



Simple Packing Tips To Ship Holiday Gifts



How to ship safely at holiday time or any time.

(NAPS)—Sending gifts to friends and family and getting them there intact can be easy, if you know how. Fortunately, the United States Postal Service does and offers these helpful tips:

- To ensure items arrive safely, leave space for extra cushioning inside the package. Stuff glass and fragile, hollow items, such as vases, with newspaper or packing material to avoid damage. Mailing a framed photo? Remove the glass and wrap it separately. Items powered by dry-cell batteries may turn on during handling and make noises or emit light. Make sure the device is turned off or package the batteries separately, preferably in the original manufacturer's packaging. For rules on shipping batteries and other items, please see the online Hazardous, Restricted and Perishable Mail publication. <https://pe.usps.com/HAZMAT/Index>
- Do not wrap the outside (shipping) box. You absolutely should wrap the gifts inside the box if that is your thing. But never wrap the outside box with any kind of paper, even heavy-duty brown craft paper. Paper can easily tear during the shipping process and get caught in package sorting equipment.
- Once your box is securely packed, make sure the address is printed clearly on the outside. Include all address elements, such as apartment numbers, directional information (ex: 123 S Main St. Apt. 2B), and the ZIP code. Don't forget to include a return address. Also, place a card inside the package that contains the delivery and return addresses. This ensures the package can be delivered or returned should the mailing label become dam-

aged or fall off.

- Another good rule of thumb: Don't reuse boxes. They aren't as sturdy as new boxes, and can weaken, become damaged or break open in transit. If you do decide to reuse boxes, make sure any labels or markings are removed, completely covered over by a new label, or crossed out—especially if the box you choose to reuse has labels or markings associated with hazardous, prohibited or restricted materials. Better yet, use the free Priority Mail boxes available at Post Office locations or online at usps.com/freeboxes.
- If you can't get to the Post Office to mail your packages, the Click-N-Ship feature and other online services allow customers to order free Priority Mail boxes, print shipping labels, purchase postage and even request free next-day Package Pickup. Priority Mail includes delivery between one to three days, Priority Mail Express includes delivery between overnight up to two days. Tracking is also included.
- For information on sending packages internationally, visit the USPS International Shipping page. More information and specific restrictions for Air/Army Post Office/Fleet Post Office/Diplomatic Post Office (APO, FPO, and DPO) shipping can also be found on the USPS website, www.usps.com.
- The Postal Service offers many more tips in online "how to" guides. Each video is less than three minutes long and shows how to address packages, ship packages and pack a box so items arrive safely.

For more information and restrictions visit <https://www.youtube.com/c/usps>.

Did You Know?

Sending gifts to friends and family and getting them there intact can be easy, if you heed the tips from the United States Postal Service available online and in "how to" guides on packing, addressing and shipping packages so they arrive safely. Learn more at <https://www.youtube.com/c/usps>.

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gift, friends, family, United States Postal Service, pack, address, ship, package, cushioning, batteries, hazardous restricted and perishable mail, delivery, label, Free Priority Mailboxes, APO, FPO, DPO

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