



POSTAL CUSTOMER GUIDE



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OVERVIEW OF GUIDE

Welcome to the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). For more than 245 years, our mission has been to serve the American people and, through the universal service commitment, bind our nation together by maintaining and operating our unique, vital, and resilient infrastructure.

This guide explains the domestic and international products and services for mailing and shipping available for individuals, businesses, and organizations. The Postal Service offers several options for domestic and international mailing and shipping for retail and commercial services. Additional commercial product and service options beyond what is covered in this guide may be available. For more information contact the Mailing and Shipping Solution Center (MSSC) at 1-877-672-0007 or MSSC@usps.gov.

For the complete domestic and international mailing and shipping standards, see the [Domestic Mail Manual \(DMM\)](#) and the [International Mail Manual \(IMM\)](#) on the [Postal Explorer](#) website. The [Quick Service Guides](#), also located on Postal Explorer, provide brief overviews of mailing and shipping standards on a variety of topics.

Plan Your Mailing or Shipment

To send a successful mailing or shipment, carefully consider the following steps:



Determine What You Are Sending

Services are first determined by the **shape and content** of what you are sending.



Prepare Your Mailpieces

Your **careful preparation** of your mail and packages is essential for the Postal Service to process it for timely delivery.



Determine Number of Items

A wide range of retail and commercial mailing and shipping options are available for any **quantity** of mail or packages.



Choose Additional Services

Extra services can provide additional **protection and delivery information**.



Choose Mailing or Shipping Service

Various **mailing and shipping services** are available for you to choose from depending on the shape, weight, and content of your mail or packages, along with the desired speed of delivery.



Choose Payment Method

The Postal Service offers several options to **pay for and apply postage** to your mail and packages.



DETERMINE WHAT YOU ARE SENDING

Shape

Knowing the **shape** of your mailpiece or package determines the price you will pay. The Postal Service classifies the shape of your mailpiece or package by its **dimensions**. Once a mailpiece exceeds the maximum length, height, or thickness of a shape, it automatically gets classified as the next largest shape. The table below provides domestic shape limitations. International shape limitations vary from domestic shape limitations and are set forth in the [International Mail Manual \(IMM\)](#).

Shape		Length	Height	Width
Postcards* Often the least expensive way to send business correspondence, advertising, invitations, and business reply mail.	minimum maximum	5-inch min. 6-inch max.	3-½-inch min. 4-¼-inch max.	0.007-inch min. 0.009-inch Automation min. 0.016-inch max.
Letters Envelopes and folded pieces, such as announcements, bills, and newsletters.	minimum maximum	5-inch min. 11-½-inch max.	3-½-inch min. 6-⅞-inch max.	0.007-inch min. 0.009-inch Automation min. 0.25-inch max.
Large Envelopes (Flats) Large envelopes and flat rectangular mailpieces, such as magazines, newspapers, catalogs, circulars, or important documents that should not be folded.	minimum maximum	11-½-inch max. 15-inch max.	6-⅞-inch min. 12-inch max.	0.25-inch min. 0.75-inch max
Packages (Parcels) Items that are not postcards, letters, or large envelopes (flats), such as thick envelopes, thick or rigid books, goods, small or large boxes, and poster tubes.	<p>Domestic Domestic packages have a maximum length plus girth of 108 inches (130 inches for USPS Ground Advantage).</p> <p>Packages must be large enough to hold the required delivery address, return address, mailing labels, postage, barcode, endorsements, and other mail markings on the address side of the package. All pieces 1/4 inch thick or less must be a minimum of 5 inches in length, 3-1/2 inches in height, and 0.007 inch in thickness.</p> <p>Packages over 70 pounds and/or over 130 inches in girth are not shippable.</p> <p>International size and weight limits vary by product and country.</p> <p>Domestic shipping size and weight limits vary by product. For more information for commercial packages, see the Domestic Mail Manual, 201.7.3 and 201.7.5.</p>			

* For commercial mailers, larger-sized postcards have a maximum size of 6 inches in length and 9 inches in height. Pieces over 6 inches in length or 4.25 inches in height must be at least 0.009 inch thick.

Unusual Shapes and Sizes

Postcards, Letters, and Large Envelopes (Flats)

Sometimes a mailpiece requires additional postage because it is a certain shape or size that is difficult to process on mail sorting machines (nonmachinable). Common examples that make a mailpiece nonmachinable include:

Postcards and Letters

- Materials or items, such as coins or keys, that cause uneven thickness.
- Closure devices such as strings, wax seals, or buttons.
- Items that are polybagged, polywrapped, or enclosed in any plastic material.
- Square items.

Large Envelopes (Flats)

- Materials that are too rigid and cannot be easily bent.
- Materials that are not uniformly thick.

Packages

Packages are not just boxes. If a mailpiece isn't a postcard, letter, or a flat (large envelope), then it's a package. Packages can be in corrugated boxes or soft packages such as bubble mailers or polywrap. If packages are prepared so that they can be processed on Postal Service equipment, then they are easier to process and deliver, making them more cost effective to ship. Packages that are nonstandard in shape and size can require additional handling. To ensure packages are not subject to additional fees and a longer delivery window, they must not be:

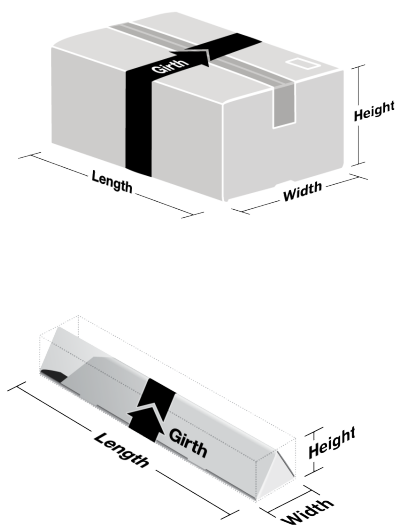
- Greater than 22 inches long x 18 inches width x 15 inches high.
- Nonstandard in shape regardless of shape.
- Packaged improperly.

See the [Domestic Mail Manual, 101](#) for more information.

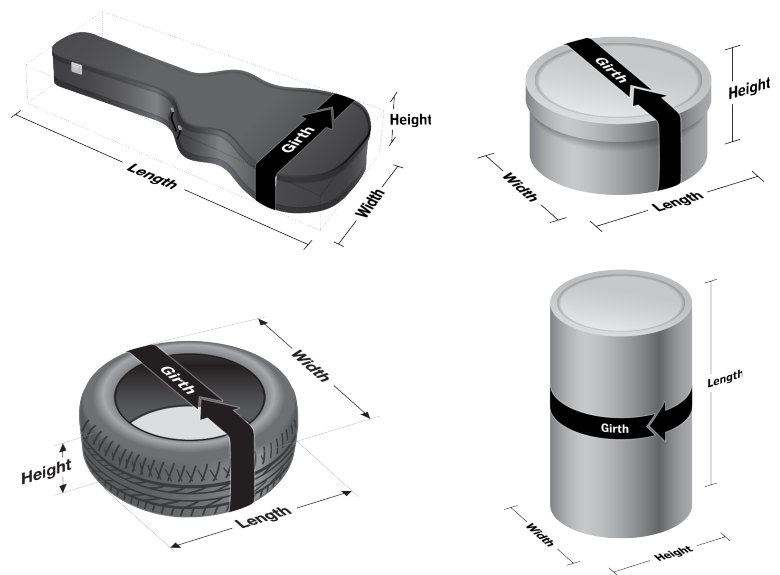
Please refer to section [Prepare Your Mailpiece and Packages](#) for more information.

Use this guide for measuring packages:

Standard packages.



Nonstandard packages.



Not Everything Can Be Mailed or Shipped

For regulatory and safety reasons, some items cannot be mailed or shipped and are therefore deemed nonmailable. Items such as alcoholic beverages, ammunition, drug paraphernalia, and explosives (including fireworks) can never be mailed or shipped. Intentional depositing of nonmailable matter that is outwardly or of its own force dangerous or injurious to life, health, or property is a crime punishable by fines, penalties, or even imprisonment.

Some items are mailed or shipped in limited quantities and others may require special permissions and packaging. These items can include live animals, fresh fruits and vegetables, plants, firearms, aerosol cans, liquids and powders, lithium batteries, tobacco and tobacco products, and electronic cigarettes.

Please refer to [Publication 52 – Hazardous, Restricted, and Perishable Mail](#) for more information.

- Metallic mercury and devices containing metallic mercury are always prohibited by USPS. This includes antique items such as thermometers, barometers, blood pressure monitors, and similar devices.

International Mail and Packages

All items that are nonmailable domestically cannot be mailed or shipped internationally. However, many items that are mailable or shippable in domestic mail are not allowed to be mailed internationally. See Chapter 6 of [Publication 52 – Hazardous, Restricted, and Perishable Mail](#) and the [Individual Country Listings \(ICLs\)](#) in the [International Mail Manual \(IMM\)](#) for specific prohibitions and restrictions. The list of prohibitions and restrictions provided in the ICLs are based on information furnished by the countries concerned. Articles that are prohibited by the destination country cannot be mailed or shipped and restricted items are subject to the import requirements of that country. A country may return or seize mail and packages containing articles prohibited or restricted within that country, whether or not notice of such prohibition or restriction has been provided to or published by the Postal Service.

- Regardless of any statement in this guide or the statement of any employee of the United States Postal Service, you are responsible for ensuring compliance with domestic, international, and individual country rules and regulations for mailing or shipping. See [Domestic Mail Manual, 607.1.1](#) and [International Mail Manual, 112](#) for additional details.

Content

Knowing the **content** of what you are sending can help determine the best USPS service for the best price. Sometimes what you send may **restrict** your available USPS mailing and shipping services. Certain items must be sent using a specific service. For example, correspondence or financial documents mailed in letters or large envelopes (flats) must be mailed by First-Class Mail, Priority Mail, or Priority Mail Express services. Sometimes what you send may **expand** your available USPS mailing and shipping services. For example, advertisements for a business can be mailed by either First-Class Mail or USPS Marketing Mail services.

Personal and Business Mail

This includes personal correspondence, personally identifiable information (PII), bills and payments (remittances), statements of accounts, personal communications, handwritten or typewritten material, merchandise, and items of expedited nature.

Advertising

Advertising is any volume mailing that consists of marketing and/or advertising materials. Common examples include flyers, circulars, newsletters, bulletins, catalogs, product samples, and promotional materials.

Media, Books, and Other Educational Materials

Media, books, and other educational materials can include digital media such as videocassettes, DVDs, Blu-Rays, CD-ROMs, books, and films. Educational materials include educational charts, textbooks, and standardized testing materials.

Newspapers and Publications

Newspapers and publications are mail that has the primary purpose of transmitting information. This mail generally includes magazines, newspapers, and newsletters.





DETERMINE NUMBER OF ITEMS

The number of items you are sending will also determine the price you pay. The Postal Service categorizes mail and packages as “retail” or “commercial” mail.

Choosing Between Retail and Commercial Mailing and Package Services

“Retail” means that you pay the full postage price, for example, when you put a First-Class Mail Postage stamp on a letter. The Postal retail network provides easy and efficient access to deposit your items into the mail. You can send any number of mail or packages using retail services. Even when you have a large quantity of mail or packages, using a retail mailing or shipping service may be your best option for ease and convenience.

“Commercial” refers to larger quantities of mail or packages prepared for mailing and shipping at reduced prices. The commercial mailing and shipping programs require you to apply for a mailing permit, use a postage evidencing system, prepare your items to Postal specifications, and/or meet minimum volume requirements. Mailing permit users pay an annual fee for each class of mail. As a guideline, if you are mailing or shipping a few hundred pieces at a time, a few times a year, or if you plan to make a large, one-time mailing or shipping, commercial mail may be a good deal for you.

Even if your mailing or shipment has the required number of mail or packages to qualify for a commercial price, you still must perform some of the work the Postal Service would normally do. When deciding whether to undertake a commercial mailing or shipment, you should consider:

- **Your technology:** Your technology and equipment, such as computers and software, will influence the discount services you can use and the time it will take you to complete the work.
- **Your budget:** The cost of designing and printing your mail or packages and obtaining a mailing list adds to the amount of money you spend on mailing or shipping, even before you purchase postage.

As your business grows, your resources may allow you to take advantage of additional discounts and incentives. In addition to being properly addressed and prepared, commercial mail and packages must be entered at a Business Mail Entry Unit (BMEU), which may be a retail Post Office facility or a dedicated commercial mail facility. Your local BMEU office can help you decide if commercial mailing or shipping is the right business choice for you. Use the [District Business Mail Entry Locator](#) on the [PostalPro](#) website to locate your nearest BMEU or contact the Mailing and Shipping Solution Center (MSSC) at 1-877-672-0007 or MSSC@usps.gov.

Apply For a Mailing Permit

To become a commercial mailer or shipper using permit imprint, you must apply for a mailing permit. You can apply online through the [Business Customer Gateway](#) webpage. You can also apply by downloading and completing [PS Form 3615 – Mailing Permit Application and Customer Profile](#). Copies are also available from your BMEU or Post Office facility. Once complete, submit the form to your BMEU or Post Office facility and present a primary form of photo identification (and in certain instances a secondary form of photo identification). You will need to pay an annual mailing fee when you turn in your application. If you are applying to mail using a permit imprint to pay for postage, there will be an additional fee.

You must hold a permit and pay an annual mailing fee at every Post Office facility where you want to enter and pay for commercial mail or packages, unless you enroll in the [Mail Anywhere](#) program on the [PostalPro](#) website. To keep your permit imprint account active, you must send a commercial mailing or shipment at least once every 2 years. If your account becomes inactive, you will have to pay the application fee again to begin mailing or shipping. Remember, a mailing permit is “permission to mail or ship,” regardless of how you pay for postage. See the [Choose Payment Method](#) section for more information.

If you have questions about commercial mailing and shipping, or to speak to a Mailpiece Design Analyst, contact the Mailing and Shipping Solution Center (MSSC) at 1-877-672-0007 or MSSC@usps.gov.

Nonprofits

Nonprofit USPS Marketing Mail prices are available for nonprofit organizations who qualify and are authorized as such by the Postal Service. You must first apply for authorization at your local Post Office facility and adhere to the content restrictions associated with Nonprofit USPS Marketing Mail. To learn more, see [Publication 417 – Nonprofit USPS Marketing Mail Eligibility: Nonprofit and Other Qualified Organizations](#).





CHOOSE MAILING OR SHIPPING SERVICE

Several mailing or shipping services are available to fit your needs.

Domestic Mailing and Shipping

Content	Shape		
	Packages	Flats	Postcards & Letters
	Personal and Business Mail USPS Ground Advantage ♦▲ Priority Mail Express ♦▲ Priority Mail ♦▲ Parcel Select ▲	Priority Mail Express ♦▲ Priority Mail ♦▲ First-Class Mail ♦▲	Priority Mail Express ♦▲ Priority Mail ♦▲ First-Class Mail ♦▲
	Advertising Marketing Mail ▲ Bound Printed Matter ▲	Marketing Mail ▲ Bound Printed Matter ▲	Marketing Mail ▲
	Media, Books & Other Educational Materials Media Mail ♦▲ Library Mail* ♦▲ Bound Printed Matter ▲	Media Mail ♦▲ Library Mail* ♦▲ Bound Printed Matter ▲	
Newspapers & Publications		Periodicals ▲	Periodicals** ▲

Key: Retail ♦ Commerical ▲ *Must be an authorized organization **Letters only

For more information on delivery times, see the [Service Standards Map](#) on the [PostalPro](#) website.

International Mailing and Shipping

	Fastest Delivery Fast delivery for your most important mail and packages.	Affordable Options Value-priced shipping with options.	Best for Documents or Printed Materials Only Options for sending personal correspondence, documents, books, or other printed materials.
Service	Priority Mail Express International ♦ ▲	Priority Mail International ♦ ▲	First-Class Package International Service ♦ ▲
	You're sending important items that need to arrive in under a week. ¹	You're sending items to recipients virtually anywhere in the world.	First-Class Mail International ♦ ▲
			IPA (letters & large envelopes) ▲
			ISAL (letters & large envelopes) ▲
			International Priority Airmail (IPA) [Packets] ▲
			International Surface Air Lift (ISAL) [Packets] ▲
			You're sending items with a value of \$400 or less and weight 4 lbs. or less. ²
			You're sending postcards, letters, or large envelopes (flats) containing personal correspondence or documents that weigh under 1 lb. (up to 15.994 ounces.).
			M-bags ♦ ▲
			Airmail M-bags ♦ ▲
			IPA M-bag ▲
			ISAL M-bag ▲
			You're sending books or other printed materials that need to go to a single foreign addressee.
Delivery Speed	3–5 business days ³	6–10 business days ³	Varies by destination

Key: Retail ♦ Commercial ▲

1. Additional features may be available. See the [Priority Mail Express International](#) webpage. Also, review the [USPS Service Alerts](#) website for more information.

2. IPA and ISAL service has a weight limit of 4.4 pounds.

3. For many major markets. Actual number of days may vary based on origin, destination, and customs delays.

Please note, some domestic items **must** be mailed as First-Class Mail, Priority Mail Express, or Priority Mail:

- Handwritten or typewritten personalized correspondence, such as a letter to grandma or a letter to a customer.
- Bills or statements of accounts.
- All matter sealed or otherwise closed against inspection.

► Please review the [USPS Service Alerts](#) website for information regarding domestic and international service disruptions caused by weather-related and other natural disasters, special events, or other changes impacting service.



USPS Ground Advantage

USPS Ground Advantage service is an affordable and reliable way to send packages domestically, with [day-specific service standards](#) based on distance. There is a weight limit of 70 pounds. This service includes USPS Tracking service, forwarding, and return service if undeliverable as addressed and includes insurance up to \$100. Free Package Pickup service is also available from your home or office. For details on free Package Pickup, visit the [Schedule a Pickup](#) webpage. USPS Ground Advantage retail packages are sealed against inspection.

Commercial

USPS Ground Advantage for Business includes all the benefits of shipping through USPS Ground Advantage but at discounted prices. There is also the option of adding USPS Ground Advantage Return service, which offers a convenient way for customers to send items back. For businesses interested in getting commercial pricing for USPS Ground Advantage, using USPS Ground Advantage Return for customer returns, or learning other ways USPS can power up your shipping and logistics, visit the [Ground Advantage](#) webpage to learn more about business options. Or if you're ready now, lower commercial prices are available through Click-N-Ship. To learn more, [get in touch with your USPS representative](#).



Priority Mail Express

Priority Mail Express is the fastest domestic mail and package service offered by the Postal Service, providing expedited service with a money-back guarantee. Exceptions apply. See the [Domestic Mail Manual, 110](#) for more information. Letters, large or thick envelopes, tubes, and packages (up to 70 pounds) containing eligible items can be sent using Priority Mail Express. This service includes tracking, forwarding, return service, and insurance up to \$100. Additional merchandise insurance up to \$5,000 may be purchased. See the [Choose Additional Services](#) section for more information. Priority Mail Express items are sealed against postal inspection.

You must use a USPS-produced address label provided by the Post Office facility or purchased on the [Click-N-Ship](#) website. Select Priority Mail Express packaging is available at Post Office facilities. All Priority Mail Express packaging can be ordered online at the [Postal Store](#) website or on the [Click-N-Ship](#) website after a label is placed in the Click-N-Ship cart.

Flat Rate domestic shipping is available for Priority Mail Express and lets you send your items at a simple flat rate price. See the [Flat Rate Quick Reference](#) section for available sizes.

See the [Retail – Priority Mail Express Quick Service Guide](#) for more information.

Commercial

Many businesses use Priority Mail Express for important business documents, like contracts and sales orders. Lower commercial prices are available for Priority Mail Express items that meet eligibility standards and must contain an Intelligent Mail package barcode, or you will be charged a non-compliance fee. See [Domestic Mail Manual, 213.3](#) for more information about eligibility standards or consult the [Commercial – Priority Mail Express Quick Service Guide](#) for more information.

Priority Mail Express International

Priority Mail Express International (PMEI) service is a reliable high-speed mail and package service to send documents and merchandise (not prohibited by the destination country) to approximately 180 countries in 3 to 5 business days for many major markets. Actual number of days may vary based upon origin, destination, and customs delays.

PMEI items are not insured against delay in delivery, and indemnity payments are not made in the event of delay. Priority Mail Express International with Money-Back Guarantee service offers a date-certain, postage-refund guarantee to select countries. Postage refunds for delay are considered only for mailings and shipments sent to countries with Priority Mail Express International with Money-Back Guarantee service. Refer to the [USPS Service Alerts](#) webpage for more information.

The maximum weight limit for PMEI service is 70 pounds. Lower, country-specific weight limits may apply. PMEI shipments containing merchandise are insured against loss, damage, or missing contents up to \$200 at no additional charge. Additional insurance coverage up to a maximum of \$5,000 may be purchased. PMEI mail and packages are sealed against inspection. See the [Individual Country Listings](#) for service availability, prohibitions and restrictions, and additional information.

All PMEI items require an electronically generated PS Form 2976-B, Priority Mail Express International Shipping Label and Customs Declaration, available on the [Customs Forms](#) webpage. See the [Prepare Your Mail and Packages](#) section for more information about preparing an international mailing or shipment.

Free PMEI Flat Rate envelopes are available for international shipping at low flat rate prices. See the [Flat Rate Quick Reference](#) section for available sizes. Flat Rate envelopes are limited to 4 pounds.

- ▶ Review the [USPS Service Alerts](#) website for information regarding PMEI and PMEI with Money-Back Guarantee service disruptions caused by weather-related and other natural disasters, special events, or other changes impacting service.
- ▶ Coins, banknotes, currency, traveler's checks, and other valuable items such as precious metals and stones, jewelry, and watches are prohibited to be sent via PMEI service.

Priority Mail

If getting your mail there fast is your top priority, Priority Mail service offers the best value. While specific delivery time is not guaranteed, your items typically reach their destinations in 2 to 3 days. In most cases, the expected delivery date printed on your receipt or provided at checkout will reflect a delivery time of 2 or 3 days and is based on origin, destination, and drop-off time. The expected delivery data does not come with a money-back guarantee. Letters, large or thick envelopes, tubes, and packages (up to 70 pounds) containing eligible items can be sent using Priority Mail. This service is typically used to send documents, gifts, and merchandise. Priority Mail postage includes USPS Tracking service, forwarding, return service, and insurance up to \$100. See the [Choose Additional Services](#) section for more information. Priority Mail items are sealed against postal inspection.

Select Priority Mail packaging is available at Post Office facilities. All Priority Mail packaging can be ordered at the [Postal Store](#) website or on the [Click-N-Ship](#) website after a label is placed in the Click-N-Ship cart.

Flat Rate domestic shipping is available for Priority Mail and lets you send your items at a low Flat Rate price. See the [Flat Rate Quick Reference](#) section for available sizes.

See the [Retail – Priority Mail Quick Service Guide](#) for more information.

Commercial

Discounts are available for Priority Mail customers using specific postage payment methods. Items are required to meet eligibility standards and must contain an Intelligent Mail package barcode (IMpb), otherwise, you could be charged a non-compliance fee. See the [Commercial – Priority Mail Quick Service Guide](#) for more information.

Priority Mail International

Priority Mail International (PMI) service is a reliable, cost-effective way to send documents and merchandise, not prohibited by the destination country. PMI arrives in 6 to 10 business days to many countries. Actual number of days may vary based on origin, destination, and customs delays.

The maximum weight limit for PMI service is 70 pounds. Lower, country-specific weight limits may apply. Merchandise shipped through this service is insured against loss, damage, or missing contents up to \$200 at no additional charge. Unlike a Priority Mail Express International item, a PMI item is not sealed against inspection and the mailing and shipment of a PMI item constitutes consent by the mailer to inspection of the contents.

See the [Individual Country Listings](#) for service availability, prohibitions and restrictions, and additional information.

All PMI items require an electronically generated PS Form 2976-A, Customs Declaration and Dispatch Note — CP 72 Form, available on the [Customs Forms](#) webpage. See the [Prepare Your Mail and Packages](#) section for more information about preparing an international mailing or shipment.

Free PMI Flat Rate envelopes and boxes are available for international mailing and shipping at low flat rate prices. See the [Flat Rate Quick Reference](#) section for available sizes. PMI Flat Rate envelopes and PMI small Flat Rate boxes are limited to 4 pounds. PMI medium and large Flat Rate boxes are limited to 20 pounds.

- Review the [USPS Service Alerts](#) website for information regarding PMI service disruptions caused by weather-related and other natural disasters, special events, or other changes impacting service.





Parcel Select

Parcel Select is an economical ground delivery service for commercial shippers. This regional service allows packages to be entered at USPS-approved locations for designated zip codes served from that entry point. The maximum weight limit for Parcel Select is 70 pounds. The combined length + girth must not exceed 130 inches. USPS Tracking service is included in this service at no extra cost. For more information on this product, entry points, and critical entry times, contact your USPS representative.



First-Class Package International Service

First-Class Package International Service (FCPIS) is an affordable way to ship international packages and/or small packets, with items not prohibited by the destination country, weighing 4 pounds or less, with a value of \$400 or less. Tracking is available to select destinations for FCPIS items through Electronic USPS Delivery Confirmation International service (E-USPS DELCON INTL). Delivery times vary by destination country. First-Class Package International Service items are sealed against inspection. See the [Individual Country Listings](#) for service availability, prohibitions and restrictions, and additional information.

First-Class Package International Service items always require a fully completed PS Form 2976, Customs Declaration – CN22, available on the [Customs Forms](#) webpage. See the [Prepare Your Mail and Packages](#) section for more information about preparing international shipments.

- Review the [USPS Service Alerts](#) website for information regarding service disruptions caused by weather-related and other natural disasters, special events, or other changes impacting service.
- Items exceeding \$400 must be mailed using Priority Mail Express International (PMEI) service, or Priority Mail International (PMI) service.

First-Class Mail

First-Class Mail service is the most affordable option for mailing personal postcards, letters, and large envelopes. Universal pricing allows the prices to stay the same regardless of the distance the mail travels. While a delivery timeline isn't guaranteed, most mail reaches its destination within [1 to 5 business days](#). Mailpieces must weigh less than 13 ounces. First-Class Mail items weighing more than 13 ounces are classified as Priority Mail. This service is typically used for personal and business correspondence and is required for sending personal correspondence, handwritten or typewritten letters, bills, payments, and statements of accounts.

Many beginning mailers use First-Class Mail service to mail postcards and letters because it is simple and quick. If you mail at single-piece prices, there's no special payment method or mailing permit required, and no extra time to presort the mail. You simply put a stamp on it and drop it in the collection box. First-Class Mail postage includes forwarding and return services. You can enhance the service, security, and convenience of First-Class Mail service by adding extra services. See the [Choose Additional Services](#) section for more information. First-Class Mail items are sealed against postal inspection.

Commercial

First-Class Mail service is an affordable way to send commercial mail and can be used to send advertisements. There is a 500-piece minimum to qualify for the discounted commercial prices. See the [Prepare Your Mail and Packages](#) section for more information.

Promotions for extra services and postage discounts are available throughout the year for First-Class Mail service. For more information, see the [Direct Mail Promotions & Incentives](#) webpage.

See the [Quick Service Guides on First-Class Mail](#) webpage for more information.

First-Class Mail International

First-Class Mail International (FCMI) service is an affordable option for sending postcards, letters, or large envelopes (flat) pieces that contain mailable correspondence or nondutiable documents that are not prohibited by the destination country. Delivery expectations vary by the destination country.

The maximum weight limit for a letter-size piece is 3.5 ounces and up to 15.994 ounces for a large envelope (flat). Items containing merchandise may be sent by Priority Mail Express International (PMEI) service, Priority Mail International (PMI) service, or First-Class Package International Service (FCPIS); commercial mailers and shippers may also use International Priority Airmail (IPA) packets and International Surface Air Lift (ISAL) packets. FCMI mailpieces are sealed against inspection. See the [Individual Country Listings](#) for service availability, prohibitions and restrictions, and additional information.

- ▶ Review the [USPS Service Alerts](#) website for information regarding service disruptions caused by weather-related and other natural disasters, national security events, or other changes impacting service.
- ▶ Dutiable or nondutiable merchandise may not be mailed using FCMI service.





USPS Marketing Mail

For beginning commercial mailers, USPS Marketing Mail is often the best choice because postage prices are very low. USPS Marketing Mail items are typically delivered in [3 to 10 business days](#), based on where the mail is entered and its destination. This domestic-only service is typically used to send printed matter, flyers, circulars, advertising, newsletters, bulletins, catalogs, and small parcels that do not contain personal correspondence. All USPS Marketing Mail prices are based on volume, presort, and use of destination entry, and each mailing must meet a minimum quantity of 200 pieces or 50 pounds of mail. Lower nonprofit prices are available for USPS Marketing Mail service but require specific authorization. USPS Marketing Mail mailpieces are not sealed against postal inspection, regardless of physical closure, and mailing by this service constitutes consent by the mailer to postal inspection of the contents. Promotions for extra services and postage discounts are available throughout the year for USPS Marketing Mail service. For more information, see the [Direct Mail Promotions & Incentives](#) webpage.

For more information on marketing for your business, see [Business Solutions](#) section.

Bound Printed Matter

Bound Printed Matter is a product under Package Services and only available for commercial mailings and shipments with a minimum quantity of 300 pieces for Presorted and Carrier Route mailings and shipments. There is a 15-pound maximum weight limit for Bound Printed Matter. Bound printed matter shipped within the continental United States typically arrives within [2 to 8 business days](#), based on where the mail and packages are entered and their destination. For more information on delivery times, see the [Service Standards Map](#) on the [PostalPro](#) website.

Contents are limited to permanently bound printed sheets of directory, advertising, books, editorial matter, and large catalogs. See [Domestic Mail Manual, 263.2](#) for more information about content standards. Flats that meet requirements can be sent using Bound Printed Matter. There are different prices for Bound Printed Matter parcels than for Bound Printed Matter flats. Bound Printed Matter is not sealed against postal inspection and mailing or shipping by this service constitutes consent by the mailer or shipper to postal inspection of the contents. Note that Bound Printed Matter can only be paid for via permit imprint.

Library Mail

Library Mail is a product under domestic Package Services for items sent to or from or exchanged between academic institutions, public libraries, museums, and other authorized organizations. See [Domestic Mail Manual, 173.4](#) for more information about content standards. Library Mail is typically delivered in [2 to 8 business days](#), based on where the packages are entered and their destinations. There is a 70-pound maximum weight limit for Library Mail. Books, sound recordings, academic theses, and certain other items may be shipped at the Library Mail price if properly marked. Library Mail is not sealed against postal inspection, and shipping by this service constitutes consent by the shipper to postal inspection of the contents.

Commercial

There are no presort, sacking, or labeling standards for single-piece Library Mail.

Media Mail

Media Mail service is a product under domestic Package Services that consists of domestically sent books (at least eight pages), sheet music, printed educational charts, film, videocassettes, CD-ROMs, or other computer-readable media. See [Domestic Mail Manual, 173.3](#) for additional information about content standards. While there is no guaranteed delivery date, Media Mail items are typically delivered in [2 to 8 business days](#), based on where the shipment is entered and its destination. There is a 70-pound maximum weight limit for Media Mail items. Media Mail packages cannot contain advertising, except eligible books that may contain incidental announcements of books. Media Mail packages are not sealed against postal inspection, and shipping by this service constitutes consent by the shipper to postal inspection of the contents.

Commercial

There are no presort, sacking, or labeling standards for single-piece Media Mail.





Periodicals

Periodicals is a commercial domestic-only class of mail designed for newspapers, magazines, and other periodical publications whose primary purpose is transmitting information to an established list of subscribers or requesters. Periodicals must be published at regular intervals (at least four times a year) from a known office of publication and be formed of printed sheets. There are specific standards for circulation, record keeping, and advertising limits. There are special lower postage prices for Nonprofit, Science-of-Agriculture, and Classroom Periodicals. There is a 70-pound maximum weight limit for Periodicals, and there is no guaranteed delivery time. For more information on delivery times, see the [Service Standards Map](#) on the [PostalPro](#) website.

There is a formal application procedure and a nonrefundable application fee to become authorized for Periodicals mailing privileges. Talk to your Business Mail Entry Unit for more information. Use the [District Business Mail Entry Locator](#) on the [PostalPro](#) website to locate your nearest BMEU for more information about becoming a Periodicals mailer.

M-bag

M-bag is an international-only service used to send a direct sack of printed matter to a single foreign addressee. It is an affordable way to send large amounts of printed material to an individual recipient almost anywhere in the world. M-bag can be used for items such as newspapers, magazines, journals, books, sheet music, catalogs, directories, commercial advertising, and promotional materials. International students often find M-bag useful as a way of sending books home at the end of the semester.

The maximum weight for an individual M-bag is 66 pounds, including the weight of the sack (lower maximum weights apply to certain countries). A completed PS Tag 158, M-bag Addressee Tag must be attached to the neck of each sack. See [International Mail Manual, 264.22](#) for more information. The PS Tag 158 must bear the required postage and a complete, electronically generated [PS Form 2976, Customs Declaration – CN22](#), available on the [Customs Forms](#) webpage. See the [Prepare Your Mail and Packages](#) section for more information.

There are three types of M-bags: Airmail M-bag, International Priority Airmail (IPA) M-bag, and International Surface Air Lift (ISAL) M-bag. Airmail M-bag is typically entered as individual receptacles at a USPS Post Office facility, while an IPA and ISAL M-bag is entered as volume commercial type mailings at a USPS Business Mail Entry Unit (see IPA and ISAL section below). M-bag is not sealed against inspection. For Airmail M-bag, customers have the option of adding a Certificate of Mailing as an Extra Service. See [International Mail Manual, 260](#) for additional information on the Airmail M-bag. See the [Individual Country Listings](#) for available destinations for Airmail M-bag service.

International Priority Airmail (IPA) & International Surface Air Lift (ISAL)

IPA and ISAL are commercial services designed for volume mailings of postcards, letters, large envelopes (flats), packets, and M-bag(s). The two services have similar features and requirements, but IPA is available to a larger number of countries and is designed to provide somewhat faster delivery.

IPA and ISAL are workshare services that require customers to enter shipments in mailer-prepared receptacles. There is a minimum weight requirement of 50 pounds per mailing. The maximum weight for individual items is 4.4 pounds. Packet items must bear a completed electronically generated [PS Form 2976, Customs Declaration – CN22](#), available on the [Customs Forms](#) webpage. Extra services are not available. IPA and ISAL items are sealed against inspection. See the [International Mail Manual, 292 and 293](#) for additional information on IPA and ISAL M-bag(s).





PREPARE YOUR MAIL AND PACKAGES

Careful preparation of your mail or package helps ensure accurate and safe delivery. All items that are nonmailable domestically cannot be mailed or shipped internationally. Laws and regulations applicable to international mail and packages vary from laws and regulations applicable to domestic mail. See [Publication 52 – Hazardous, Restricted, and Perishable Mail](#) for more information. For additional country-specific requirements, see the [Individual Country Listings \(ICLs\)](#).

Keeping Mail and Packages Safe

Some items can be shipped only in small quantities for safety and legal reasons. Other items may have restrictions on how they can be shipped and may require special packaging or special permission to be shipped. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Live animals
- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Plants

Some things cannot be shipped or can be shipped only in small quantities for safety and legal reasons. Some items have restrictions on how they can be shipped, including:

- Aerosol cans
- Firearms
- Flammable materials
- Liquids and powders
- Lithium batteries
- Lottery tickets
- Perfume
- Poisons
- Tobacco and tobacco products

The following items are never permitted to be shipped:

- Alcoholic beverages
- Ammunition
- Drug paraphernalia
- Fireworks and other explosives

Call 1-800-ASK-USPS or visit your Post Office facility if you have questions about the item you want to mail or ship. Additionally, you may refer to [Publication 52 – Hazardous, Restricted, and Perishable Mail](#) for more information. Chapter 6 of Publication 52 concerns international mail and packages.

The Postal Service can deliver your mail and packages to more than 600 military Post Office facilities worldwide at domestic prices. Many services available for domestic mail are also available for Military Mail. There may be restrictions on the size, weight, or content of your mail and packages. Refer to the [Individual Country Listings \(ICLs\)](#), and the [Army Post Office \(APO\)/Fleet Post Office \(FPO\)/Diplomatic Post Office \(DPO\) Restrictions](#) webpage, or the [Postal Bulletin](#) to ensure your mail or package adheres to the destination countries regulations. USPS offers customers a reduced price on the Priority Mail Large Flat Rate Box when sent to APO/FPO destinations. Packaging is available on the Postal Store website.

Military addresses must show the full name with middle name or initial and the PSC number, unit number, or ship name. Replace the city name with APO, FPO, or DPO, and the state with AA, AE, or AP, and include the ZIP + 4 Code. For more information, visit the [Military & Diplomatic Mail](#) webpage.

You can print postage for most of your mailings and packages online using [Click-N-Ship](#), saving you a trip to the Post Office facility.

The image shows a collection of white envelopes and postal labels. Key elements include:

- Envelopes:** Several white envelopes are scattered, some with "PRESORTED FIRST CLASS" printed on them.
- Postage Labels:**
 - A label with "USPS" and "00292" (likely a ZIP code).
 - A label with "U.S. POSTAGE" and a large "0.50" value.
 - A label with "U.S. POSTAGE" and a large "0.27" value.
- Postmarks:**
 - A red circular postmark from "CINCINNATI OH" dated "OCT 1985".
 - A red rectangular "PAID" stamp.
- Other Text:**
 - "sent smarter?" is printed on one of the envelopes.
 - "FIRST-CLASS MAIL U.S. POSTAGE PAID" is printed on a label.
 - "PRESORTED FIRST CLASS" is printed on another label.
 - "USPS" and "00292" are printed on a label.
 - "0.50" and "0.27" are printed on postage labels.

Addressing

Placement

Print the delivery and return addresses on the same side of your postcard, envelope, or package. The addresses should be written parallel to the longest side.

Legible

Type or print clearly with a pen or permanent marker so the address is legible from an arm's length away. Do not use commas or periods.

Return Address

A return address is required on most mail and packages and is used to tell the USPS where to send the returned mail or package if it cannot be delivered. Print or type your address in the upper-left corner on the front of the postcard, envelope, or package.

Return Address

Print or type your address in the upper left corner on the front of the envelope.

Recipient Name

Street Address

Use a Post Office box or street address, but not both. If the address also has a directional (for instance, NW for Northwest), be sure to use it. There may be more than one Main Street.

Confirmation Services

Labels for USPS Tracking or Signature Confirmation are placed to the left of or above the address label.

Extra Services

Place labels for extra services above the delivery address and to the right of the return address, or to the left of the delivery address.

Postage

Use stamps, a postage meter, [Click-N-Ship](#), or a PC Postage system to affix the correct amount.

City, State, and ZIP Code

To find the correct spelling of a city name or to find a ZIP Code, visit the www.usps.com website or call 1-800-ASK-USPS. Using the correct ZIP Code helps to direct your mail more efficiently and accurately.



Return Address

Print or type your address in the upper left corner on the front of the envelope.

Recipient Name

Street Address

Use a Post Office box or street address, but not both. If the address also has a directional (for instance, NW for Northwest), be sure to use it. There may be more than one Main Street.

Postage

Use stamps, a postage meter, [Click-N-Ship](#), or a PC Postage system to affix the correct amount.

City, State, and ZIP Code

To find the correct spelling of a city name or to find a ZIP Code, visit the www.usps.com website or call 1-800-ASK-USPS. Using the correct ZIP Code helps to direct your mail more efficiently and accurately.



Packages and Packaging

Packaging

Choose a container with enough room for cushioning material around the contents. Sturdy paperboard or corrugated fiberboard boxes are best.

For smaller and light-weight items, bubble mailers and polywrap offer a lightweight shipping solution with a self-sealing fold-over flap. This type of packaging must be at least 2 millimeters thick polyethylene or equivalent for easy loads up to 5 pounds or 4 millimeters thick for easy loads up to 10 pounds.

For heavier or very dense items, use a new corrugated or fiberboard box that is sturdy enough to handle the contents being shipped. Pack the contents securely with a strong material for bracing to prevent shifting, and tape all the edges with reinforced tape. **Packages heavier than 70 pounds cannot be mailed.**

If you are reusing a box, totally remove or obliterate all previous labels and markings with heavy black marker.

For more information on mailing and shipping standards, see the [Domestic Mail Manual, 600](#).

Where to Find Packaging

You can purchase boxes, tubes, padded mailers, and bubble mailers of various sizes at most Post Office facilities. Select Priority Mail Express and Priority Mail boxes and envelopes are available free at Post Office facilities for items sent using either of these services. While you are not required to use the free packaging for these services, you must use the USPS-produced address label provided by the Post Office facility or [Click-N-Ship](#) for Priority Mail Express. To order expedited shipping supplies, including Priority Mail Express or Priority Mail boxes and envelopes at no extra charge, call 1-800-610-8734, visit the [Postal Store](#), or add supplies to your order on [Click-N-Ship](#) after a label is placed in the Click-N-Ship cart.

Cushioning

Place the cushioning all around your item or items. You can use newspaper, “foam peanuts,” or shredded paper. Close and shake the box to see if you have enough cushioning. If you hear items shifting, add more cushioning. Place an extra address label with the delivery and return addresses inside the package to ensure that the item can be delivered in case the outside label becomes damaged or falls off.

Shipping Fragile or Perishable Items

Use foamed plastic or padding to protect your items, placing the cushioning inside hollow items as well. Items fragile or perishable in nature should be cushioned adequately to protect them through processing and delivery. Careful packaging is the best way to safeguard your valuable items against damage.

Shipping Liquids

Ensure that the container is sealed securely to withstand processing and delivery. If you are shipping mailable liquids in containers greater than 4 ounces, you are required to triple pack these containers. This means you need to pad around the original container(s). Then, surround the original packaging with another sealed, leak-proof container that includes absorbent materials.

Sealing

Tape the opening of your box and reinforce all seams with 2-inch-wide tape. Use clear or brown packaging tape, reinforced packing tape, or paper tape. Do not use cord, string, twine, masking, or cellophane tape. Place a strip of clear packaging tape over your label to prevent the address from smearing.

Online Shipping Labels

You can print and pay for your Priority Mail Express, Priority Mail, and USPS Ground Advantage postage labels online using [Click-N-Ship](#). USPS Tracking service is included for domestic USPS Ground Advantage and most Priority Mail Express and Priority Mail shipments. International labels with postage may be purchased online for Global Express Guaranteed, Priority Mail Express International, Priority Mail International, and First-Class Package International Service using the [Click-N-Ship](#). You can also arrange for free Package Pickup online. For details on free Package Pickup, visit the [Schedule a Pickup](#) webpage. Learn more about [Click-N-Ship](#) on the webpage.

While some flexibility exists in design of shipping labels, following standards will make label certification easier and make processing your parcels more efficient. See the [Parcel Labeling Guide](#) on the [PostalPro](#) website for more information.

Commercial Pallet Preparation and Parcels

Pallet Preparation and Parcels

Pallets may be prepared containing either parcels, bundles of parcels, or sacks containing parcels. Pallets must meet the volume requirements and be labeled as in compliance with [Domestic Mail Manual, 705.8.0](#) for the applicable class of mail. Pallets of Parcel Select may be entered at a Network Distribution Center (NDC)/Regional Processing Distribution Center (RPDC), Sectional Center Facility (SCF)/RPDC, and Destination Delivery Unit (DDU)/Sorting Delivery Center (SDC).

At The Post Office Facility

The requirement is to enter your commercial shipment at the Business Mail Entry Unit (BMEU) or Post Office facility. For most shippers, this will be your local BMEU, but if you're in a small town you may have to take your packages directly to the retail window. You **cannot** give permit imprint packages to a letter carrier or deposit it in a collection box. This is applicable to all Priority Mail, USPS Ground Advantage, Parcel Select, Library Mail, Media Mail, and Bound Printed Matter parcels paid by permit imprint.

If you are taking advantage of destination entry discounts, first you must go to the office where you hold your mailing permit. That office will verify and accept your shipment, and then you can take your destination entry packages to the correct postal facility.

Postcards, Letters, Large Envelopes (Flats)

Letters, bills, greeting cards, and other documents can be sent in standard white, manila, or recycled paper envelopes. Items needing extra protection can be sent in bubble-lined, padded paper, or waterproof envelopes. These envelopes, along with stationery and prepaid First-Class Mail postcards and envelopes, can be purchased at a Post Office facility or online at the [Postal Store](#) website.

Priority Mail Express and Priority Mail envelopes are available at your Post Office facility or by visiting the [Postal Store](#) website or the [Click-N-Ship](#) website. You must use the USPS-produced address label for Priority Mail Express.

Commercial Postcards, Letters, and Large Envelopes (Flats) Preparation

In addition to weight and shape, the Postal Service prices mailpieces by the way they are prepared and processed on Postal Service equipment. The Postal Service classifies postcards, letters, and large envelopes (flats) into one of three categories:

- **Machinable:** If you prepare your mailpiece so that it has an accurate address and is the proper size to be processed on Postal Service equipment, your mailpiece is "machinable" and may be eligible for "presort" prices.
- **Nonmachinable:** If your mailpiece does not meet the machinable standards, you may have to pay a higher postage price.
- **Automation:** If your letter-size or flat-size mailpiece is machinable and displays the correct barcode, you can qualify for lower, "automation" prices. For more information, contact your local Business Mail Entry Unit. Use the [District Business Mail Entry Locator](#) on the [PostalPro](#) website to locate your nearest BMEU or visit the [www.usps.com](#) website.
 - An automation letter or a letter claimed at Enhanced Carrier Route saturation or high-density automation letter prices may not bear a 5-digit or ZIP+4 Intelligent Mail barcode in the lower-right corner (barcode clear zone). The piece may bear an additional Intelligent Mail barcode in the address block only if a qualifying Intelligent Mail barcode with a delivery point routing code appears in the lower right corner. See [Domestic Mail Manual, 202.5.1.4](#) for additional information.

See the [Quick Service Guides](#), located on the [Postal Explorer](#) website, for more information.

Sorting Your Mailing

Prices for commercial mail services are affected by the level of sorting you do. Presorting means grouping mail by ZIP Code. All the mailpieces going to the same destination get grouped into the same bundle or tray. You'll sort to specific areas, and then work your way up to more general areas. All leftover mailpieces are combined.

Some beginning mailers choose not to presort their mail; instead, they pay the full price, put stamps on their mailpieces, and drop them in a collection box. Other mailers don't want to presort their mail but still want to get the lower postage prices. To do that, they use a presort bureau or letter shop to prepare their mail.

At The Post Office Facility

The requirement is to enter your commercial mail at the Business Mail Entry Unit (BMEU) or Post Office facility where you hold a mailing permit. For most mailers, this will be your local BMEU, but if you're in a small town you may have to take your mail directly to the retail window. You cannot give permit imprint mail to a letter carrier or deposit it in a collection box. This is applicable to all First-Class Mail, USPS Marketing Mail, and any mail paid by permit imprint.

If you are taking advantage of destination entry discounts, first you must go to the office where you hold your mailing permit. That office will verify and accept your mailing, and then you can take your destination entry mail to the correct postal facility.

International Mailpiece Preparation

International Customs Clearance Documentation

When you mail or ship items from the U.S. to another country or APO/FPO/DPO locations, you must fill out customs forms (except for, subject to certain conditions, First-Class Mail International, IPA and ISAL letters and large envelopes (flats) up to 15.994 ounces). The customs form you need depends on the USPS mail service you use and the contents of the item. You can visit the [Customs Forms](#) webpage to print a customs form online, then bring the form to the Post Office facility to pay for the item and receive a label, or use [Click-N-Ship](#) to pay for postage and print an international shipping label and a customs form. You can also visit your local Post Office facility and a retail associate will provide you with PS Form 2976-R, USPS Customs Declaration and Dispatch Note and assist you.

See the [International Mail Manual, 123](#) for more information on customs forms and online shipping labels.

Certain items may be subject to prohibitions or restrictions imposed by the foreign post. It is the mailer's or shipper's responsibility to comply with import and export regulations and restrictions (e.g., quarantine, pharmaceutical) and to determine what documents (e.g., commercial invoice, certificate of origin, health certificate, license, authorization for goods subject to quarantine such as plant, animal, or food products), if any, are required in the destination country. Additional information is available in the [Individual Country Listings](#). For an item bearing a privately printed customs form, a mailer or shipper must electronically transmit customs declaration information by using a USPS-approved software. Refer to [Publication 199 – Intelligent Mail Package Barcode \(IMpb\) Implementation Guide for Confirmation Services and Electronic Payment Systems](#).





CHOOSE ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Extra services can provide additional protection and peace of mind. Forms and labels for extra services are available in your Post Office facility lobby or from your rural letter carrier. Most extra services provide proof of mailing and receipt of delivery. Extra services for domestic and international mail and shipments vary. Refer to the Extra Services table for international products with available extra services.

Certificate of Mailing

For domestic mail and shipments, a Certificate of Mailing provides evidence of mailing or shipping. A certificate of mailing (individual pieces) cannot be obtained in combination with Registered Mail items, insured packages, Free Matter for the Blind, or items paid with a permit imprint.

Certified Mail

If available and purchased, Certified Mail provides proof of mailing at time of mailing and the date and time of delivery or attempted delivery. Return Receipt can be added to confirm delivery.

Insurance

If available and purchased, insurance provides coverage against loss or damage up to \$5,000. For domestic shipping of items insured for more than \$500, Return Receipt can be added to confirm delivery. Free with select services.

Most indemnity claims for Insured, Registered Mail, or Priority Mail Express can be filed online on the [File a USPS Claim](#) webpage.

Additional insurance for international shipments to most destinations may be purchased in incremental amounts by destination country. For detailed information, go to the [International Insurance & Extra Services](#) webpage.

Registered Mail

This service provides maximum security and includes proof of mailing at time of mailing or shipping and the date and time of delivery or attempted delivery. For domestic mail items, postal insurance is included in the fee for articles with a value up to a maximum insured value of \$50,000. Fee is based on value of item. Return Receipt can be added to confirm delivery.

USPS Tracking

This service provides a confirmation that the item was delivered by sharing the date and time of delivery or attempted delivery. Free with select services. Not available for First-Class Mail service. USPS Tracking Plus extends the length of time you can access the tracking history of a package.

For First-Class Package International Service, Electronic USPS Delivery Confirmation International Service (E-USPS DELCON INTL) is available for select destinations and provides date and time an article was delivered or, if delivery was attempted but not completed, the date and time of the delivery attempt.

Signature Confirmation™

For domestic mail, provides the date and time of delivery or attempted delivery and the name of the person who signed for the item. You can request a printed copy of the signature. A lower price is available when you print Priority Mail postage from the www.usps.com website.

Adult Signature

Available for domestic mail, this service requires the signature of someone 21 years of age or older at the recipient's address.

Return Receipt

This service provides the sender with proof of the delivery, which for domestic mail and shipments is in the form of the recipient's signature, the delivery address, and the date and time of delivery. A Return Receipt must be purchased at the time of mailing or shipping. After the item is sent, a Return Receipt is no longer available. Must be used with Certified Mail services.

Package Pickup

Package Pickup is a free package pick up service that is available when your mail is delivered, regardless of the number of items. For details on availability and to submit your request online, visit the [Schedule a Pickup](#) webpage and have your qualifying items ready before your carrier arrives.

Pickup On Demand

For a fee, Pickup On Demand service allows you to schedule time-specific pickups within a 2-hour time frame. A letter carrier will make a special trip to your home or business for a fee to pick up qualifying packages that have postage affixed. There is no additional charge for picking up multiple packages. Visit the [Schedule a Pickup](#) webpage or call 1-800-222-1811 for additional information including qualifying packages or to schedule a pickup.



Here are some useful mailing hints for senders and recipients.

Services	Proof of Mailing	Protection in Transit	Confirmation at Delivery	Convenience
Priority Mail Express		Insurance	Signature Confirmation Return Receipt USPS Tracking Adult Signature	Package Pickup* Pickup On Demand
Priority Mail Express International		Insurance**	USPS Tracking	Package Pickup* Pickup On Demand*
Priority Mail	Certificate of Mailing	Insurance	Certified Mail Signature Confirmation Return Receipt USPS Tracking Registered Mail Adult Signature	Package Pickup* Pickup On Demand
Priority Mail International		Insurance**	Return Receipt** ⁶ USPS Tracking	Package Pickup* Pickup On Demand*
First-Class Mail	Certificate of Mailing	Insurance Registered Mail	Certified Mail Signature Confirmation Return Receipt**	
First-Class Mail International	Certificate of Mailing ¹	Registered Mail ²	Return Receipt**	
USPS Ground Advantage		Insurance	Signature Confirmation Return Receipt ⁴ USPS Tracking Registered Mail Adult Signature ⁴	Package Pickup* Pickup On Demand*
First-Class Package International Service	Certificate of Mailing ¹	Registered Mail ²	Return Receipt E-USPS DELCON INTL Tracking* ⁷	Package Pickup* Pickup On Demand*
USPS Marketing Mail	Certificate of Mailing ³		Return Receipt USPS Tracking ⁵	
Bound Printed Matter	Certificate of Mailing	Insurance	Signature Confirmation USPS Tracking Return Receipt	
Library Mail	Certificate of Mailing	Insurance	Signature Confirmation USPS Tracking Return Receipt	Pickup On Demand
Media Mail	Certificate of Mailing	Insurance ³	Signature Confirmation USPS Tracking Return Receipt	Pickup On Demand
Airmail M-bag	Certificate of Mailing			
Parcel Select		Insurance	Signature Confirmation Return Receipt Adult Signature	
USPS Connect Local		Insurance ³	Signature Confirmation	Package Pickup* Pickup On Demand

1. Unregistered mail only.

2. Not available to all destinations; limited indemnity available.

3. Available for merchandise only.

4. Available for Commercial only.

5. Available for parcels only.

6. Available only with the purchase of additional merchandise insurance for Priority Mail International items.

7. Not available for every destination country. See [First-Class Package International Service](#) for frequent updates on availability.

* All required labels, customs forms, and postage payment must be completed online.

** Not available for every destination country. See [Individual Country Listings](#) for more information.

Holding Mail

If you plan to be out of town on business or vacation, you may want to temporarily stop delivery of your mail and packages. To have the Postal Service hold your mail and packages up to 30 days, visit the www.usps.com website, call 1-800-ASK-USPS, or fill out a “Hold Mail” form at the Post Office facility. When you return, you can either pick up your mail or packages from the Post Office facility or have it delivered to your home.

Changing an Address and Mail Forwarding

Before you move, get a copy of the Mover's Guide from your Post Office facility, and return the completed form along with photo identification for identity verification purposes to your Post Office facility. You can also save time by visiting the www.usps.com website and filling out the [Official USPS Change-of-Address Form](#) online for a small fee.

Notify your Post Office facility at least one month before you move to ensure uninterrupted mail service. Priority Mail Express, Priority Mail, and First-Class Mail will be forwarded at no charge for one year. Magazines and newspapers will be forwarded for 60 days.

Premium Forwarding Service

If you are going away for a while and don't want to miss important mail and packages, Premium Forwarding Service is a domestic service that forwards **all** your mail and packages from your permanent address to a temporary address. Your mail and packages will be forwarded to you on a weekly basis for a minimum of two weeks up to one year. There is one flat fee for each weekly Priority Mail shipment plus an application fee. Visit the www.usps.com website or your local Post Office facility to enroll.

Signing for Mail

Some mail or packages require a signature from the recipient at the time of delivery. This includes items sent with Priority Mail Express (if selected), Certified Mail, Collect on Delivery, Insured Mail (over \$500), Registered Mail, Return Receipt, Signature Confirmation, and Adult Signature service.

Recipient Responsibilities

When you sign for a piece of mail or package, you acknowledge delivery. The Postal Service's liability ends when you sign for the mail. You may ask the letter carrier for the sender's name and address before you accept the item. You may not open the mail or package, but you may look at it as long as the letter carrier is holding it before you choose to sign for it.

Delivery If Recipient Is Not Home

If no one is home when the letter carrier attempts delivery, the letter carrier will leave a notice and return the item to the Post Office facility. Check the notice for specific instructions or call 1-800-ASK-USPS to have the mail or package redelivered. If the sender has not asked for Restricted Delivery or Adult Signature (21 years of age or older), the carrier may deliver the mail or package to anyone who receives mail at that address.



CHOOSE PAYMENT METHOD

The U.S. Postal Service is among the most efficient postal administrations in the world, with some of the lowest postage prices of any industrialized country. Dollar for dollar, you get a lot of value from your mail or packages. Postage prices are based on several factors previously covered, such as shape, content, weight, and distance traveled.

[Notice 123 – Price List](#) contains the complete list of published domestic and international prices and fees and is available on the [Postal Explorer](#) website. It is important that you compare the various pricing options to determine which service will best suit your needs. Prices may change over time, so it is also important to stay informed by visiting the www.usps.com website for the latest updates.

Retail customers should utilize the [Retail Postage Price Calculator](#) to calculate postage.

Commercial customers should utilize the [Business Postage Price Calculator](#) to calculate postage.

Helpful Tip

Make sure that you calculate your postage correctly. Round the weight of your mail or package up to the nearest ounce or pound to avoid underpayment and delaying delivery.

Paying For Retail Mail

There are several ways to pay for postage. For payment methods specific to commercial mailings and shipments, see the section [Paying for Commercial Mail and Packages](#). The Post Office will accept cash, checks, major credit cards, and debit cards.

Stamps

The easiest way to buy stamps is by mail, from your local Post Office facility or supermarket, or online at the [Postal Store](#) website and attach them directly to your mail or packages. Stamps are available in various denominations and designs. There is no need to obtain a permit or pay additional fees, no matter how many items you send. Purchasing the Forever Stamps guarantees the First-Class Mail single-piece 1-ounce letter price at any time in the future, without the addition of extra postage.

Postage Meters and PC Postage Systems

Postage meters and PC Postage products are collectively known as “postage evidencing systems” and are available to pay for commercial or retail mailing/shipping. Postage meters and PC Postage products are devices or systems that allow you to print postage indicia directly onto your mail or packages (or onto a meter tape or labels, which you then apply to your mailpiece or package). PC Postage is USPS-approved third-party vendor software that mailers and shippers can use to pay for and print their postage using a computer, printer, and internet connection. Both are a convenient and personalized way to pay for postage and track postage costs for your business or organization. Either postage payment method may be used on all classes of mail except Periodicals and Bound Printed Matter. Users of postage meters or PC Postage vendors are eligible for reduced First-Class Mail prices.

How do I get a postage meter?

A postage meter is ideal for the mailing and shipping needs of offices. You can send out any class of mail (except Periodicals and Bound Printed Matter) in any quantity at any price with the same postage meter. Postage meters come in different sizes. A meter or PC Postage vendor can help you decide which meter is right for your mailing or shipping needs. See the [Postage Options](#) webpage for a list of vendors and more information.

How do I pay for postage?

All postage meters are remotely reset by your meter vendor—you do not need to go to the Post Office facility. Your meter vendor will give you information about the payment options currently authorized by the Postal Service. A Permit to use the meter for commercial mailings or shipments is required. See the [Postage Options](#) webpage for a list of vendors and more information.

See the [Meters and PC Postage Systems Quick Service Guide](#) for more information.

Click-N-Ship

[Click-N-Ship](#) is a convenient way for you or your small business to pay for and print labels from home or the office. All you need to get started is a free www.usps.com residential or business account, a computer, and a standard printer. If you do not have a printer available, check out our Label Broker option. Click-N-Ship service can be used for USPS Ground Advantage, Priority Mail Express, Priority Mail Express International, Priority Mail, Priority Mail International, First-Class Package International Service, and Global Express Guaranteed shipping.

Businesses using the enhanced Click-N-Ship experience can now sign up for USPS's new Click-N-Ship Business Rate Card. After you agree to the terms online, you'll get immediate access to non-published discounted prices for Priority Mail, USPS Ground Advantage, Priority Mail Return, and USPS Ground Advantage Return labels. These are the lowest rates you can get outside of a Negotiated Service.

Paying for Commercial Mail

Regardless of the method of postage payment you chose for volume mailings and shipments, certain classes of mail require you to pay an annual presort mailing fee to access commercial prices. This fee is separate from any other application fees or account deposits. There is no special form to fill out each year when renewing the fee and you cannot mail or ship in volume at commercial prices until you pay it. Paying the annual mailing fee gives you permission to mail or ship a certain class of mail from a certain postal facility for 365 days. For instance, you would need to have two different permits to mail presorted First-Class Mail items and USPS Marketing Mail commercial mailings or shipments from the same office. You must hold a mailing permit and pay an annual mailing fee at every Post Office facility where you want to enter and pay for your mail or shipments.

The Postal Service has three different ways for you to pay postage for commercial mailings or shipments.

- **Permit Imprint:** Allows you to set up an account at the Post Office facility. You deposit money into this account, and money is deducted when you drop off your mailing or shipment as explained previously.
- **Precanceled Stamps:** Allows you to apply stamps onto your mailpieces. With precanceled stamps, you affix a lower rate of postage and then pay the difference when you drop off your mailing. Stamps add a personal touch to your envelope and may give your customer an added incentive to open and read your mailpiece.
- **Postage Meter & PC Postage Systems:** Allows you to prepay postage by affixing metered or PC Postage indicia (showing the numerical value of postage) onto each mailpiece or package. You fill your postage meter or PC Postage account in advance and then replenish it as your postage balance runs out.

Helpful Tip

You don't have to pay your annual mailing fee until you bring in your first mailing. The annual mailing fee is good for 365 days from the day you pay it. If you're not doing your first mailing for, say, 5 weeks, wait to pay this fee until you take your first mailing to the Post Office facility. This buys you 5 more weeks of mailing on the other end of the 365 days!

Permit Imprint

Permit imprint is the most popular and convenient way to pay for commercial postage, especially for high volume mailings or shipments. You don't have to buy postage in advance, remember to reset your meter, or worry about putting the right amount of postage on each item. A permit imprint is like having a checking account at the Post Office facility. You set up a postage account (called an "advance deposit account") at the Post Office facility or Business Mail Entry Unit (BMEU) where you'll be depositing your mail or packages, and when you bring your items to the Post Office facility, the total postage is deducted from your account.

Proof of postage is printed in the upper-right corner of the mailpiece or package, saving time that would be spent affixing postage individually. This postage block is called an "indicia." If you already have a mailpiece or package printed without the permit imprint, you can use a rubber stamp. See the [How to Design a Permit Imprint Indicia Guide](#) on [Postal Explorer](#). If you have questions about the content or placement of your permit imprint, contact your local [Mailpiece Design Analyst](#) or [Business Mail Entry Unit](#).

To utilize a permit imprint for certain products you must mail 200 pieces or 50 pounds of mail each time you mail and all your mailpieces must be identical weight. The Postal Service weighs individual pieces and the entire mailing to check the number of pieces and calculate the postage you owe.

To learn more about permit imprint, visit the [How to Apply for a Permit Imprint Guide](#) on [Postal Explorer](#) or the [Permit Imprint Quick Service Guide](#) on [Postal Explorer](#).

Precanceled Stamps

Precanceled Stamps are special stamps that come in small denominations and are specifically for Presorted First-Class Mail and USPS Marketing Mail mailings. Mailers apply these special stamps to envelopes at a lower postage price and pay the difference when they drop off the mail at the Post Office facility. The Business Mail Entry Unit clerk can help you fill out your postage statement to calculate how much you still owe. You can pay that difference with a meter strip or through an account. Precanceled stamps are available in various non-denominations in coils for the following classes of mail:

- Presorted First-Class Mail
- Regular USPS Marketing Mail
- Presorted First-Class Postcards
- Nonprofit USPS Marketing Mail

See the [Precanceled Stamps Quick Service Guides](#) for more information.

Retail Prices

To pay for postage, use stamps, [Click-N-Ship](#), a postage meter, or a PC Postage system to affix the correct amount.

Domestic mailpieces that weigh less than 10 ounces or are under a ½ inch thick, with postage stamps affixed, can be dropped in a blue collection box or handed to your letter carrier. Mailpieces that weigh 10 ounces or more or are ½ inch or thicker, with postage stamps affixed, must be handed to a retail associate at your local Post Office facility.

See [Notice 123 – Price List](#) for full pricing charts.

Retail mailers should utilize the [Retail Postage Price Calculator](#) to calculate postage.

Helpful Tip
One ounce is approximately equal to three sheets of paper plus a standard envelope.

International

The Postal Service uses Country Price Groups to determine the shipping prices for international mailings and shipments. Each country is assigned to a Country Price Group. These groups also vary by USPS service and mail or package type. See Country Price Groups available in [Notice 123 – Price List](#).

You can send your international mailpiece several ways depending on what is being mailed, including putting it in your mailbox or dropping it in a blue collection box or at a Post Office facility. See more details on the [What Can and Cannot be Deposited in a Collection Box?](#) webpage (also see the [specific guidance around dropping off mail that requires customs forms](#) webpage—though if you’re sending mail under 15.994 ounces that’s just nondutiable documents, using First-Class Mail International, you don’t need to complete a customs form).

Commercial Prices

Commercial pricing refers to reduced postage prices offered to mailers and shippers in exchange for higher standards of mail and shipment preparation, sortation, and/or destination entry. Commercial pricing is available for USPS Ground Advantage – Commercial, Priority Mail, Priority Mail Express, First Class Package International Service, Priority Mail International, and Priority Mail Express International service.

See [Notice 123 – Price List](#) for full pricing charts.

To calculate the price for your commercial mailing or shipment, visit the [Business Postage Price Calculator](#).

International

The Postal Service uses Country Price Groups to determine the mailing and shipping prices for international mail and packages. Each country is assigned to a Country Price Group. The services available to each country within each Country Price Group vary. See Country Price Groups available in [Notice 123 – Price List](#) and the [Individual Country Listings \(ICLs\)](#) in the [International Mail Manual \(IMM\)](#) for details.



COMPLAINTS, CLAIMS, REFUNDS

The Postal Service strives to provide great value and service to its customers. If you are happy or unhappy with our service, we would like to know. Give us the opportunity to serve you better by visiting the www.usps.com website, calling 1-800-ASK-USPS, or speaking to the Postmaster or manager at your local Post Office facility.

Stamps and Postage

If stamps that you have purchased are defective, become damaged or unusable, or do not meet your needs for any other reason, you may be eligible for a refund. To request a refund for fees or postage, you may need a tracking number, purchase receipt, or photo ID. To learn more or request a refund, visit the [Request a USPS Refund](#) webpage. Requests for domestic postage reimbursement must be made within the following time limits:

Mail Type or Service	When to Apply (From Mailing Date)	
	No Sooner Than	No Later Than
Priority Mail Express	2 days	30 days
Priority Mail Express with Additional Services	30 days	60 days
All Other Classes of Mail	10 days	60 days
All Other Classes of Mail with Extra Services	30 days	60 days

For more information on refunds, see the [Domestic Mail Manual, 604.9](#).

To learn more about requesting a refund or to file a request for international mail or packages, visit the [Request a USPS Refund: International](#) webpage.

Lost, Delayed, or Damaged Mail

If you think your package or mail is lost or delayed, visit the [Find Missing Mail](#) webpage to search tracking status or submit a missing mail or package search request.

If mail that you have sent is lost, damaged, or has broken or missing pieces, you may file a claim for loss or damage. Visit the [File a Claim](#) webpage or see [Domestic Mail Manual, 609](#) for more information.

International Mail

Claims and inquiries for international mail and packages must be made within the following time limits:

Product or Extra Service	Who	When to Apply (From Mailing Date)	
		No Sooner Than	No Later Than
Priority Mail Express International	U.S. Sender Only	3 days ²	90 days
Priority Mail Express International With Money-Back Guarantee ³	U.S. Sender Only	3 days ²	30 days
Priority Mail International or Registered Mail	Sender or Addressee ⁴	7 days	6 months

1. The Postal Service does not process online inquiries and claims for Global Express Guaranteed service. To initiate a claim, call 800-222-1811.

2. No sooner than 3 days or the scheduled date of delivery.

3. For a list of participating countries, refer to the [International Mail Manual, 221.2](#).

4. Only the U.S. Sender can initiate an online inquiry.

Customers must wait a reasonable amount of time for an international item to be delivered in the foreign country before initiating an inquiry.

For more information on inquiries and claims, see the [International Mail Manual, 920](#).

To learn about how to file a claim, visit the [File a USPS Claim: International](#) website.



Contact Information

Find a Zip Code.

Calculate postage prices.

Change address.

Track or confirm delivery.

1-800-ASK-USPS

Locate a Post Office facility.

Put mail or packages on hold.

Schedule a pickup.

Domestic mailing and shipping requirements.

International mailing and shipping requirements.

Postal Explorer (pe.usps.com)

Prices and eligibility.

postalexplorer@usps.gov

Mail preparation and price calculators.

HAZMAT.

Business sales contacts.

Printing and paying for online shipping labels.

[Click-N-Ship](#)

Label refunds for unused labels.

800-344-7779, Option 3

PostalPro

800-238-3150

Website information.

PostalProSupport@usps.gov

PostalOne!

Current business account assistance; permit accounts.

www.usps.com/postalone

Business Customer Gateway

Business Customer Gateway

Find and manage USPS® services for your business.

gateway.usps.com

Postal Bulletin

Official record of changes in Postal Service policies and procedures.

about.usps.com/resources/postal-bulletin

Stamps & Stamp Collecting

1-800-STAMP24

USPS Mailing and Shipping Solution Center (MSSC)

1-877-672-0007

Mailpiece Design Analysts

MSSC@usps.gov

Service Alerts

about.usps.com/newsroom/service-alerts/

APPENDIX A: FLAT RATE QUICK REFERENCE

Priority Mail and Priority Mail International

Flat Rate Envelope

12-½" x 9-½"

Legal Flat Rate Envelope

15" x 9-½"

Padded Flat Rate Envelope

12-½" x 9-½"

Small Flat Rate Envelope

10" x 6"

Window Flat Rate Envelopes

10" x 5"

12-½" x 9-½"

Small Flat Rate Box

8-⁵/₈" x 5-³/₈" x 1-⁵/₈"—Inside

8-¹¹/₁₆" x 5-⁷/₁₆" x 1-³/₄"—Outside

Medium Flat Rate Boxes

Top Loading

11" x 8-½" x 5-½"—Inside

11-¼" x 8-¾" x 6"—Outside

Side-Loading (domestic only)

13-⁵/₈" x 11-⁷/₈" x 3-³/₈"—Inside

14-¹/₈" x 12" x 3-½"—Outside

Large Flat Rate Box

12" x 11-¾" x 5-½"—Inside

12-¼" x 12" x 6"—Outside

Large Video Box (Flat Rate pricing for international only)

9-⁷/₁₆" x 6-¼" x 2"—Inside

9-⁹/₁₆" x 6-⁷/₁₆" x 2-⁷³/₁₆"—Outside

DVD Box (Flat Rate pricing for international only)

7-⁹/₁₆" x 5-⁷/₁₆" x 5/8"—Inside

8-¾" x 5-⁹/₁₆" x 7/8"—Outside

Priority Mail Express and Priority Mail Express International

Flat Rate Envelope

12-½" x 9-½"

Legal Flat Rate Envelope

15" x 9-½"

Padded Flat Rate Envelope

12-½" x 9-½"

APO/FPO/DPO

Large Flat Rate Box

12" x 11-¾" x 5-½"—Inside

12-¼" x 12" x 6"—Outside

Note: Flat Rate prices are available when material is sent in a USPS-produced Flat Rate Envelope or Box. When sealing a Flat Rate Box or Flat Rate Envelope, the container flaps must be able to close within the normal folds. Tape may be applied to the flaps and seams to reinforce the container, provided the design of the container is not enlarged by opening the sides and the container is not reconstructed in any way.

Weight restrictions for domestic Priority Mail Express Flat Rate Envelopes and Priority Mail Flat Rate Envelopes and Boxes are 70 pounds. Weight restrictions for Priority Mail Express International Flat Rate Envelopes are 4 pounds. Weight restrictions for Priority Mail International Large and Medium Flat Rate Boxes are 20 pounds, and 4 pounds for Priority Mail International Flat Rate Envelopes and Small Flat Rate Priced Boxes.

To order Priority Mail Express and Priority Mail boxes and envelopes at no extra charge, call 1-800-610-8734, visit the Postal Store website, or add supplies to your order on [Click-N-Ship](#) after a label is placed in the Click-N-Ship cart.

APPENDIX B: EXAMPLES OF SMART CHOICES

These examples show how mailing services can be combined to meet your needs.

Example 1: Sending a Valuable Item

Jane's niece is getting married next month, and Jane wants to send a piece of heirloom jewelry to the bride in Virginia. The jewelry has a lot of sentimental value, so Jane wants to be sure that it will arrive safely. Jane identifies three possible options:

\$\$\$\$ Option A: Priority Mail Express

Priority Mail Express service automatically includes insurance up to \$100 and guarantees delivery to Jane's niece in typically 1 to 2 business days*. Additional insurance may be purchased. Jane will also receive a mailing receipt and confirmation that the package has been delivered and, if requested, has been signed for by her niece.

\$\$\$ Option B: Priority Mail

Priority Mail service will get the jewelry to its destination typically within 1 to 3 business days*. Priority Mail service with USPS Tracking lets her obtain delivery information online/by phone and includes \$100 of insurance. Additional insurance may be purchased. If Jane uses Signature Confirmation service, she gets the same delivery information; plus she can request a copy of the recipient's signature.

\$\$ Option C: USPS Ground Advantage—Retail with Registered Mail

USPS Ground Advantage-Retail service offers delivery at a low cost and can be combined with Registered Mail, a service that provides the highest level of security during transit. For domestic shipping, using Registered Mail service, insurance can be purchased for items with a declared value up to \$50,000 in material, but not sentimental value.

\$ Option D: USPS Ground Advantage—Retail with Insurance

USPS Ground Advantage-Retail service offers delivery at a low cost and with \$100 of included insurance. This will cover the jewelry's material value, if the material value is up to \$100, should the piece get lost or damaged. Should the jewelry have a material value of greater than \$100, Jane can opt to increase insurance coverage up to \$5,000. Please note that the insurance coverage is material value, not sentimental value.

Jane's Decision

Jane decides that speed is less of a priority than security. Jane chooses USPS Ground Advantage Retail with Registered Mail service because the jewelry has greater sentimental than monetary value, so she can feel confident that her heirloom will be as secure as possible during transit.

Example 2: Sending an Important Document

Maria recently sold her car and needs to transfer the title to the new owner. Maria wants to be sure that the new owner gets the title to complete the sale. Maria considers these options:

\$\$\$ Option A: Priority Mail Express

Priority Mail Express items will arrive at many locations the day after they are shipped*. Priority Mail Express service also provides Maria with proof that she shipped the title, the ability to track it online/by phone, and notification that it was delivered. Maria can also request a copy of the recipient's signature.

\$ Option B: Priority Mail with Signature Confirmation Service

Priority Mail service will get the title to its destination typically within 1 to 3 business days*. Priority Mail service with USPS Tracking lets her obtain delivery information online or by phone. If Maria uses Signature Confirmation service she gets the same delivery information, plus she can request a copy of the recipient's signature.

\$ Option C: First-Class Mail with Certified Mail and Return Receipt

First-Class Mail service will get the title to its destination typically within 1 to 5 business days*. Certified Mail with Return Receipt service will give Maria proof that she shipped the title and will return a card to her with the date the title was delivered and the signature of the person who received it.

Maria's Decision

Maria wants a copy of the signature returned to her to prove that the title was delivered, and she wants to get the lowest price she can. Maria decides that First-Class Mail with Certified Mail and Return Receipt service is the best option.

Example 3: Shipping to a Customer

Joe owns a hobby store, and a customer has placed an online order for a model car that costs \$85. Joe wants to be sure that the customer receives the model car and provide additional protection in case of damage. Joe considers these options:

\$\$\$ Option A: Priority Mail Express

Priority Mail Express service will get the model car to its destination typically within 1 to 2 business days*. Priority Mail Express service includes insurance up to \$100 and USPS Tracking service at no additional cost. Additionally, he can have the package picked up from his store, saving him a trip to the Post Office facility.

\$ Option B: Priority Mail

Priority Mail service will get the model car to the customer typically within 1 to 3 business days*. Priority Mail service includes insurance up to \$100 and USPS Tracking service at no additional cost. Additionally, he can have the package picked up from his store, saving him a trip to the Post Office facility.

\$ Option C: USPS Ground Advantage

USPS Ground Advantage service will get the model car to the customer typically within 2 to 5 business days*. USPS Ground Advantage service includes insurance up to \$100 and USPS Tracking at no additional cost. Additionally, he can have the package picked up from his store, saving him a trip to the Post Office facility.

Joe's Decision

Joe wants to ensure the package arrives to his customer in a timely fashion, with insurance, at the lowest price he can so he can pass those savings onto his customer. Joe decides that USPS Ground Advantage service is the best option.

Example 4: Shipping to a Local Customer

Catherine's company, Farm to Table, ships fresh fruits and vegetables within 24 hours of being picked. Everything is locally grown, and members in her neighborhood subscribe to a monthly or seasonal service. Catherine wants to ensure the produce arrives fresh and considers these options:

\$\$\$ Option A Priority Mail Express

Priority Mail Express service will get the produce to her neighborhood customers typically within 1 to 2 business days*. Priority Mail Express service includes insurance up to \$100 and USPS Tracking service at no additional cost. Additionally, she can have the package picked up from her store, saving a trip to the Post Office facility.

\$\$ Option B Priority Mail

Priority Mail service will get the produce to her neighborhood customers typically within 1 to 3 business days*. Priority Mail service includes insurance up to \$100 and USPS Tracking service at no additional cost. Additionally, she can have the package picked up from her store, saving a trip to the Post Office facility.

\$ Option C USPS Connect Local – Same Day/Next Day

Connect Local Same Day/Next Day will get the produce to her neighborhood customers the same day when dropped off by 7 AM, or next day when dropped off after 7 AM. USPS Tracking service is available at no additional cost and free packaging is available up to 25 pounds. Additionally, she can have the package picked up from her store, saving a trip to the Post Office facility.

Catherine's Decision

Catherine wants to ensure the fresh fruits and vegetables arrive fresh to her neighborhood customers as quickly as possible. Catherine decides that USPS Connect Local – Same Day/Next Day service is the best option.

**Actual delivery time depends on origin, destination, and drop-off time. For additional information, visit the [Price Calculator](#).*

APPENDIX C: BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

Business Customer Gateway

The Business Customer Gateway (BCG) provides a single point of entry for several USPS online business services. This makes it quick and easy for shipping and marketing professionals to find the exact tools, resources, and services they need—all in one place. With a BCG account, you will have access to tools such as Full-Service Intelligent Mail, Intelligent Mail for Small Business Mailers (IMSB), Mailer Identifier (MID) and Permit Services, PostalOne! Information Management System, Facility Access and Shipment Tracking (FAST®), and Einduction® and Tracking. With a BCG account, you'll also get access to special promotions and incentive programs, so you can try out new shipping and mailing technology and techniques to set your business apart.

Ready to explore further? Sign up for a free www.usps.com business account.

USPS Connect Local

Looking to offer low-cost, same-day/next-day local delivery? With USPS Connect Local delivery, there's no burdensome approval process or eligibility requirements. Save time and money with competitive pricing, free supplies (Flat Rate Boxes, poly bags, and envelopes), and other tools and services for cost-effective shipping. Sign up for a free www.usps.com business account, review and agree to the online terms of service, and get ready to offer this service to your customers. Talk to your local Postmaster or USPS Sales Team about how USPS Connect Local can meet your needs and to initiate a local agreement.

Visit the USPS Connect Local website to learn more.

Participation in USPS Connect Local requires agreement to program terms and entry of packages close to final destination. Same-day delivery is expected but not guaranteed and may not be available at all locations. Next-day delivery may be impacted by holidays and availability of Sunday delivery. Sunday delivery is available for an additional fee in select locations and is only available for USPS Connect Local shipping services not USPS Connect Local Flat Rate package service.

USPS Connect Regional

If you're a business shipping larger batches of packages (50 or 200 at a time, depending on service) to customers in the same region, USPS Connect Regional service can help you reach customers with next-day shipping. You'll get special prices and expedited handling for meeting package minimums, pre-sorting packages, and taking them to designated USPS facilities close to your customers.

Visit the USPS Connect Regional website to learn more.

Click-N-Ship

[Click-N-Ship](#) service is a convenient way for you or your small business to pay for and print labels from home or the office. All you need to get started is a free www.usps.com residential or business account, a computer, and a standard printer. If you do not have a printer available, check out our [Label Broker](#) option. Click-N-Ship service can be used for USPS Ground Advantage, Priority Mail Express, Priority Mail Express International, Priority Mail, Priority Mail Express International, First-Class Package International Service, and Global Express Guaranteed shipping.

Every Door Direct Mail

Not a national mailer? Use Every Door Direct Mail (EDDM) service to promote your small business in your local community, all without needing a mailing permit or permit imprint. If you're having a sale, opening a new location, or offering coupons, EDMM service can help you mail postcards, menus, and flyers to the right carrier routes. EDMM service allows you to reach customers in targeted neighborhoods without having to provide names or street addresses. The EDMM Online Tool utilizes prior U.S. Census data to map ZIP Code and neighborhoods, allowing you to filter by age, income, or household size.

Watch an overview of EDMM service and download your [free EDMM Advertising Kit](#).

See the [EDMM User Guide](#) for more information.

See the [USPS EDMM](#) webpage for more information.

See the [EDMM-Retail – USPS Marketing Mail Flats Quick Service Guide](#) for more information.

GLOSSARY

A

Address

(1) The location to which the Postal Service is to deliver or return a mailpiece or package. It consists of certain elements such as recipient name, street name, and house number, and city, state, and ZIP Code. (2) The portion of an envelope or parcel that shows the delivery location of the recipient of the mailpiece or package.

Advertising Mail

Any mail that is mailed in volume that consists of marketing. Common examples include flyers, circulars, advertising, newsletters, bulletins, catalogs product samples, and promotional materials.

Airmail M-bags

A type of M-bag that is typically entered as individual receptacles at a USPS Post Office facility.

Army Post Office (APO)

A Post Office facility that receives military mail and packages. Mail and packages addressed to military post offices overseas is subject to certain conditions or restrictions regarding content, preparation, and handling.

Adult Signature

Extra service for domestic mail that requires the signature of an individual 21 years of age or older at the recipient's address.

Automation-Compatible Mail

Mail that meets postal specifications concerning design, size, machine readability, and characteristics so that it can be scanned and processed by automated mail processing equipment efficiently.

Automation Price

A postage price offered to mailers who barcode their letters and flats and meet addressing, readability, and other requirements for processing on automated equipment.

B

Bound Printed Matter (BPM)

A product under Package Services for material that weighs no more than 15 pounds and consists of permanently bound sheets (at least 90 percent of which are printed) with advertising, promotional, directory, editorial matter, or a combination of these. Not available at retail outlets.

Bundle

A group of addressed pieces going to the same destination assembled and secured together as a basic unit of volume mail for processing purposes.

Business Mail

Any mail sent by any business, using any possible mailing method and service.

Business Mail Entry Unit (BMEU)

The area of a retail or dedicated commercial postal facility where mailers present mailings for acceptance that require postal verification, such as presorted and permit imprint commercial mailings.

Business Reply Mail (BRM)

A service that allows a permit holder to receive First-Class Mail and Priority Mail pieces back from customers and pay postage only for the returned pieces. These pieces must have a specific address and format. When the mail is delivered back to the permit holder, postage and per piece charges are collected, usually through an advance deposit account.

C

Certificate of Mailing

An extra service that provides a receipt as evidence of mailing for domestic and international mail

Certified Mail

An extra service that provides the sender proof mailing and delivery. A record of delivery with the recipient's signature is kept by the Postal Service. Certified Mail must be sent by First-Class Mail or Priority Mail service and may be combined with return receipt and/or restricted delivery service.

Classification

The grouping of mailable matter into mail classes and products by price categories, according to content, weight, size, and preparation standards.

Click-N-Ship

A service at www.usps.com that allows customers to print shipping labels from their computers with or without postage for Priority Mail Express, Priority Mail, and USPS Ground Advantage items. Customers pay for postage online with a credit card, and the labels will print with PC Postage indicia.

Commercial Mailing Services

Services that allow higher volumes of mail to be sent at reduced prices with a mailing permit. Special preparation is required for the Postal Service to process this type of mail. Commercial mailing services are also called volume mail, direct mail, advertising mail, and presorted mail.

Commercial Prices

Reduced postage prices offered to mailers in exchange for higher standards of mail preparation, sortation, and destination entry.

Courtesy Reply Mail (CRM)

A preaddressed return envelope or postcard that business mailers provide to a customer for returning a remittance, order, or response. The customer pays the postage.

D

Delivery Confirmation

An extra service that provides the date and time of delivery or, if delivery was attempted but not successful, the date and time of the delivery attempt.

Delivery Unit

The postal facility where the carrier cases the mail for delivery.

Destination Entry

The process of transporting and depositing mail or packages at the postal facilities that serve the addresses on the items in a mailing or shipment. The mailer receives lower prices for destination entry mail.

Diplomatic Post Office (DPO)

A Post Office facility that receives diplomatic mail or packages. Mail or packages addressed to diplomatic post offices overseas is subject to certain conditions or restrictions regarding content, preparation, and handling.

Direct Mail

Another name for marketing mail sent to targeted markets to help renew, maintain, or grow business.

Domestic Mail Manual (DMM)

Postal Service manual that contains the standards for domestic mail services.

E

Eligibility

The qualification standards, such as content, shape, and preparation, that mail or packages must meet for specific prices.

Endorsement

An authorized marking on mail or packages that shows handling instructions or extra services.

Entry Facility

The Postal Service mail processing facility that serves the Post Office facility at which the mail is entered by the mailer. Also called origin facility.

Extra Services

A mail service for a fee in addition to required postage, that provides proof of mailing and/or delivery, or security and insurance. Extra services include Registered Mail, Certified Mail, insured mail, certificate of mailing, restricted delivery, return receipt, return receipt for merchandise, Delivery Confirmation, Signature Confirmation, and collect on delivery. Also called special services or additional services.

F

First-Class Mail (FCM)

A mailing service that includes all matter in handwriting or typewriting, all actual and personal correspondence, bills and statements of account, and matter sealed or otherwise closed against inspection. Standard delivery time is 1 to 5 business days based on where the mail is entered and its destination.

First-Class Mail International (FCMI)

An international service that ships postcards, letters, or large envelopes (flats) containing mailable correspondence or nondutiable documents.

First-Class Package International Service (FCPIS)

An international service for sending packages (packets) weighing 4 pounds or less and with a value of \$400 or less.

Flat

Flat-size (large envelope) mail that exceeds at least one of the maximum dimensions for letter-size mail (11-½ inches long, 6-⅞ inches high, ¼ inch thick) but does not exceed the maximum dimensions for flats (15 inches long, 12 inches high, ¾ inch thick). Dimensions are different for automation price flats. A flat may be unwrapped, sleeved, wrapped, or enveloped.

Fleet Post Office (FPO)

A Post Office facility that receives military mail or packages. Mail or packages addressed to military post offices overseas is subject to certain conditions or restrictions regarding content, preparation, and handling.

G

Girth

The measurement around the thickest part of a mailpiece and package.

H

Hazardous Material

Any article or substance designated by the U.S. Department of Transportation as posing an unreasonable risk to health, safety, or property during transportation.

I

Indicia

Imprinted designations on mail or packages that indicate postage payment (e.g., metered postage or permit imprint).

Insured Mail

An extra service that provides indemnity coverage for a lost, rifled, or damaged article, subject to the standards for the service and payment of the applicable fee.

International Priority Airmail (IPA)

An international service for volume mailings of postcards, letters, large envelopes (flats), packets, and M-bag.

International Mail Manual (IMM)

The Postal Service manual containing standards for mailing from the U.S. to other countries.

International Surface Airlift (ISAL)

An international service for volume mailings of postcards, letters, large envelopes (flats), packets, and M-bag.

L

Length

For letters and postcards, the measurement parallel to the direction of the address of a mailpiece as read. For flats and parcels, length is the longest dimension.

Letter

Letter-size mail. Mailpieces, including cards that, for domestic, are at least 5 inches long, 3-½ inches high, and 0.007 inches thick, but not more than 11-½ inches long, 6-⅞ inches high, ¼ inch thick, or over 3.5 ounces. Pieces that measure over 4-¼ inches high and 6 inches long must be a minimum 0.009 inch thick.

Library Mail

A product under Package Services for items sent to or from or exchanged between academic institutions, public libraries, museums, and other authorized organizations. Books, sound recordings, academic theses, and certain other items may be mailed at the Library Mail price if properly marked.

M

Machinable

The ability of a mailpiece to be sorted by mail processing equipment. (Compare with nonmachinable.)

Mail Class

The classification of mail according to content, dimensions, and weight.

Mail Service Provider

A private vendor that provides a wide range of mailing services such as printing, address quality and standardization, sorting, transporting, and entering mail for a client.

Mailing

1) A group of postcards, letters, and large envelopes (flats) within the same mailing service and mail processing category that may be sorted together under the appropriate standards. 2) the action of depositing or presenting mail at a Post Office facility.

Mailing Fee

An annual fee charged for mailers to use certain commercial mail options.

Mailing Process

Steps followed to prepare, pay postage, and enter mail with the Postal Service. Each method of mailing has its own process.

Mailing Service

The classification of domestic and international mail based mainly on content of postcards, letters, and large envelopes (flats), such as personal correspondence versus printed advertising.

Mailpiece

A single addressed postcard, letter, or large envelope (flat).

M-bag

An international-only service used to send a direct sack of printed matter to a single foreign addressee.

Media Mail

A product under Package Services that consists of domestically sent books, sheet music, printed educational charts, film, videocassettes, CD-ROMs, or other computer-readable media.

Meter

See postage meter.

Meter Stamp

Postage printed by a Postal Service-approved postage meter or PC Postage system directly on a mailpiece or package or a Postal Service-approved label.

Metered Mail

Any class of mail, except Periodicals and Bound Printed Matter, with postage printed by a Postal Service approved postage meter.

Military Mail

Mail that bears a U.S. military delivery or return address and that, in some stage of its transmission, it is in the possession of the Department of Defense's Military Postal Service Agency. Mail and packages addressed to military post offices overseas is subject to certain conditions or restrictions of mailing and shipping regarding content, preparation, and handling.

Minimum Size Standard

The smallest dimensions allowable for all mailable matter.

N

Nonmachinable

Mail that cannot be sorted by mail processing equipment because of size, shape, content, or address legibility. Such mail is normally processed manually and could be subject to a surcharge. Often referred to as *nonstandard*.

Nonmachinable Surcharge

An additional charge on some First-Class Mail, Marketing Mail, USPS Ground Advantage and First-Class Mail International pieces that are nonmachinable. Often referred to as nonstandard surcharge for package services.

Nonmailable Matter

Items that do not meet the established criteria, or other items such as hazardous materials that are not permitted in the mailstream for regulatory and safety reasons.

Nonprofit Prices

A special price that is available to a qualified organization as approved by the Postal Service. Available to authorized Periodical and USPS Marketing Mail mailers.

O

Oversized Price

Price for pieces exceeding 108 inches but not more than 130 inches in combined length and girth.

P

Package Services

A class of commercial mail that comprises three products: Bound Printed Matter, Library Mail, and Media Mail. There is no minimum weight limit for Package Services.

Parcel

Mail that does not meet the mail processing category of letter-size or flat-size mail. It is usually enclosed in a mailing container such as a box.

Parcel Select

A cost-saving ground delivery service that allows medium and large commercial mailers to bring mail to a drop-ship location closer to the ultimate destination. USPS Tracking service is included at no extra cost. Though this service is for mailpieces not mailed at Package Services prices (Bound Printed Matter, Media Mail, or Library Mail), any Package Services content may be mailed as Parcel Select items.

PC Postage

Secure technology used to purchase and print postage using a personal computer or another device.

Periodicals

A commercial, domestic class of mail consisting of authorized magazines, newspapers, or other publications formed of printed sheets that are issued at least four times a year at regular, specific intervals from a known office of publication.

Permit

Any authorization required for specific types of services, preparation, or postage payment.

Permit Imprint

Printed indicia, used in place of an adhesive postage stamp or meter stamp, that shows postage prepayment by an authorized mailer. Often used as a way to pay for commercial postage, such as high-volume mailings.

Pickup On Demand

A service at www.usps.com that allows customers to schedule a pickup of items within a specified time frame for an additional fee.

Postage

Payment for delivery service that is affixed or imprinted onto a mailpiece or package, usually in the form of a postage stamp, permit imprint, or meter impression.

Postage Evidencing System

See postage meter.

Postage Meter

A secure device that generates indicia imprinted on or affixed to

mailpieces or packages to show prepayment of postage. Postage meters are available for lease only from authorized manufacturers.

Postage Stamp

A gummed or self-adhesive paper stamp affixed to mail as payment for postal services.

Postage Statement

Electronic documentation provided by a mailer to the Postal Service that reports the volume of mail being presented and the postage payable or affixed, and that certifies that the mail meets the applicable eligibility and addressing standards for the price claimed.

Postcard

A privately printed mailing card. A postcard does not exceed the maximum dimensions of 6 inches long, 4.25 inches high, and 0.016 inches thick. Dimensions are different for automation price postcards and for commercial mailers.

Precanceled Stamp

1) Stamps canceled by printing across the face before they are sold to mailers for volume mailings. 2) A stamp designated by the Postal Service as a precanceled stamp without cancellation marks. These stamps are used for Presorted First-Class Mail, Marketing Mail, and nonprofit Marketing Mail.

Presorted Mail

A form of mail preparation in which the mailer groups pieces in a mailing by ZIP Code, carrier route, or carrier walk sequence (or other Postal Service–recommended separation). This preparation is required to bypass certain postal operations that qualify for a price discount.

Prices

The postage cost per piece or pound to mail.

Printed Matter

Paper on which words, letters, characters, figures, or images (or any combination of them) not having the character of a bill or statement of account, or of actual and personal correspondence, have been reproduced by any process other than handwriting or typewriting.

Priority Mail

A mail service to send documents and merchandise. The expected delivery standards are day specific within 1 to 3 business days based on distance. Includes tracking, forwarding, return service, and insurance up to \$100.

Priority Mail Express (PME)

The fastest domestic mail service offered by the Postal Service. The expected delivery standards are day specific within 1 to 2 business days by 6 PM, based on distance. This service includes

a Money-Back Guarantee, which includes tracking, forwarding, return service, and insurance up to \$100.

Priority Mail Express International (PMEI)

A reliable high-speed mail service to send documents and merchandise (not prohibited by the destination country) to approximately 180 countries in 3 to 5 business days for many major markets.

Priority Mail International (PMI)

A reliable, cost-effective way to send documents and merchandise not prohibited by the destination country. Standard delivery is 6 to 10 business days.

Prohibited Matter

Any material that is illegal to mail because it can kill or injure an individual or damage other mail. This includes certain poisons and controlled substances and certain flammable or hazardous material.

R

Registered Mail

The most secure service offered by the Postal Service. Through a system of receipts, the Postal Service monitors the movement of a mail or packages from the point of acceptance. The sender receives a receipt at the time of mailing, and a delivery record is maintained by the Postal Service. This service also provides optional indemnity in case of loss or damage when sent domestically. Only available for First Class Mail, USPS Ground Advantage (commercial/retail), and Priority Mail.

Reply Mail

Refers collectively to Business Reply Mail, meter reply mail, permit reply mail, and Courtesy Reply Mail.

Restricted Delivery

A supplemental mail service that generally limits who may receive an item. This service is available for a fee when used with Certified Mail, collect on delivery, insured mail, and Registered Mail service.

Restricted Matter

Any item on which certain mailing restrictions have been imposed for legal reasons other than the risk of harm to persons or property. Examples are motor vehicle master keys, firearms, liquids, and powders.

Retail Mailing Services

Services that allow any quantity of mail to be sent at retail postage prices, including Priority Mail Express, Priority Mail, First-Class Mail, and USPS Ground Advantage. Retail mailing services

generally do not require any sortation or special preparation.

Return Receipt—Electronic Copy

An electronic return receipt requested at the time of mailing provides, for domestic mail, a copy of the signature of an addressee for an article as proof of delivery. It can be sent by fax, by mail, or electronically. This extra service is available for a fee when using Certified Mail service, collect on delivery, mail insured for more than \$200, Registered Mail service, or return receipt for merchandise. The electronic option is not available for items mailed to APO or FPO addresses or U.S. territories, possessions, and freely associated states, with the exception of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. A similar non-electronic service is available for international mail.

Return Receipt—Hard Copy

For domestic mail, the mailing card (PS Form 3811) signed by the addressee of an article and mailed back to the sender as evidence of delivery. This extra service is available for a fee when using Priority Mail Express service, Certified Mail service, collect on delivery, mail insured for more than \$200, Registered Mail service, or return receipt for merchandise. A similar service is available for international mail.

S

Sack

A container generally used to transport carrier route sorted flat-size mail and parcels.

Signature Confirmation

An extra service that provides the recipient signature and the date and time of delivery or attempted delivery.

Stamp

See postage stamp.

Surcharge

An additional fee for certain nonmachinable mail and packages.

U

USPS Ground Advantage

An affordable and reliable way to send packages of up to 70 pounds domestically. The expected delivery standards are day specific within 2 to 5 business days based on distance in the Continental US only. This service includes Free Package Pickup within line of carrier's travel, USPS Tracking service, forwarding, and return service and includes insurance up to \$100.

Marketing Mail

Used to send domestically printed matter, flyers, circulars, advertising, newsletters, bulletins, catalogs, and small parcels that do not contain personal correspondence or merchandise fulfillment, not required to be mailed by First-Class Mail service, and rated for postage partly by weight and partly by the number of pieces in the mailing. A price is given based on the mail preparation work done by the mailer and the place of mail deposit.

V

Verification

A system of checks used to determine if a mailing was properly prepared and if the correct postage was paid.

Z

ZIP Code

The system of 5- or 9-digit numeric codes that identifies the individual Post Office facility or delivery station associated with an address.

