

Fifteen Things You Should Know When Ordering Anything From Anyone By Mail

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Fifteen Things You Should Know When Ordering Anything From Anyone By Mail

Have you ever sent away for something by mail and waited... and waited... and waited? Maybe you didn't receive what you wanted or what you thought you were ordering. Perhaps you didn't receive a reply at all. At one time or another this has happened to all of us. Our first thought naturally, is that we have been ripped--off. Sadly, sometimes this is true. In many cases it is not.

We have been selling by mail for over 20 years. We try to fulfil all orders the day we receive them and send them out in the next morning's mail. Sometimes, for one reason or another, it's nearly impossible to handle orders promptly. We have listed below, the most common causes for orders being delayed, or not shipped at all. By taking a few extra seconds to do the following, you may receive your requests several days or even weeks sooner.

1. **ADDRESSING:** When ordering anything by mail, always be sure to address the envelope exactly as stated in the ad or literature you are ordering from. Include any department or suite numbers in the address.
2. **RETURN ADDRESS:** If you do not use printed envelopes, a rubber stamp or return address labels, clearly print or type your name and return address on the upper left corner of your envelope. Many firms use the return address from your envelope as your shipping label.
3. **INSIDE ADDRESS:** Always include your letterhead or a slip of paper with your name and address neatly printed or typed with your order. Sometimes through the handling of mail, the return address becomes smudged and unreadable. We often receive orders with money in them and have no idea to whom or where to send them.
4. **CLEARLY STATE YOUR REQUEST:** Many mail order companies handle dozens if not hundreds of products and services. Always include the original a copy of the ad or literature you are ordering from. If a reply coupon is included in the literature, by all means use it. At the very least, include a note stating exactly what it is you are ordering.
5. **POSTCARDS:** When using a postcard to request information, state exactly what you want and place your return address on the front and back of the postcard. The return address on the front of the card is often obliterated by the postmark.
6. **SEND PROPER REMITTANCE:** When ordering a product or service

by mail, be sure to send the correct payment. Include shipping and handling charges as well as sales tax when requested. When you send a short payment, some firms will go ahead and ship your order and bill you for the difference. Many firms will notify you and hold your order until you send the additional amount.

7. **COMPANY AND PERSONAL CHECKS:** Most mail order firms will accept personal or company checks for purchases. Many will hold your order until your check clears the bank. Others, (as we do) will ship upon receipt of checks from established customers. If you're not sure of the check policy of a particular company, send a money order or cash for the fastest possible service. Note: Most small mail order dealers will accept mint postage stamps as payment for small orders.

8. **S.A.S.E. REQUESTED:** When an advertiser requests a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your order, simply address a long #10 size envelope to yourself, affix the requested amount of postage and send it unsealed with your order. Contrary to what many believe, mail dealers who ask for a S.A.S.E. are not too cheap to buy stamps and envelopes. They save hours of time by not having to address and stamp envelopes. This savings of time and money is passed on to the customer with lower prices and fast service.

9. **STAMPS REQUESTED:** When an advertiser requests stamps with your order, send only stamps and not a S.A.S.E. In many cases, in order to save time and give you the fastest possible service, the mail order firm will have pre-packaged their product or information packet, ready to stamp, address and send out. When including stamps with an order, do not stick, staple or tape them to anything. Just drop them loose into the envelope with your order. Not only will this be less effort for you, it will make things a lot easier for the person who is going to use the stamp you send.

10. **MULTIPLE ORDERS:** When requesting information or ordering from two or more companies at the same time, double check to make sure your orders and payment are inserted into the proper envelope. We recently received an order intended for another company. When we contacted them, they also had received an order intended for still another firm. It turned out that one of our regular costumers had mixed up three orders and sent them to the wrong sources. It took three weeks to straighten it out.

11. **REQUESTING INFORMATION:** Perhaps you have seen a tempting ad or editorial about a product or service that you would like more information about. When you write to the company it's considered courteous and plain old-fashioned good manners to include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. You should get a speedy reply.

12. **QUESTIONS:** Periodically you may have a specific question for a mail order dealer which requires a personal reply. Perhaps your question will require considerable effort and research. You should get a fast response if you will slip two or three dollars into the envelope with your request. This will turn your request into a bonafide order.

13. **ENCLOSING LITERATURE:** Many of you who order from mail order companies have something of your own to sell. There is nothing wrong with sending some of your own sales literature with your order. Just make sure that you indicate on the front of the envelope that an order is enclosed. Write "Order" or "Order enclosed" in the lower left corner. When we open our mail, we sort it (as most others do) into three categories. First priority goes to orders received. We process them at once. Next comes bills and correspondence that needs answering. Finally, there are the solicitations, from people who want to sell something to us. All of our mail is opened and read but the solicitations are read when time allows, sometimes days after receipt. When enclosing your own literature with an order to anyone, let them know that an order is enclosed.

14. **BE CAREFUL OUT THERE:** Most of the companies you will deal with are honest, reliable and give prompt service. They want your repeat business and will give you a fair shake for your dollar. There are a few however, that are stinkers. Watch your step when ordering money making or business opportunity plans and programs. Now, many of these plans and programs will work if you do. Lots of them are totally worthless and unworkable. Some of these ad writers can tell the truth a thousand ways and still deceive you. They are more full of beans than a ten-cent burrito. Look carefully before you spend a lot of money on a money making program.

15. **KEEP ACCURATE RECORDS OF YOUR ORDERS:** Record the following:

- Name and address of the firm
- What you ordered and the date.
- The amount you paid.
- How you paid (cash, check, money order).
- Date you received your order.

If the company processes your order promptly and ships via First Class Mail, you should receive your order within 5-10 days. If they use 3rd or 4th class mail it will take considerably longer. If you haven't received your order or an acknowledgement within 30 days, you will have all the information necessary to follow up.

By applying the above, you will help those you do business with to provide the prompt efficient service you deserve and expect.

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