements in-house or through a trusted partner?</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>○ ○ ○ ○ ○</p>
<p>8. Design-to-production timeline</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SCORE (1-5)
Get a written timeline with milestones: pattern approval → prototype → pre-production sample → production → QC → shipping.	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
9. Payment terms Standard is 30% deposit / 70% before shipment. Be wary of 100% upfront demands.	1 2 3 4 5 <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
10. Defect policy What happens if you receive defective units? Standard is 1-3% overage (extra units to cover defects) or credit on next order.	1 2 3 4 5 <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
TOTAL SCORE:	

Score Interpretation

40 - 50 points

Strong partner — proceed with a trial order

30 - 39 points

Acceptable — negotiate weaknesses before committing

Below 30 points

Keep looking — the risks are too high