

Physical Standards for Commercial Flats

Overview

Flat Dimensions		
	Minimum*	Maximum
Length	11-1/2 inches	15 inches
Height	6-1/8 inches	12 inches
Thickness	1/4 inch	3/4 inch

* Flats exceed at least one of these dimensions

For physical standards of automation flats, see [Quick Service Guide 201d](#).

In addition to shape, the Postal Service classifies mailpieces by the way they are prepared. These classifications are based on how efficiently your mailpieces can be processed on Postal Service equipment. The Postal Service classifies commercial flats as either nonautomation or automation flats or machinable and nonmachinable for Periodicals.

A flat meets automation standards and qualifies for automation prices if it meets the specific addressing, barcoding, and design standards. Automation flats must have an Intelligent Mail barcode with a delivery point routing code.

Dimensions, Shape, Flexibility, and Uniform Thickness (201.4.0)

Dimensions:

- Minimum: more than 11-1/2 inches long, or more than 6-1/8 inches high, or more than 1/4 inch thick.
- Maximum: 15 inches long, 12 inches high, and 3/4 inch thick.

The length of a flat-size mailpiece is the longest dimension. The height is the dimension perpendicular to the length.

Shape: rectangular, with four square corners, or with finished corners that do not exceed a radius of 0.125 inch (1/8 inch).

Flexibility and deflection: flat-size pieces must meet flexibility criteria in [201.4.3](#) and the deflection criteria in [201.4.6](#). Flat-size pieces mailed at high density, high density plus, saturation, and basic carrier route prices are not required to meet deflection standards. All other flats not meeting deflection standards are subject to prices as stated in [DMM 201.4.7](#).

Uniform thickness: the contents must be uniformly thick so that any bumps, protrusions, or irregularities do not cause more than 1/4 inch variance in thickness ([201.4.4](#)). When determining variance in thickness, exclude the outer edges of a mailpiece (1 inch from each edge) when the contents do not extend to the edges.

Mailpieces that do not meet the standards for flexibility in [201.4.3](#), for uniform thickness in [201.4.4](#), or for polywrap in [201.4.5](#), must pay applicable prices as follows:

- First-Class Mail—parcel prices.
- USPS Marketing Mail—parcel prices.
- Bound Printed Matter—parcel prices.

Presorted Nonautomation Flats (201.5.0)

Maximum weight:

- First-Class Mail: 13 ounces.
- USPS Marketing Mail: less than 16 ounces.
- Bound Printed Matter: 15 pounds.

Automation Flats (201.6.0)

Flats may qualify for the automation discount based on the physical standards in [201.6.0](#).

See [Quick Service Guide 201d](#), Designing Flats for Automated Processing, for an overview.

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**Quick Service
Guides**

First-Class Mail

See Quick Service Guides:

[230d Nonautomation Flats](#)

[230e Automation Flats](#)

USPS Marketing Mail

See Quick Service Guides:

[240e Nonautomation Flats](#)

[240f Automation Flats](#)

[240g Carrier Route Flats](#)

Bound Printed Matter

See Quick Service Guide:

[260a Flats](#)

Media Mail and Library Mail

See Quick Service Guide:

[270a Presorted Flats](#)

Periodicals

See Quick Service Guides:

[207d Nonmachinable Flats](#)

[207f Barcoded \(Automation\) Flats](#)

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