



UNIT-3

Mail Services and Shipping

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

Unit 3

Mail Services and Shipping

Mail Services and Shipping

Beyond a Letter and a Stamp

Mail is an important method of communication between a company and the outside business world. The administrative assistant usually handles the daily processing of mail. This may include sorting the mail and distributing it to the proper departments or individuals. It may also include opening the employer's mail, prioritizing it, and gathering the necessary preliminary information needed to answer specific requests or solve problems.

Sending out business mail involves much more than a letter and a stamp, even when those letters are sent by the hundreds of thousands. There are larger documents and packages to be mailed, varying timetables to be met, and destinations ranging from next door to around the world. Dozens of work-saving, timesaving, money-saving strategies can help move the mail more efficiently

A competent assistant should become acquainted with these profit-boosting moves, from the best physical ways to prepare the mail to the advantages of one mail service over another. He or she should also keep abreast of U.S. Postal Service (USPS) rules and regulations and methods of moving the mail. Neither you nor the company may need all this information at present, but companies constantly change and grow. The assistant who can fulfill a company's new mailing needs—or who knows where to get the information quickly—is invaluable.

Addressing for Success

A company is judged by the way its letters are composed and spaced on the pages, and even by the manner in which its envelopes are addressed. All of this does more than simply create a good impression; it affects whether the mail is delivered in a timely fashion.

The USPS relies on computerized mail-processing machines—optical character readers (OCRs) and bar-code sorters (BCSs)—designed to increase the speed, efficiency, and accuracy of processing mail while keeping postal operating costs down. Consistently accurate delivery, faster mail turnaround, and greater profits are just some of the ways your company can benefit from this state-of-the-art system.

Administrative Assistant's and Secretary's Handbook

This high-speed equipment is programmed to “read” and sort up to thirty-six thousand pieces of mail per hour. That’s ten pieces every second. But if your company’s mail is not technically compatible, these sophisticated machines will not be able to sort it. Your mail will have to be sorted by hand, and the company will miss the related benefits of the equipment.

Two factors determine whether mail is considered technically compatible: (1) mail that is “machinable” or, in other words, the right size and shape to speed with ease through the equipment; and (2) mail that is electronically “readable,” or capable of being read, coded, and sorted by the equipment.

The following is a list of the most common addressing problems:

- Not enough contrast
- Script-type font used
- Address not visible through window
- Address slants
- Serif type font
- Not all capital letters
- Characters touch
- Logo behind delivery address line
- Information below delivery address line

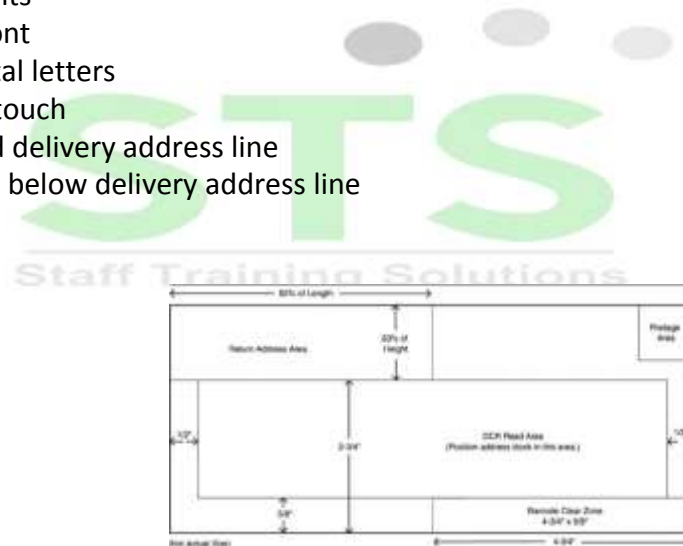


Figure 3.1

How Your Company Can Receive the Benefits

There are a variety of issues related to successful mail delivery, such as the size of your letters, address information and location, bar-code area, the use of windowed envelopes, and print quality.

Size

Begin by making sure that your letter mail is the proper size. The maximum size for a first class letter is 12 inches by 15 inches by $\frac{3}{4}$ inches thick. Items of the proper size will speed through the machines without a hitch.

Envelopes or cards smaller than the minimums will not be delivered. Letter mail larger than the maximums may be mailed, but it must bypass the OCR and be processed through slower and less efficient manual or mechanized methods. It may also be subject to a surcharge even though the postage is correct for the weight.

Address Location

The OCR looks for the address within an imaginary rectangle on each piece of mail called the OCR read area (**Figure 3.1**). Make some quick measurements of your company's envelope stationery. The OCR will not have trouble finding the delivery address if it's located within the following boundaries:

- Illustration courtesy of the United States Postal Service.
- Sides of the rectangle: $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in from the right and left edges
- Bottom of the rectangle: $\frac{5}{8}$ inch up from the bottom edge
- Top of the rectangle: $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches up from the bottom edge

To provide the OCR with the information needed for the finest sort, put all the lines of the address within the above area. If that is not possible, it will still help to place as many address lines in the OCR read area as you can. A WORD OF CAUTION: Make sure no portion of the return address appears in the read area.

Foreign Addresses

Foreign mailings should have the country name printed in capital letters as the only information on the bottom line. The postal delivery zone, if any, should be included with the city, not after the country. For example:

Mr. Thomas Clark
117 Russell Drive
London WIP 6HQ
ENGLAND

Non-Address Information

Extraneous (non-address) printing that appears in or near the OCR read area could cause the piece of mail to be rejected. To ensure that the equipment locates and reads only the delivery address, non-address information (advertising copy, company logos, etc.) that must appear in the read area should be positioned above the delivery address line. In other words, the space below and on either side of the delivery address line within the read area should be clear of all printing and other markings, not actually part of the address. Positioning such information as far away from the address as possible also helps.

Bar Code Area

After reading an address, the OCR will print the appropriate bar code on the bottom of the piece of mail. Then, by reading the code, BCSs quickly route each envelope and card to its destination. But BCSs recognize only bar codes and reject mail that has some other type of printing where the bar code goes. Make sure the bar code area (see **Figure 3.1**) remains free of all markings.

Window Envelopes

If your company uses window envelopes, be certain that the entire address is always visible, even during full movement of the insert. If part of the address is hidden, the OCR will reject the envelope and send it off for manual or mechanized processing.

Address Characters

The OCR will read most typewritten and other machine-printed addresses (see **Figure 3.2**). It cannot read type styles such as script, italic, and highly stylized characters. It also has trouble deciphering dot-matrix print if the dots that form each character are not touching each other. Among the best typeface designs to choose from are those known as sans serif.

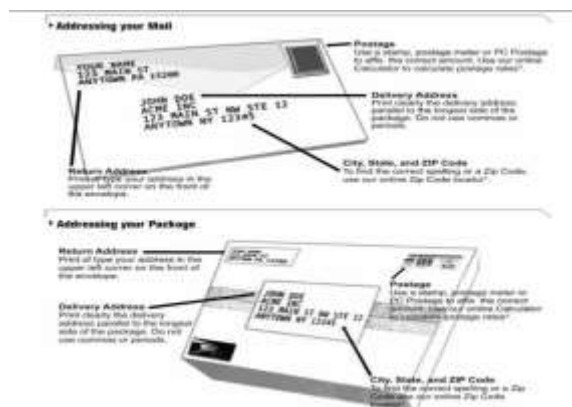


Figure 3.2

Print Quality and Color

Print quality is of great importance to the OCR. It quickly reads clear, sharp print but may not be able to distinguish characters that are faded, broken, or smudged. Black ink on a white background is best. Although certain color combinations are acceptable, the OCR 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.

Spacing

Spacing between characters, words, and address lines is equally important. The OCR must see a clear vertical space between each character and each word, or it will not know where one ends and the next one begins. For similar reasons, it needs a clear horizontal space between each line of the address.

Postal Automation: Encoding for Business Mailers

Even if an address is sharply imprinted and speeds through the OCR, the letter itself won't be deliverable if the information in the address is incorrect. If your company maintains its address list on computer, the Postal Service can help you here, too. Suppose your company has an in-house list of its best customers. The Postal Business Center for your area may be able to help you clean up your list and add valuable ZIP + 4 (5-digit zip code plus 4-digit addendum) and carrier route information.

The Postal Service provides this service for your company because the benefits are mutual: for your company, more accurate and readable addresses, which provides faster sorting of mail and fewer undeliverable pieces (undeliverable Third-Class Mail is money thrown away), and for the USPS, more efficient moving of the mail, saving it money, which can then be passed onto customers by holding the line on rates.

1. To clean up your list, here is what you can do:
2. Standardize your address list, making sure cities match the zip codes on the list.
3. Change all characters to uppercase for increased readability by automation equipment.
4. Correct minor misspellings and add missing directions and suffixes.
5. Validate or correct each five-digit zip code.
6. Add the extra digits of ZIP + 4 codes.
7. Give you a report on any address that cannot be coded. For example, you'll discover which address needs an apartment or suite number to be complete ServicesMail or which address does not exist as given.

Packaging

Much of the mail you'll be asked to send out as an administrative assistant will consist of letters and documents. But even with a mailroom on the premises, you may have to prepare and send out the occasional package yourself.

For a package to arrive in good condition at its destination, it's important to observe four basic principles in packaging your shipments:

Use a corrugated container. These "cardboard boxes" come in a variety of strengths and weights. Primarily, there are three basic types: single-wall, double-wall, and triple-wall containers. You can tell the difference by examining the sides of the box and noticing the number of layers. Single-wall containers have two out-side liners and a wavy corrugated medium in the middle. Double-wall containers have two wavy corrugated mediums in the middle separated by a third liner. Triple-wall containers have three corrugated mediums and a total of four liners.

Select a box that is large enough to allow some room around the contents in every direction. This will protect the contents from punctures, tears, or rips on the corners or side of the box when turning in transit.

Boxes are available from many shipping supply companies, as well as mailing and packaging chain stores. Make sure that the box will support the weight of your shipment. Every box has a stamp printed on it specifying the maximum weight it will support. Double-wall and triple-wall containers are stronger than most single-wall boxes. It is not a good idea to reuse shipping containers unless they are in good shape and will not be supporting much weight. Moisture and other shipping conditions tend to lessen the strength of corrugated containers.

To see whether a box is strong enough for mailing your item, look for the manufacturer's strength certification on the bottom of the box. The first and last measurements are the most important to you. "BURSTING TEST" shows you (in pounds per square inch) how well the fiberboard can resist rupture or breaking. "GROSS WT LT" shows you (in pounds) how much weight the box can hold. Once you know the load type, weight, and size of your item, you can use **Table 3.1** to choose a box by grade if necessary.

Maximum Weight of Box and Contents

Easy and Average Loads (pounds)	Difficult Loads (pounds)	Maximum Length Plus Girth (inches)	Box Grade
20	—	67	125
40	20	100	175
65	40	108	200
70	65	108	275
—	70	108	350
—	70	130	350

TABLE 3.1 Box Grade Requirements

Protect the contents.

Use wadded-up newspaper, crumpled brown grocery bags, air bubble pack, foam peanuts, or shredded paper. Depending on the contents of the package, it may be a good idea to wrap them in plastic as well to keep the packing material from sticking to them or getting inside. The packing material should be placed on the bottom, on all four sides, and on the top to provide several inches of protection between the contents and the sides of the box.

Close the box securely

Most shipping companies, including the USPS, will not accept boxes tied with string. Nor should you use masking tape or regular cellophane tape; neither has enough strength to keep the box closed. Instead, use carton sealing tape, pressure-sensitive place tape, water-activated paper tape, or water-activated reinforced tape. In general, you should apply three strips of tape to the top and the bottom. One strip should seal the box, and the other two strips should seal the sides.

Use the proper labeling.

Make sure you include a zip code; as an added precaution, you may want to include the addressee's telephone number. Your company's return address is also important. You never know if the recipient has moved or is out of town and cannot receive your shipment. In some cases, your shipment can be held at the destination, but there are time limits on this. It's also a good idea to pack a copy of the label with all of the identifying information inside the box so if the outside label is damaged or removed, the shipper can determine the destination by opening the box. When applying your labels to the package, always place them on the top, away from seams or box edges. Then apply several strips of clear carton sealing tape over the label to prevent it from falling off.

You should write both addresses in waterproof ink (or type them on a label), using letters that can be easily read from 30 inches away (arm's length). Ten- to 12-point type is a good size for computer-printed labels.

The address format preferred by the Postal Service uses uppercase letters and has a uniform left margin in the address block. For example:

LUIS ENSOR
23 MAPLE CT APT 4
ANYTOWN, CA 99887-7665

On the outside of your parcel, you should put special markings like those listed below. They let postal employees know the nature of the parcel's contents. But do not assume that the markings in themselves will keep your parcel from getting damaged.

- Mark "Fragile" on parcels that contain breakable items.
- Mark "Perishable" on parcels that contain food or other items that can decay or spoil.
- Mark "Do Not Bend" on parcels that contain photographs, artwork, or similar items, but only if they are protected with a stiffener like fiberboard.

You should put these special markings in three places: above the address, below the postage, and on the back or bottom of your parcel. If you prefer, ask a post office window clerk to rubber stamp your parcel with these markings.

For odd-shaped or extremely fragile objects, it's best to check with the shipping service for advice on how to package the item and the best way to send it.

Hazardous and Illegal Items

Except as permitted by mailing standards, it is illegal to send through the U.S. Mail any article, composition, or material that can kill or injure a person, obstruct mail service, or damage property. Harmful matter includes, but is not limited to

- All kinds of poison or matter containing poison
- All snakes, turtles, spiders, poisonous animals (except scorpions), poisonous insects, and poisonous reptiles
- All disease germs or scabs
- All explosives, flammable material, and mechanical, chemical, or other devices or compositions that can catch fire or explode

There are also legal restrictions on who may mail the following items and how they must be prepared for mailing:

- Firearms, knives, and sharp instruments
- Drugs and narcotics
- Other controlled substances as defined by federal law and related federal regulations
- Live scorpions
- Locksmithing devices
- Vehicle master keys

Certain potentially harmful or dangerous articles and substances may be mailed if special packaging and labeling requirements are met. Contact your local postmaster for details and ask for Publication 2, [Packaging for Mailing](#).

Forwarding First-Class and Other Mail

First-Class Mail is forwarded at no charge for one year. Second-Class Mail, including magazines and newspapers, is forwarded at no charge for sixty days from the effective date of a change-of-address order. All post offices have information about holding mail, temporary changes of address, and forwarding and return of other classes of mail.

Other Special Mail Services

In addition to the services already outlined, the USPS offers a wide variety of other options to provide customers maximum convenience and to give individual pieces of mail special handling or protection.

Any piece of mail traveling by one of these special services must be so labeled. The appropriate marking (registered, insured, certified, delivery tracking, etc.) should be placed above the delivery address and to the right of the return address.

Post Office Box and Caller Services

Post office box and caller services are available at many post offices for an annual fee. Post office box delivery is a secure and private means of getting your mail any time the post office lobby is open. With post offices conveniently located near most businesses, you can get a jump on your day by picking up your company's mail at a post office box in the morning.

Caller (pickup) service, available when post office retail windows are open, is for customers who receive a large volume of mail or those who need a box number address when no boxes are available. Call your post office for more information.

Passport Applications

You can apply for a passport at more than 1,200 postal facilities nationwide. State Department regulations require that each applicant present two recent photographs (2 inches by 2 inches), valid identification, and a certified copy of his or her birth certificate, along with the appropriate fee when applying for a new passport. The passport fee may be paid in different ways, including in cash, by check, or by money order. For additional information, call the State Department information line nearest you or your local post office.

Money Orders

Because you should never send cash through the mail, money orders are a safe way to send money when checks cannot be used. The special color-blend, Benjamin Franklin watermark, metal security thread, and twice imprinting of the dollar amount are incorporated security features. You can buy domestic and international money orders at all post offices in amounts up to \$1,000. Military money orders can be purchased on U.S. military ships and foreign bases.

If your money order is lost or stolen, present your customer receipt, and the money order can be replaced. For a small fee, you can obtain a copy of a money order for up to two years after the date it is paid.

Address Changes

Before moving from one location to another, each company or individual should obtain a Mover's Guide from the local post office.

It's best to notify the post office several weeks in advance of the move to keep the mail coming without interruption. Be sure the effective date of the change is on the notification form. Your complete new address on the notification form should include directions (North, East, South, West), the correct suffix (Street, Avenue, Road, Circle), suite number, rural route number, box number, and correct zip code or ZIP + 4 code if known—all essential to proper addressing and fast delivery of your mail.

Collect on Delivery (COD) Service

Use COD service when your company wants to collect for merchandise and postage when the merchandise is delivered. COD service may be used for merchandise sent by First-Class Mail, Express Mail, Priority Mail, Third- or Fourth-Class Mail, or registered mail. The merchandise must have been ordered by the addressee.

The fee charged for this service includes insurance protection against loss or damage, although the service is limited to items valued at a maximum of \$1,000. COD service is not available for international mail.

Merchandise Return Service

Merchandise return service is available to authorized parties through a special permit. The service enables one of your company's customers to return a parcel and have the postage paid by you. Under this arrangement, the company provides the customer with instructions and a special label to attach to the parcel if it must be returned. The customer applies the label to the parcel and deposits it at a post office or in a mailbox. Unless the label is provided, the customer must pay the required postage charges.

Certified Mail

Certified Mail service provides the mailer with a receipt and a record of the delivery of the item mailed from the post office from which it is delivered. No record is kept at the post office at which the item is mailed. Certified Mail is handled in the ordinary mail and is not covered by insurance. The matter mailed usually has no intrinsic value, with the sender wishing only to be sure that it has been sent to the correct point of receipt. If the item mailed does have intrinsic value, it should be sent via registered mail, not certified mail. Certified Mail may be sent special delivery if additional postage is paid. An additional fee is also charged if delivery is restricted

Restricted Delivery

Restricted delivery means that the sender's mail is delivered only to the addressee or to someone authorized in writing to receive mail for the addressee. Restricted delivery is offered in connection with return receipt service and is available only for Registered Mail, Certified Mail, COD mail, and mail insured for more than \$50.

Restricted delivery mail addressed to officials of government agencies, members of the legislative and judicial branches of federal and state government, members of the diplomatic corps, minors, and individuals under guardianship can be delivered to an agent without written authorization from the addressee.

Insurance

Protection against loss or damage to packages with contents valued in any amount up to \$5,000 is available. The fee is based on the amount of insurance desired. Insurance can be purchased for Third- and Fourth-Class Mail, as well as for Third- and Fourth-Class matter that is mailed at the Priority Mail or First-Class Mail rate. Insurance coverage up to \$25,000 can be purchased on registered mail, the most secure service offered by the Postal Service. For articles insured for more than \$50, a receipt of delivery is signed by the recipient and filed at the delivery post office.

Do not over-insure your packages since the amount of insurance coverage for loss will be the actual value, less depreciation. No payments are made for sentimental losses or for any expenses incurred as a result of the loss. For example, if you send a package containing a three-year-old computer that was originally purchased for \$2,500, its actual value (due to depreciation) might only be \$800. Even if you insured the computer for \$2,500, if it were damaged or lost, the insurance would pay only the current value of \$800.

Registered Mail

The most secure option offered by the post office is registered mail. Registered articles are placed under tight security from the point of mailing to the delivery office, providing added protection for valuable and important mail. Insurance may be purchased on domestic registered mail up to \$25,000 at the option of the mailer. Return receipt and restricted delivery services are available for additional fees. Registered mail to Canada is subject to a \$1,000 indemnity limit. For all other foreign countries, the indemnity is currently \$40.45. First-Class or Priority Mail postage is required on domestic registered mail.

There are special packaging requirements for registered mail. For example, you can't send a soft-sided package, put tape over the edges, or reinforce an old box with tape. The box must be able to accept a postage ink stamp, and slick tape surfaces will not.

Special Handling

Special handling service is required for parcels whose unusual contents require additional care in transit and handling. Special handling is not required for parcels sent by First-Class Mail, Express Mail, or Priority Mail. Examples of contents requiring additional care—and thus, special handling—include live poultry or bees. Special handling is available for Standard Mail only, including insured and COD mail. This service provides preferential handling to the extent practical in dispatch and transportation.

Special handling service is not necessary for sending ordinary parcels even when they contain fragile items. Breakable items will receive adequate protection if they are packed with sufficient cushioning and clearly marked "FRAGILE." Use registered mail for valuable or irreplaceable items.

Information on the Internet

A wealth of information is available at your fingertips when you visit the U.S. Postal Service's website at www.usps.com. You can look up ZIP + 4 codes, track your mail, get information on the latest postal rates, and find answers to frequently asked questions.

If you keep exploring, you can find postal news releases and learn about the history of the Postal Service. The Inspection Service has included information on consumer fraud and other crimes and information about the history of the Inspection Service. The website is continually changing, so you

should visit often for new postal information. You also have an opportunity via the website to make inquiries and request additional information.

Alternatives to the USPS

Although documents, letters, and advertisements are usually shipped through the USPS, it is likely that your company will also use an alternative form of service—for example, United Parcel Service or FedEx Express. Many airlines have an air-freight express service that can transport a package from one city to another the same day. In addition, there are trucking freight shippers and even couriers that can deliver packages in town the same day. Here's a quick overview of these delivery options.

United Parcel Service

When it comes to shipping parcels, many businesses turn to United Parcel Service (UPS). UPS specializes in overnight shipping in addition to its regular package shipping service. Its freight charges are comparable to other carriers; prices vary depending on how far your package is being shipped and how much it weighs.

UPS distance charges are based on zones—both ground transportation zones and air freight zones. The ground transportation zones can also tell you approximately how many working days it will take for your package to arrive at its destination. You can determine the zone by looking up the zip code of the package's destination on a UPS zone chart. Use the UPS website (www.ups.com) to find this information and order shipping supplies. You can also print labels for your packages at the website.

There are several ways to ship via UPS:

- Take your packages directly to the nearest UPS office or UPS Store. You can find the location by calling UPS at 800-PICK-UPS (800-742-5877) or by checking the website.
- Bring your package to one of the local UPS pickup stations, found at hardware stores, print shops, and office supply stores, in addition to chains of mailbox and packaging stores. Because each of these locations has a specific time when the UPS truck arrives to pick up packages, be sure you know when it is before you make the drop-off. You also may want to note that some of these local pickup stations as well as mailbox and packaging stores charge a surcharge on top of the regular shipping costs.
- Call UPS and ask to have your package picked up at your location. Normally, UPS will schedule the package pickup for the next day. When calling, you will need the weight and dimensions of each package, along with the delivery address. The operator will give you a price for the shipment, which you will have to pay by cash or check when the package is picked up. There is a small additional charge for the pickup service.

- Set up a UPS account, so that you can schedule shipments by phone or using the UPS website. You do not have to provide any detailed information on the size or weight of your package or the delivery address. You can schedule a pick up from a UPS driver at your location. The fees for the shipment are charged to your account which is billed to your business by UPS.
- Register with UPS for regular weekday pickups. This is the ideal choice for a company that does a lot of shipping. To make the arrangement, meet with a UPS representative, register your company, and pay a small deposit, usually based on the company's normal expected monthly shipping bill. UPS will then provide a shipping kit that contains various supplies. With these materials you can prepare your own shipments for a pickup each day. In addition to the shipping charges, there is a small weekly pickup fee, paid whether you have any outgoing packages or not.

UPS Services

The following is a list of UPS services:

- UPS Next Day Air Early A.M.—Guaranteed delivery to major U.S. cities by 8 a.m., and most others by 8:30 a.m. on weekdays and 9 a.m. on Saturdays. In addition, 8:30 a.m. delivery is available for most major international cities.
- UPS Next Day Air—Overnight money-back guarantee on delivery of letters, documents, and packages to all major U.S. metropolitan areas.
- UPS Next Day Air Saver—3 p.m. delivery for commercial destinations and end-of-day for residential locations for packages shipped within the continental United States and from Alaska.
- UPS 2nd Day Air A.M.—Guaranteed delivery by noon on the second business day for commercial deliveries in the continental United States. The service is also available from Alaska and Hawaii to the forty-eight states.
- UPS 2nd Day Air—Economical, guaranteed second business day delivery of letters and packages.
- UPS 3 Day Select—Guaranteed three-day delivery. Developed primarily for longer-distance shippers who need time-definite delivery and higher levels of information, it is priced between traditional ground and air express services. The service is available to any shipper for delivery throughout the contiguous forty-eight states
- UPS Ground—Guaranteed time-definite delivery that applies to commercial ground service throughout the contiguous forty-eight states.

- UPS Worldwide Express Plus—Guaranteed delivery of documents and packages to more than 150 cities in Europe by 8:30 a.m. on the second business day.

In addition, there is guaranteed overnight delivery by as early as 8 a.m. to thousands of U.S. cities from Europe, Asia, Canada, Mexico, and Puerto Rico.

- UPS Worldwide Express—For urgent international shipments, a door-to-door, customs-cleared delivery to more than two hundred countries and territories. There is guaranteed overnight delivery of documents from major U.S. cities to the world's most important business centers. Document and no document shipments to other destinations worldwide are typically delivered in two business days.
- UPS Worldwide Saver—For delivery by the end of the day in more than 200 countries. There is next day delivery to Canada and Mexico, and second-day delivery to Europe and Latin America.
- UPS Worldwide Expedited—For routine shipments that don't require express delivery, a time-definite alternative that is faster than traditional air freight. This is a door-to-door, customs-cleared service available to major trading countries. Shipments to most major destinations in Canada and Mexico are delivered in three business days and to Europe and Asia in four business days.
- UPS Standard Service—For routine shipments to and from Canada, this is a prompt, dependable service with low-cost, fully tracked ground delivery. Service is available to every address in all of Canada's provinces. USP

FedEx

FedEx Express and FedEx Ground offer a wide variety of package shipping services ranging from overnight letters to ground freight. You can set up an account for FedEx by calling 800-GoFedEx (800-463-3339) or by visiting the website at www.fedex.com.

FedEx services include:

- FedEx Express: U.S.—For fast, reliable, time-definite delivery.
- FedEx Express: International—for shipping to more than 220 countries door-to-door by specific delivery times.
- FedEx Express Freight—For time-definite delivery of packages that weigh between 151 and 2,200 pounds.
- FedEx Express Freight International—For time-definite delivery of high-volume international shipments in twenty-four to seventy-two hours to major global markets.

- FedEx Ground—U.S.—For cost-effective, day-definite delivery for business-to-business packages.
- FedEx International Ground—For door-to-door delivery in three to seven days from the United States to Canada and Puerto Rico.
- FedEx Home Delivery—For deliveries to residences at extended hours, competitive ground rates, and backed by a money-back guarantee.

To ship a package with FedEx, follow these steps:

1. Pack your shipment in FedEx packaging or your own packaging. Shipping supplies, such as overnight letter envelopes, boxes, and shipping forms, can be ordered or picked up from one of many conveniently located FedEx locations. They can also be ordered from the FedEx website.
2. Log-on to the www.fedex.com website and select a service. Then create a shipping label by filling out the same, address, and phone number of the recipient. You can print a shipping label on your laser or ink-jet printer. Drop off your package at the nearest self-service FedEx.
3. Drop Box, staffed service center, FedEx Authorized Ship Center, or select post office locations around the country. You can locate one of the more than 48,000 drop-off locations using the www.fedex.com website. In addition to dropping off your package, you can schedule a pickup. No prequalification is needed for a FedEx pickup; however, there is a small surcharge added to the shipping cost.

DHL

DHL is an international shipper that uses air and ocean freight, as well as truck and train transportation to over 220 countries.

DHL services include:

- DHL Jetline—Emergency next flight out delivery within 24 hours.
- DHL Sprintline—Emergency dedicated transportation delivery within 24 hours.
- DHL Secureline—Emergency for high-value article delivery within 24 hours.
- DHL Express—Next day express shipping.
- DHL Domestic Express—Next day delivery within the same country.
- DHL Domestic Economy—Less urgent delivery within the same country.
- DHL Economy Select—Less urgent delivery between countries.

- DHL Global Mail—International nonsorted, non-franked business mail.

Other Shipping Services

Air Freight

For special situations, such as large packages or packages that must be delivered to another city the same day, air freight services are available from many airlines and specialty air freight companies. Some have special offices at the airport for same-day shipments. These shipments must usually be dropped off at the freight office and picked up at the destination freight office. The fees are much higher than other next-day air and two-day air shipments.

Trucking Freight

For large shipments and heavy or bulky packages, there are many trucking companies that specialize in hauling freight. These companies will load the shipment at your place of business, transport it to the destination, and unload it for a fee that is usually competitive. Depending on what you are shipping and where it is going, coast-to-coast shipping can take anywhere from seven to twenty-one days.

Courier Services

If you need to ship a package across town within a few hours, your best bet is a courier service. These companies operate in most large towns and cities and provide pick-up and delivery within a few hours. The prices for these services vary depending on the distance traveled and the weight and size of the package. Most of the time, the charge is paid in advance by the sender. Courier services are bonded against theft or damage. For documents and other small items, many taxi companies also provide a courier-type service. Check your telephone book for courier services or taxi services.

Further Reading: