



Guide for Ship-Shape Parcel Packaging

ONCE YOUR PRODUCT SELLS, THE REAL WORK BEGINS.

Packaging for your parcels affects your shipment's integrity, costs and ultimately customer satisfaction. With all of this at stake, are you reaching for the closest materials at hand, or making purposeful packaging decisions that keep items safe and customers happy?

Read on to become a parcel packaging pro, courtesy of Worldwide Express (WWEX).



Start With Box Basics

Perfectly pairing the item you're shipping with its box improves your costs and chances the product arrive safe and sound. The six sides of your box determine three key factors:



Shipping Rates

The greater of either your actual weight or dimensional weight (DIM) weight is what ultimately determines your shipping costs. **A smaller box may help with costs — especially for lightweight shipments.**



Cushioning

Empty space allows items to shift and bounce. Filing these spaces consumes resources and raises costs. Also, custom molds require specific box dimensions for a tight fit.



Fees

Different modes of transportation have different parcel package dimension requirements. Exceeding these dimensions results in Additional Handling or Oversize Package fees.

Stock up on box sizes that fit most of your products, and always use new boxes. Even if it looks fine, a used box may have taken a pounding in its prior life, leaving your shipment susceptible to damage.

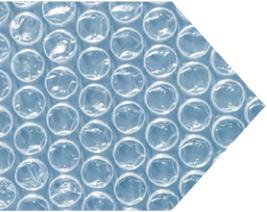


For shipping rate or dimensional details, get in touch with WWEX for a closer look at your costs and shipping needs.



Choose Cushioning Wisely

What you put inside packages matters, and we're not just talking about your products. From ensuring the safety of items to influencing the total weight of your packages, your materials play a crucial role in cushioning and costs.



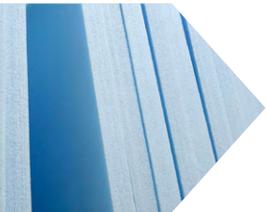
Bubble Wrap

Air cushioning offers shock absorption and plenty of flexibility to wrap around corners and edges. Use several layers for ideal package protection but remember that **the air is sensitive to altitude and temperature variations, which may result in a loss of cushion integrity or swelling.**



Loose Cushioning

Ideal for lightweight, non-fragile items, loose cushioning helps distribute shock equally inside the box rather than a focused point of impact. It's easier for thin items to slide around, so make sure to secure them firmly. **Before sealing the box, let the materials settle and add more if necessary.** And because loose cushioning can create static buildup, use anti-static materials when shipping electronics.



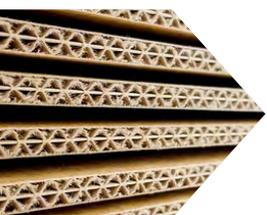
Foam

Various foam solutions are available as sheets, custom prefabricated molds or foam-in-bag solutions that inflate inside the box. Polyethylene (PE) is strong enough for fragile items, while other foams such as expanded polystyrene (EPS) or polyurethane (PU) offer moldable protection for lightweight items.



Packing Paper

Kraft paper and other paper-based cushioning protect item surfaces, fill empty space or provide moisture absorption. Paper is a good material to use with bubble wrap or loose materials for extra protection but may not offer enough padding on its own. **Just make sure to leave last week's newspaper in the recycle bin** — it doesn't have the same padding or structural integrity as packing paper.



Corrugated Board

These flat slats of board are handy as an extra layer for heavier materials or objects with flat surfaces or right angles.

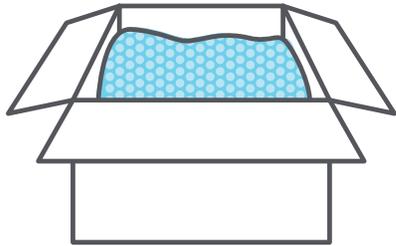


Thermal Packaging

Keeping items like pharmaceuticals, chemicals or perishable goods at a specific temperature requires special packaging. Packing materials include insulated foam, dry ice, gels or heating blankets, some of which require special containers and handling. **You should check with your carrier or 3PL partner on proper thermal packaging before shipping.**

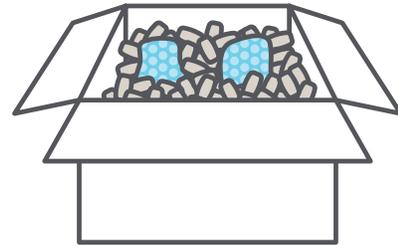
Pick a Packing Style

Do you distribute shock absorption across the entire box or to a single point? How does item shape and weight affect packaging? Putting a little thought into packing goes a long way toward safer shipping.



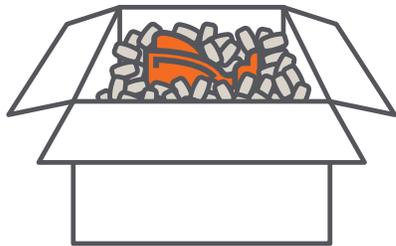
Wraps

This is a simple wrapping using paper, bubble wrap or other protective materials. Combining wrapping with other packing methods offers an extra layer of protection but should not be used on its own for fragile or heavy items.



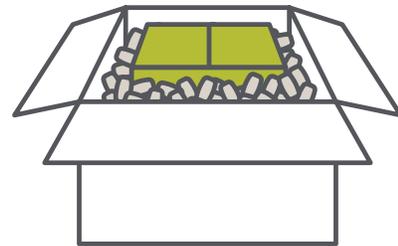
Multiple Items, Single Box

When using a single box for various items, wrap each item individually with paper, air or foam cushioning. Also be sure to fill at least 2 inches of space between each item with protective material.



Floating

By placing the item in the center of the box and filling the empty space with cushioning, you provide 360 degrees of protection. With loose packaging, fill the bottom first, then fill the sides after placing the item inside. With foams, you have several options. You can use prefabricated molds that fit the box and item perfectly. Or, a foam-in-bag solution inflates inside the box for a custom fit.



Double Boxing

Adding a second box (usually to the manufacturer's box) protects fragile items or electronics — especially if the original box is not made for the rigors of the road. The outside box should be at least 6 inches bigger in length, width and height. Be sure to fill the space between boxes with 2 inches of cushioning material (bottom, sides and top).

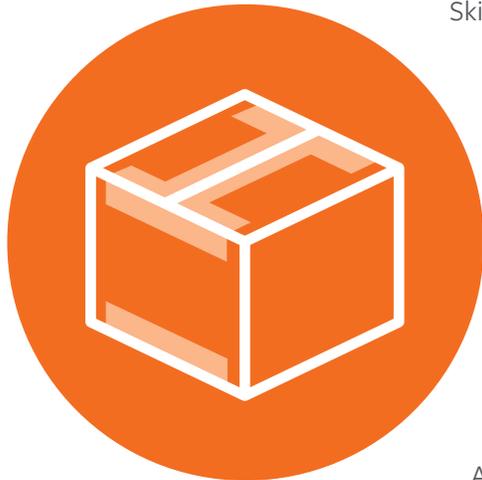
Can't decide how to pack?

If you need a packing recommendation, check out the [UPS® Packing Advisor](#) for a customized list of guidelines specific to your items. [Or, reach out to your local WWEX shipping consultant for a one-on-one assessment.](#)



Seal The Deal

This is the home stretch! Wrap up your perfectly packaged order with proper tape techniques.



The Right Tape

Skip the Scotch, duct and masking tapes.

You need 2-inch pressure-sealed tape designed for shipping. Don't use cord, string, ribbons or other tying materials. They're nice for a boutique touch but are big trouble on trucks.

The Right Technique

Tape edges as well as the center where the flaps meet to form an "H-shape" with the adhesive. This goes for the top and bottom of the box.

And don't skimp on layering tape – UPS® recommends at least three strips per edge.

Don't close that box yet!

We know you're eager to send the box to its new home. But do a quick check before laying tape down.

- ✓ Are all products in the box?
- ✓ Did you wrap items individually?
- ✓ Is there unfilled space or wiggle room?
- ✓ Did you put an extra shipping label inside?

Cover your investment, or let it ride?

No matter how confident you are in packaging, accidents happen either in warehouses or on trucks.

Damaged items and delivery issues make for nearly half of all returned e-commerce orders.¹ Save the dice rolling for Las Vegas. Know the difference between liability and insurance coverage to properly cover profits on your orders.

What is liability? It's the maximum amount a carrier is responsible for in the event of loss, damage or theft. For many small package carriers, like UPS, it's usually limited at \$100. And although you can declare a higher value, it's still not insurance, so if and when you need to file a claim, it's on you to prove the value of items and that the carrier is at fault for damages.

What is insurance? It's extra coverage that helps you get reimbursement for the full invoice value of your goods if they're lost, damaged or stolen. **As a low-cost safety net, it's often a no-brainer for high-value and fragile shipments.**

With Worldwide Express, you have access to industry-leading coverage through UPS Capital Insurance Agency, Inc. which is easy to add and features a hassle-free claims process.



Protect Packages and the Planet

Keep these tips in mind for more sustainable and budget-friendly shipping. Win-win!

Use the right-sized box.

Less cushioning lowers waste while improving shipping costs.

Consolidate your orders.

Batch orders to reduce carrier carbon emissions while scoring multi-lot rates.



Choose recycled packing materials.

Instead of foam, paper or eco-friendly bubble wrap might do the trick. And certified recycled boxes are sturdy and green.

Help customers do their part.

Offer customers tips inside your packaging to encourage sustainable material disposal.

Your Guide to Parcel Perfection

As a third-party logistics (3PL) company with a mission to help small and mid-size businesses, we know there are information gaps and little things in the shipping world that gets in your way of focusing on your craft.

Consider a 3PL like Worldwide Express for bigtime benefits for small packages.

Strategic and Operational Support

With our help, you can find efficiencies and extra time in the day to get more done and stop worrying about shipping.

Negotiated Rates with UPS

As an Authorized Reseller, our rates offer savings over UPS retail costs, and you get personal support to book the perfect services for your packages.

Simple Tools

Our transportation management system (TMS), SpeedShip®, lets you book orders, create shipping labels, compare transit times, review invoices, add insurance and track UPS shipments from a single dashboard. And if you need to book freight, SpeedShip has that too, including more than 65 of the top less-than-truckload carriers.

¹ Reasons for returning online purchases according to online shoppers worldwide as of January 2019, Statista

Ready for a parcel partner?

Worldwide Express is ready to be your partner to push your small package operations to the next level. Contact us today, and let's work towards simplifying your shipping.



wwex.com/contact