

# Postal Savings Guide

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## Postal Savings Guide

Any legitimate article of commerce may be sold through the U.S. mails upon truthful and honest representation - and the Post Office welcomes every legal enterprise to the use of the mails.

The purpose of this report is to provide you with practical information on more economical and efficient handling of your mail. With postage costs at an all time high, we believe you will find these suggestions on how to get more for your postage dollar especially helpful. Today, it is more important than ever to establish good mailing practices, practices that will make a profitable difference in your postage handling, and speed up your mail.

**A WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF POSTAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS** - By the very nature of the business, mail merchandising implies integrity. If a customer has to pay for something before having a chance to examine the article, his confidence is not to be abused. Selling by mail must be kept on a high plane of the dealer is to survive and prosper.

Lotteries, chain letters and schemes to injure or defraud are denied the mail privilege.. Nonmailable materials also include items not regarded as conducive to the public welfare, such as pornography. Excluded, too are materials (as inflammable liquids and chemicals) which could damage the mails or cause injury to postal employees.

Every one who is using the mails to conduct business should become familiar with the postal regulations which apply to his particular enterprise. It is not, however, necessary or advisable for the beginner or small operator to attempt learning in detail all the ramifications of all the Postal Laws and Regulations. To the mail minded person, dealing with the post office is not anything new or strange. As a mail user in the past, whenever you came across something on which you desired information, you simply inquired at the post office. As a small mail order dealer you will be doing the same thing.., and there will not be a great range of questions that will concern you. If you are in doubt about anything relating to your situation,, inquire as to how the matter should be handled. The Post Office will answer all your questions.

**PENALTIES FOR USING THE MAILS TO DEFRAUD** - A customer should make a formal complaint in the case of misrepresentations and possible fraud with the Office of the Regional Chief Postal Inspector. There are 5 regions. The local Post Office will advise what region is responsible for a given area of the country.

If complaints from different parties have been received, the postal inspector can ascertain that the seller is at fault. However, the Post Office will give a mail order business the benefit of the doubt and the business is afforded the chance of settling complaints fairly with customers.

Where the intention is clearly to defraud, the case is followed through with a fraud order to be issued by the office of the Postmaster General. Letters are then returned to the senders, marked across the face of the envelope "Fraudulent".. It is not the intent of the Post Office, however, for its inspectors to act as censors on transactions or adjusters of arguments.

In flagrant cases of fraud,, in addition to loss of mail use, a fine or imprisonment, or both, may be imposed. However, any honest individual who operates a mail-order enterprise as a business and not as racket need have no fear.

**NEED FOR FAMILIARITY WITH CLASSES AND RATES OF MAIL** - Since mailing costs are responsible for a major operating expense -- approximately one fourth of the total expenses of a small mail order business -- the mail-order business has to be able to figure how to get top efficiency for this major expense category.

A mail order business may, for example, save a great deal in the course of a year by knowing how pieces of sales literature can best be mailed and what the weight limitations are for specific postage charges. Among small dealers especially, there is much postage waste by failure to take into account minor details which in the aggregate run to respectable sums. Suppose, as an illustration, a booklet or catalog ready to mail just barely exceeds the limit for one rate and calls for more postage. A minor adjustment in the place can decrease the postage from, for example 65 cents to 45 cents. A thousand pieces mailed per month makes a difference of \$200 Dollars in lost profit.

Third-class mail, (also called bulk mail), may be used by anyone, but it is used most often by larger mailers. Basic requirements to mail by bulk mail are that the mailer obtains the proper permit,, minimum number of pieces must be 200 per mailing and all pieces are sorted by zip code. At this time the rate for Basic Bulk Mail is 0.167 for the first 3.37oz. Thereafter a combination of pound and pieces rate are applied. Almost all mail order companies use bulk mail when a given piece exceeds 45 cents for first class postage. The savings are substantial. The big disadvantage is the time it takes for delivery. This can vary greatly by region and time of the year. As a rule of thumb mail within a 500 mile range may take from 1 to 2 weeks, 500 to 1500 miles 10 to 20 days and over 1500 miles from 2-4 weeks. Your local Post Office will give you all necessary bulk mail information and the proper application.

The Post Office issues a number of informative brochures which are free and give information on key postal matters. For a list of currently available publications write to:

Consumer Advocate  
U.S. Postal Service  
475 L'Enfant Plaza West, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20260

Since many prospective small mail dealers are interested in the merchandising of books, it is important for them to know that books can be mailed by preferential rate not enjoyed by any other commodity. To take advantage of the reduced rates, packages must be plainly marked "Special Fourth Class Rate", Current special Fourth Class Rate are 90 cents for the first pound and, 30 cents for each additional pound.

**KEEP YOUR BUSINESS ABOVE REPROACH** - Considering the number of people using the mails and the tremendous volume of business transacted by mail, the Post Office levies relatively few penalties. However, no business of any size can be carried on without some complaints. A policy of "Money Back Guarantee" or "Satisfaction Guaranteed" goes a long way in convincing the Post Office as well as your customers that you are a trustworthy business.

**PACKAGING AND ADDRESSING PARCELS AND PACKAGES** - Proper packaging and addressing of packages is the best way to prevent damage and loss. Use a container strong enough to protect contents during handling.. Cushion the contents if necessary to make sure they do not move within the container and affix the address information securely. Plastic packaging tape is recommended for closing and reinforcing the flaps and seams... Avoid using wrapping paper. The use of string could cause damage in processing. The address must be typed or legibly written one side only.. Use an address that's designed for efficient post office handling including proper zip code information - with the recipients address more prominent than your own.

**USE STANDARD SIZE ENVELOPES** - Save time and money. For best results envelopes should be at least a few inches longer than the longest insert plus the combined total thickness of the inserts. When the inserts are thick and bulky, extra allowances should be made.

**WATCH YOUR WEIGHT** - A truly accurate mailing scale is a must for any mailer - large or small. Otherwise, you run the risk of underpayment of postage - and the irritation of mail being returned because of "postage Due". And of course, overpayment of postage can cost you a great deal of money over a period of time, so it is indeed important to have an accurate postage scale.

**POSTAGE METER** - If you send out much mail from your place of business, it might be practical to consider the convenience of metered mail. Some advantages are - Save trips to the post office. Eliminate the need for keeping loose stamps.. Stamp, seal and postmark quickly. Avoid loss of stamps. Print "meter ads" simultaneously with the meter stamps. Accurate postage affixing.

Postage meter equipment generally consists of tow parts, an office mailing machine and a detachable postage meter, the later licensed for use by the United States Postal Service. Since postage meters print U.S. postage and account for government revenue under official lock and seal, they cannot be sold outright, as are mailing machines, but are leased from an authorized manufacturer who is held responsible to the U.S. Postal Service for their proper operation and replacement when necessary.

**KEEP YOUR MAILING LIST CURRENT** - Only a "live" list can produce good results - and many nixies on a list can be very costly. So be sure to keep your list constantly up to date. One way to keep your list clean is to print. "Address Correction Requested" on outgoing envelopes. The P<sup>O</sup>st Office notes the reason for non-delivery, or the new address if known. The fee for address correction service is 30 cents per notice issued, for both Second and Third class mail. Undeliverable first class mail is returned free of charge.

**SPECIAL HANDLING** -Special handling service is available for Third and Fourth class mail only, including insured and certified mail... It provides for preferential handling in dispatch and transport, but does not provide faster delivery.

**PRIORITY MAIL** - First class and priority mail are one and the same... When first class mail exceeds 11 ounces it becomes priority mail.

**WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU HAVE A POSTAL PROBLEM** - When you have a problem with your mail service it is best to talk to one of the clerks at the Post Office. If necessary the clerk will refer you to someone else. It is best not to complain to management or file an official complaint at your own Post Office. Be nice with the clerks and try to get known them. They are important partners in your mail order business.