

It's today, and . . .

The Postal Service will:

- Deliver
 - 316 million pieces of First-Class Mail
 - 2.96 million pieces of Priority Mail
 - 181 thousand pieces of Express Mail
 - 2.8 million pieces of International Mail
 - 46 thousand cards and letters coming into the United States from other countries
 - 700 million total pieces of mail
 - about 85 million pounds of mail
 - to 119 million residences, 9 million businesses and 20 million PO boxes
- Drive nearly 4.1 million miles in our fleet of trucks
- Spend nearly \$1 million on over 400,000 gallons of fuel for the fleet of trucks
- Add 6,000 new delivery points to our nationwide network
- Process 152,000 changes of address
- Forward more than 6.6 billion pieces of mail at no charge to the customer
- Serve 9 million customers at nearly 37,000 retail locations
- Accept nearly 20,000 passport applications
- Cancel 50 million postage stamps on automation equipment
- Issue more than 500,000 money orders
- Have one million visitors on *usps.com*
- Process more than 230,000 transactions at Automated Postal Centers
- Perform at least one heroic act by saving a customer's life, home, or both.
- Receive no tax dollars

Our customers will:

- Ship packages without leaving their desks at work or their kitchens at home
- Order shipping supplies between meetings or errands
- Create Customized Postage with their company logo or their kid's artwork
- Use free, eco-friendly packaging
- Track domestic and international shipments while on the train
- Buy stamps while watching TV
- Hold their mail from the airport
- Change their address while sitting in a coffee shop
- Create greeting cards with a family photo and mail them to relatives without leaving their home
- Download postage-paid mailing labels for packages they are sending from the convenience of their own mailboxes
- Reschedule the delivery of packages while making dinner
- Skip the trip, log onto *usps.com*, use Click-N-Ship and Carrier Pickup
- Use Global Express Guaranteed to ship packages to London, Paris, or Brussels — and know that it will get there in two days
- Save time knowing the U.S. Postal Service is helping them have more time to do the things they want to be doing

Careful preparation of your package helps to ensure safe delivery.

The Box

Choose a box with enough room for cushioning material around the contents. Sturdy paperboard or corrugated fiberboard boxes are best for weights up to 10 pounds. If you are reusing a box, totally remove or obliterate all previous labels and markings with heavy black marker. Do not reuse boxes that have markings for alcoholic beverages, oils, cleaners, or other hazardous or restricted materials.

Where to Find Boxes

You can purchase boxes and tubes of various sizes at most Post Offices or office supply stores. Express Mail and Priority Mail boxes are available free at the Post Office 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 address label provided by the Post Office for Express Mail. To order Express Mail or Priority Mail boxes at no extra charge, call 1-800-222-1811 or visit www.usps.com and click on 'Supplies' under 'Shipping Tools'.

Cushioning

Place the cushioning all around your item or items. You can use newspaper, bubble wrap, "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.

Placing an extra address label with the delivery and return addresses inside the package will ensure that the item can be delivered in case the outside label becomes damaged or falls off.

Mailing Fragile Items

Use foamed plastic or padding to protect your items, placing the cushioning inside hollow items as well. Mark the package "Fragile" or mark "Perishable" on packages that contain food or other items that can spoil. Careful packaging is the best way to safeguard your valuable items against damage.

Mailing Heavy Items

If you are mailing a very heavy or very dense item, start with a sturdy box, 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.

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. Envelopes, flat-size mailing containers, or cards that have partially opened staples are not acceptable for mailing.

Return Address

Print or type your address in the upper left corner on the same side of the package as the delivery address.

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, or a PC Postage system to affix the correct amount. Use stamps, a postage meter, or a PC Postage system to affix the correct amount. You can calculate postage rates and purchase postage online.

Delivery Address

Print or type the delivery address parallel to the longest side of the package. Print or type clearly with a pen or permanent marker so that your address is legible from an arm's length away. Do not use commas or periods.

Confirmation Services

Labels for Delivery Confirmation or Signature Confirmation are placed to the left of the address label.

City, State, and ZIP Code

To find the correct spelling of a city name or to find a ZIP Code, see the ZIP Code Lookup tool or call 1-800-ASK-USPS. Using the correct ZIP Code helps to direct your mail more efficiently and accurately.

Drop Off

Domestic and international mailpieces that weigh 13 ounces or less, with postage stamps affixed, can be dropped in a blue collection box, or handed to your letter carrier. Mailpieces that weigh *more than* 13 ounces, with postage stamps affixed, must be handed to a Retail associate at your local Post Office.

Library Mail

3.1 General

Mailable matter meeting one of the specific eligibility standards in 3.3 or 3.4, as applicable, and that is neither mailed or required to be mailed as First-Class Mail nor entered as Periodicals, may be mailed as Library Mail.

3.2 Sender, Recipient, and Contents

Each piece must show in the address or return address the name of a school, college, university, public library, museum, or herbarium or the name of a nonprofit religious, educational, scientific, philanthropic (charitable), agricultural, labor, veterans, or fraternal organization or association. For Library Mail standards, these nonprofit organizations are defined in 703.1.0. Only the articles described in 3.3 and 3.4 may be mailed at the Library Mail rate.

3.3 Qualified Mailings Between Entities

The items described in this section may be mailed at the Library Mail rate when sent between: (1) schools, colleges, universities, public libraries, museums, and herbariums and nonprofit religious, educational, scientific, philanthropic (charitable), agricultural, labor, veterans, and fraternal organizations or associations; (2) any such institution, organization, or association and an individual who has no financial interest in the sale, promotion, or distribution of the materials; or (3) any such institution, organization, or association and a publisher, if such institution, organization, or association has placed an order to buy such materials for delivery to itself:

- a. Books, consisting wholly of reading matter, scholarly bibliography, or reading matter with incidental blank spaces for notations and containing no advertising, except for incidental announcements of books.
- b. Printed music, whether in bound or sheet form.
- c. Bound volumes of academic theses, whether in typewritten or duplicated form.
- d. Periodicals, whether bound or unbound.
- e. Sound recordings.
- f. Other library materials in printed, duplicated, or photographic form or in the form of unpublished manuscripts.
- g. Museum materials, specimens, collections, teaching aids, printed matter, and interpretive materials for informing and furthering the educational work and interests of museums and herbariums.

3.4 Qualified Mailings "To" or "From"

The following specific items may be mailed at the Library Mail rate when sent to or from schools, colleges, universities, public libraries, museums, and herbariums and to or from nonprofit religious, educational, scientific, philanthropic (charitable), agricultural, labor, veterans, or fraternal organizations:

- a. 16-millimeter or narrower width films, filmstrips, transparencies, slides, and microfilms. All must be positive prints in final form for viewing.
- b. Sound recordings.
- c. Museum materials, specimens, collections, teaching aids, printed matter, and interpretive materials intended for informing and furthering the educational work and interests of museums and herbariums.
- d. Scientific or mathematical kits, instruments, or other devices.
- e. Catalogs of the materials in 3.4a. through 3.4d. and guides or scripts prepared solely for use with such materials.

2.1 Service Objectives

The USPS does not guarantee the delivery of Library Mail within a specified time. Library Mail might receive deferred service. The local post office can provide more information concerning delivery times within its area.

2.2 Postal Inspection

Library Mail is not sealed against postal inspection. Regardless of physical closure, the mailing of articles at Library Mail rates constitutes consent by the mailer to postal inspection of the contents.

2.3 Delivery and Return Addresses

All Library Mail must bear a delivery address. The delivery address on each piece must include the correct ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code. Alternative addressing formats under 602.3.0 may be used. Each piece must bear the sender's return address.

3.3 Mail Markings


Mailers must print the basic required Package Services subclass marking—"Parcel Post" or "PP," "Media Mail," or "Library Mail"—on each piece claimed at the respective rate. The basic required marking must be placed in the postage area (i.e., printed or produced as part of, or directly below or to the left of, the permit imprint indicia or meter stamp or impression). Optionally, the basic required marking may be printed on the shipping address label as service indicators composed of a service icon and service banner




Mailing Free Matter for Blind and Visually Handicapped Persons

Questions and Answers

Publication 347
October 2005



This pamphlet has been produced by the Consumer Advocate, U.S. Postal Service. The pamphlet is designed to answer the questions asked most often about free matter for the blind and other visually handicapped persons. The information in this pamphlet is based on 703.5.0 of the *Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service*, Domestic Mail Manual (DMM®) and *United States Code*, title 39, sections 3403-3405.




Q: Who is eligible to mail items free of postage?

A: Persons who are blind or who cannot read or use conventionally printed matter due to a physical handicap.

Persons must be residents of the United States, including the territories and insular possessions, or American citizens domiciled abroad.

Q: What must I do to qualify to mail items free of postage?

A: You may have a competent authority certify in writing that you are unable to read conventional reading matter. A competent authority includes doctors of medicine; doctors of osteopathy; ophthalmologists; optometrists; registered nurses; therapists; and professional staff of hospitals, institutions, and public or private welfare agencies (e.g., social workers,




caseworkers, counselors, rehabilitation teachers, and superintendents). In the absence of any of these, certification may be made by professional librarians or by any person whose competence under specific circumstances is acceptable to the Library of Congress (see 36 CFR 701.10(b)(2)(i)).

A postmaster may extend the free matter privilege to you based on his or her personal knowledge of your eligibility.

Q: Where must I submit the documentation?


A: You must submit the documentation to the Post Office™ where you will make or receive postage-free mailings. You will then be considered eligible to use the free mailing privilege.



Q: Which matter may I mail free of postage?

A: Under the conditions specified below, the following matter is eligible:

1. Reading matter in Braille or 14-point or larger sightsaving type and musical scores.
2. Paper, records, tapes, and other matter for the production of reading matter, musical scores, or sound reproductions for eligible persons.
3. Equipment and parts for equipment, such as Braille writers, used for writing by eligible persons or for educational purposes.
4. Sound playback equipment specially designed or adapted for the use of visually handicapped persons.
5. Equipment or parts for equipment specifically



designed or adapted
for use by visually
handicapped persons,
such as Braille watches,
white canes, and similar
equipment.


Q: Are there restrictions on this
matter?

A: The matter may not contain
any advertising.

Musical or other sound
recordings not specifically
designed for use by visually
handicapped persons are not
eligible for free mailing.

Matter having a required
charge, rental, subscription,
or other fee — unless the fee
does not exceed the cost of
the item — is not eligible for
free mailing.

Empty shipping materials for
mailing eligible matter may not
be sent free and must bear the
full applicable postage.




The mail is subject to inspection by the Postal Service™.

Q: Who can mail eligible matter postage-free and to whom can it be mailed?

A: Individuals, libraries, and other noncommercial organizations serving eligible persons may mail the above matter free of postage to eligible persons and to organizations serving eligible persons. Eligible persons may return matter to the mailers free of postage. Eligible persons may exchange the above matter among themselves free of postage. Libraries and other noncommercial organizations may exchange such matter among themselves free of postage.

Commercial producers of the above matter may mail such matter free of postage to an eligible person on the




additional condition that if a charge or fee is required it does not exceed the cost of the matter.

Q: What class of mail is this matter?

A: It is not considered part of any particular class of mail. However, it is treated as First-Class Mail®. It may be forwarded and if undeliverable, returned to the mailer free of charge. The matter must meet all appropriate size and weight standards.

Q: Can I mail letters free of postage?

A: An eligible person may mail unsealed letters that contain no advertising free of postage. The letters must be in raised characters (Braille), in 14-point or larger sightsaving type, or in the form of sound recordings. Handwritten, printed, or typed letters that are in a type size smaller than 14-point are



subject to the applicable rate of postage when mailed **to** or **from** an eligible person. Also subject to applicable postage are bills paid by mail by eligible persons and letters in any form when mailed **to** eligible persons from ineligible persons.


Q: Why must I mail letters unsealed?

A: You must mail letters unsealed to allow inspection by Postal Service authorities to ensure that the matter qualifies for postage-free mailing.

Q: Are extra services available for free mail for eligible persons?

A: A mailer may insure a postage-free parcel by paying only the required insurance fee.

Matter sent by all other extra services, such as Express Mail[®], Certified Mail[™], or Registered Mail[™], requires payment of postage plus the




full fees charged for the extra postal service.

Q: What must be marked on mail to show that it qualifies for mailing free of postage?

A: In the upper right corner of the address side of the envelope or parcel where the postage would normally be placed, the words "**FREE MATTER FOR THE BLIND OR HANDICAPPED**" must be placed. The words may be printed, rubber stamped, or handwritten.

Q: Are special arrangements possible for delivery or pickup of free mail for eligible persons?

A: Eligibility for free mailing for the blind or other visually handicapped persons does not encompass such special arrangements. Post Offices may be able to make special arrangements depending on the local circumstances. You




should contact your local Post Office to request special arrangements. Such requests will be handled in accordance with the postal regulations concerning requests for special arrangements by handicapped persons.

Q: Is international service available for blind and other visually handicapped persons?

A: Yes, the same general rules apply, except that the items that may be mailed are limited to:

1. Books, periodicals, and other matter (including unsealed letters) impressed in Braille or other special type for the use of the blind.
2. Plates for embossing literature for the blind.
3. Disks, tapes, or wires bearing voice recordings and special paper intended solely for the use of blind




or visually handicapped persons, provided that they are sent by or addressed to an officially recognized institute for the blind.

4. Sound recordings or tapes that are mailed by blind or other visually handicapped persons.
5. Items allowable within the United States.
6. Articles weighing 15 pounds or less.

Matter may be sent by airmail or economy mail. However, **postage is free only if sent by economy mail.**

Q: What must be marked on international mail to show that it qualifies for mailing free of postage?

A: "MATTER FOR THE BLIND" must be placed in the upper-right corner. For **economy mail** accepted as matter for the blind, the




word "FREE" must be placed immediately above the words.

If mailed by an officially recognized institution for the blind, the institution's name must appear in the address or the return address for the following items:

- a. Disks, tapes, or wires bearing voice recordings.
- b. Special paper intended solely for the use of the blind.

Q: Where can I get help if problems occur while using the procedures for free mailing for the blind and visually handicapped?

A: Most problems can be resolved at your local Post Office. You may make inquiries or express concerns by telephone, letter, or in person. If a problem cannot be resolved satisfactorily at your local Post Office, you may call



our Customer Service toll-free
number at 1-800-ASK-USPS
(1-800-275-8777) or write to
the Consumer Advocate at the
following address:

CONSUMER ADVOCATE
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
475 L'ENFANT PLZ SW RM 5821
WASHINGTON DC 20260-2200

USPS Pricing - Library Mail
Effective May 12, 2008

Weight Not Over (Pounds)	Single Piece	5-Digit Presort	Basic Presort
1	2.12	1.35	1.81
2	2.45	1.68	2.14
3	2.78	2.01	2.47
4	3.11	2.34	2.80
5	3.44	2.67	3.13
6	3.77	3.00	3.46
7	4.10	3.33	3.79
8	4.43	3.66	4.12
9	4.76	3.99	4.45
10	5.09	4.32	4.78
11	5.42	4.65	5.11
12	5.75	4.98	5.44
13	6.08	5.31	5.77
14	6.41	5.64	6.10
15	6.74	5.97	6.43
16	7.07	6.30	6.76
17	7.40	6.63	7.09
18	7.73	6.96	7.42
19	8.06	7.29	7.75
20	8.39	7.62	8.08
21	8.72	7.95	8.41
22	9.05	8.28	8.74
23	9.38	8.61	9.07
24	9.71	8.94	9.40
25	10.04	9.27	9.73
26	10.37	9.60	10.06
27	10.70	9.93	10.39
28	11.03	10.26	10.72
29	11.36	10.59	11.05
30	11.69	10.92	11.38
31	12.02	11.25	11.71
32	12.35	11.58	12.04
33	12.68	11.91	12.37
34	13.01	12.24	12.70
35	13.34	12.57	13.03
36	13.67	12.90	13.36
37	14.00	13.23	13.69
38	14.33	13.56	14.02
39	14.66	13.89	14.35
40	14.99	14.22	14.68
41	15.32	14.55	15.01
42	15.65	14.88	15.34
43	15.98	15.21	15.67
44	16.31	15.54	16.00
45	16.64	15.87	16.33
46	16.97	16.20	16.66
47	17.30	16.53	16.99
48	17.63	16.86	17.32
49	17.96	17.19	17.65
50	18.29	17.52	17.98
51	18.62	17.85	18.31
52	18.95	18.18	18.64
53	19.28	18.51	18.97
54	19.61	18.84	19.30
55	19.94	19.17	19.63

USPS Pricing - Library Mail
Effective May 12, 2008

Weight Not Over (Pounds)	Single Piece	5-Digit Presort	Basic Presort
56	20.27	19.50	19.96
57	20.60	19.83	20.29
58	20.93	20.16	20.62
59	21.26	20.49	20.95
60	21.59	20.82	21.28
61	21.92	21.15	21.61
62	22.25	21.48	21.94
63	22.58	21.81	22.27
64	22.91	22.14	22.60
65	23.24	22.47	22.93
66	23.57	22.80	23.26
67	23.90	23.13	23.59
68	24.23	23.46	23.92
69	24.56	23.79	24.25
70	24.89	24.12	24.58

State/Territory Abbreviations

Alabama	AL	Montana	MT
Alaska	AK	Nebraska	NE
American Samoa	AS	Nevada	NV
Arizona	AZ	New Hampshire	NH
Arkansas	AR	New Jersey	NJ
California	CA	New Mexico	NM
Colorado	CO	New York	NY
Connecticut	CT	North Carolina	NC
Delaware	DE	North Dakota	ND
District of Columbia	DC	Northern Mariana Is.	MP
Florida	FL	Ohio	OH
Georgia	GA	Oklahoma	OK
Guam	GU	Oregon	OR
Hawaii	HI	Palau	PW
Idaho	ID	Pennsylvania	PA
Illinois	IL	Puerto Rico	PR
Indiana	IN	Rhode Island	RI
Iowa	IA	South Carolina	SC
Kansas	KS	South Dakota	SD
Kentucky	KY	Tennessee	TN
Louisiana	LA	Texas	TX
Maine	ME	Utah	UT
Marshall Islands	MH	Vermont	VT
Maryland	MD	Virginia	VA
Massachusetts	MA	Virgin Islands	VI
Michigan	MI	Washington	WA
Minnesota	MN	West Virginia	WV
Mississippi	MS	Wisconsin	WI
Missouri	MO	Wyoming	WY

Suffix/Descriptor/Directional Abbreviations*

Avenue	AVE	Lake	LK
Boulevard	BLVD	Lane	LN
Court	CT	Mountain	MTN
Center	CTR	Parkway	PKWY
Drive	DR	Place	PL
Expressway	EXPY	Road	RD
Heights	HTS	Station	STA
Highway	HWY	Street	ST
Island	IS	Turnpike	TPKE
Junction	JCT	Valley	VLY
<hr/>			
Apartment	APT	North	N
Building	BLDG	East	E
Floor	FL	South	S
Suite	STE	West	W
Unit	UNIT	Northeast	NE
Room	RM	Southeast	SE
Department	DEPT	Northwest	NW
		Southwest	SW

*For a complete listing, see Postal Service Publication 28, *Postal Addressing Standards*.

Addressing for Success

Publication 221
August 1995

The Right Way...

**MR JAMES JONES
4417 BROOK ST NE
WASHINGTON DC 20019-4649**

Common Addressing Problems...

Not Enough Contrast

MR JAMES JONES
4417 BROOK ST NE
WASHINGTON DC 20019-4649

Serif Type Font — Not All Capital Letters

Mr James Jones
4417 Brook St NE
Washington DC 20019-4649

Script Type Font Used

*Mr James Jones
4417 Brook St NE
Washington DC 20019-4649*

Characters Touch

MR JAMES JONES
4417 BROOK ST NE
WASHINGTON DC 20019-4649

Address Not Visible Through Window

MR JAMES JONES
4417 BROOK ST NE
WASHINGTON DC 20019-4649

Logo Below Delivery Address Line

MR JAMES JONES
4417 BROOK ST NE
WASHINGTON DC 20019-4649



Address Slants

MR JAMES JONES
4417 BROOK ST NE
WASHINGTON DC 20019-4649

Information Below Delivery Address Line

Mr James Jones
4417 Brook St NE
Washington DC 20019-4649
Attn: R JONES

Addressing for Success

Publication 221
August 1995

Make your mail machinable and readable...

Optical character readers (OCRs) and barcodes sorters (BCSs) increase the speed, efficiency, and accuracy of processing your mail while keeping postal operating costs down. These computerized mail processing machines are located in post offices across the nation and are programmed to "read" and sort up to 36,000 pieces of mail per hour. That's 10 pieces every second. But if your mail isn't technically compatible, you'll miss the related benefits.

So what type of mail is considered technically compatible? "Machinable" mail is the right size and shape to speed with ease through the equipment. "Readable" mail is quickly and accurately read, coded, and sorted by the equipment.

Processing Equipment

The OCR

Each piece of mail passes by the computer's scanner for a quick read of the delivery address. Then the OCR's printer sprays on a delivery point barcode for that address. Next, the mailpiece zooms on to one of the OCR's sorting channels reserved for the proper delivery area. From there, the barcoded mail is fed to BCSs for fast final separations — right down to the letter carriers who deliver it.

The OCR is easily confused by sloppy handwriting, highly stylized characters, extraneous printing, and incorrectly placed address information.

The Barcode Sorter

As the barcode on your mailpiece shoots past the scanner, it is quickly read and sent to the appropriate channel for delivery.

Automation Requirements

Size

Make sure that your letter mail is the proper size. Mailpieces smaller than the dimensions below are not mailable. Letter mail larger than the dimensions is mailable but must bypass the OCR and be processed through slower and less efficient manual methods.

Dimensions	Minimum	Maximum
Height	3 1/2"	6 1/8"
Length	5"	11 1/2"
Thickness	.007"	1/4" *

* Card stock thickness should not exceed .0095".

Address Location

The OCR looks for the address within a rectangular space on each mailpiece, called the **OCR read area**. All lines of the address should fall within the OCR read area for the best results. No portion of the return address should appear in the OCR read area.

Address Lines

Keep address lines in the same order as shown in the illustration below. Make sure the address is as complete as possible, including all apartment or suite numbers and proper delivery designations such as RD, ST, NW, and S.

Address Characters

Capitalize everything, using plain block letters or a sans serif typeface such as Helvetica. Omit all punctuation, except the hyphen in the ZIP+4 code. Use abbreviations whenever possible.

Spacing

The OCR must see a clear vertical space between each character and each word or it won't know where one ends and the next begins. It also needs a clear horizontal space between each line of the address. Clear spaces between words should be at least equal to the width of one full-size character, like a capital "M."

Barcode Clear Area

The barcode clear area must remain free of all printing, markings, or colored borders and allow for a clean display of the barcode.

Non-Address Information

Extraneous printing such as advertising copy or company logos should be positioned above the delivery address line. The space below and on either side of the delivery address line should be clear of all printing and markings not actually part of the address.

Foreign Addresses

Foreign mailings should have the country name, printed in capital letters, as the only information on the bottom line. The postal zone, if any, should be included with the city. For example:

MR THOMAS CLARK
117 RUSSELL DRIVE
LONDON W1P6HQ
ENGLAND

Window Envelopes

The entire address must always be visible through window envelopes. If part of the address is hidden, the OCR rejects the envelope and sends it off for manual processing.

Print Quality and Color

The OCR performs best with black ink on a white background. Although certain color combinations are acceptable, it cannot read the address if there is not enough contrast between the ink and paper. Keep the ink as dark as possible and the background as light as possible.

If you have any questions concerning your mail and our computerized processing equipment, please contact the nearest Postal Business Center. They will be glad to help.

