

Nailing the basics

Your guide to smoother sending,
easy returns and a positive
delivery experience.



Australia Post

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Introduction

Setting you up for success, one parcel at a time

Smooth and efficient parcel sending is essential to any business' success, and it hinges on balancing speed, accuracy and customer expectations.



This playbook is designed here to make that easier for you.

Inside, you'll find:

- Practical tips on packaging, labelling, sorting and manifesting to keep deliveries on track
- Smart strategies for managing returns and international shipping
- Tools and resources to help save time and improve accuracy

Whether you're optimising for peak season or refining daily workflows, this playbook will help you streamline operations, enhance efficiency and deliver positive experiences that keep customers coming back.

Smart packaging and labelling

Good packaging gets parcels to the right facility, processed faster and delivered to customers on time.

- Use sturdy, correctly sized packaging to protect items during transit
- Opt for matte packaging in bright or light colours. Glossy packaging can easily slip off conveyor belts
- Remove any loose straps, flaps, ribbons, strings or handles that could get tangled in our sorting machines
- When possible, use soft or compact packaging to optimise airplane cargo space



PRO TIP

Our [packaging finder](#) can help you choose the right packaging for your business.



Readable barcodes are key to on-time delivery and parcel tracking.

Make sure your labels are:

- **Clear and readable:** Print on matte white paper in black ink. Avoid smudges or print lines. Clear barcodes help direct each parcel through the right chute for delivery to the right location.
- **Undamaged and visible:** Labels must be wrinkle-free and placed on the largest, flattest surface of the parcel. Remove any strapping or tape over it.
- **Smart:** Use the Australia Post Smart Barcodes with a Delivery Point Identifier (DPID) for added delivery precision. The DPID is a unique reference number for the delivery address which helps parcels arrive efficiently.



VIDEO

If you're an **SMB**, here's what best practice [packaging](#) and [labelling](#) looks like.

If you're an **Enterprise**, here's what best practice [packaging](#) and [labelling](#) looks like.



Efficient sorting and manifesting

For streamlined delivery, sort your parcels by:

Speed

For small businesses: Separate Express Post from Parcel Post into the respective parcel bags and use Express Post tape so we know which parcels to prioritise.

For large businesses: Separate StarTrack Courier from StarTrack Premium into the respective Unit Loading Devices (ULDs) so we know which to prioritise.

Size

Separate small parcels from larger ones into the respective parcel bags or ULDs so each batch goes to the right facility. Otherwise, it'll have to be re-routed which could cause delivery delays.

Manifesting for on-time delivery

If you lodge parcels at the Post Office, you don't need to manifest. If you book parcel pickups, then timely and accurate manifests are essential for on-time delivery. This is extra important during busy seasons when there are multiple pickups every day.

On-time manifesting is crucial for:

- Getting parcels to customers on time
- Parcel visibility in our network
- Setting accurate delivery expectations

Submit your manifest only when we collect your items.

Too early and you set unrealistic delivery expectations. Too late and we'll need to enter data manually which causes delays.



VIDEO

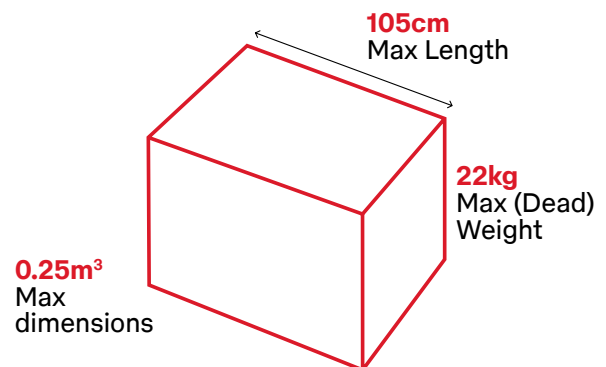
If you're an **SMB**, here's what best practice [sorting](#) and [manifesting](#) looks like.

If you're an **Enterprise**, here's what best practice [sorting](#) and [manifesting](#) looks like.

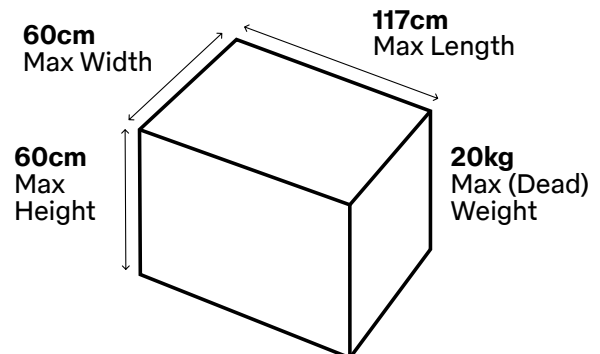
Size and weight matter

Avoid extra charges by keeping your parcels within the maximum size limits for your chosen service. Also remember that boxes mustn't exceed 0.25 cubic metres.

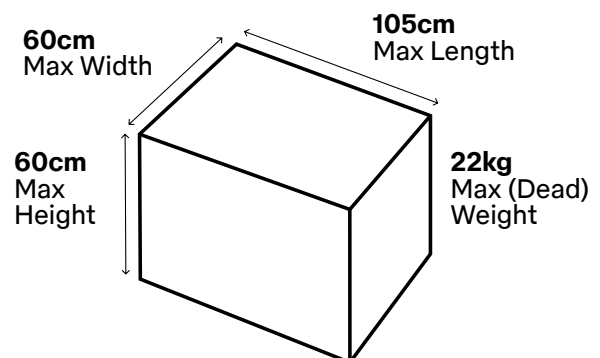
Australia Post (Domestic)¹



StarTrack Road Express²



StarTrack Premium²



Getting ULDs and pallets cargo-ready

Unit Loading Devices (ULDs) are how Australia Post moves parcels and freight for large businesses. If ULDs aren't available, we may ask you to use pallets instead.

When you're approaching a busy season, review your ULD orders daily to make sure you always have enough to get orders out.



If you're an **Enterprise**, here's what best practice ULD preparation looks like.



For ULDs

- Keep the gross weight under 600kg and avoid over-filling or we won't be able to accept them
- Attach completed Australia Post VISA labels to a minimum of two sides of each ULD so they're routed correctly. Order VISA labels through your lodgement point.



Print our [ULD checklist poster](#)

For pallets

- Limit pallets to 1.6m in total height and 1,000kg in total gross weight
- Attach completed Australia Post VISA labels to a minimum of two sides of each pallet
- Secure with shrink-wrap (at least three times and including the base) or with approved strapping
- Place satchels in boxes before stacking them for stability
- Ensure all parcels remain within the pallet's edges



Print our [pallet checklist poster](#)

Sending with StarTrack

An Oversize Charge³ applies to any item consigned using any StarTrack Service, excluding Courier, that exceeds a dead weight of 32kg (except on a pallet or skid) or where any side measures 150cm or greater.

Preparing StarTrack freight

- For items over 20kg, place a 'Heavy' sticker on the parcel and record the exact weight in your manifest and consignment label
- For items over 32kg, secure them to a pallet or skid for handling by Load Shifting Equipment (LSE)
- Dangerous Goods⁴ articles must be correctly consigned and manifested with the appropriate Dangerous Goods Declaration paperwork.



Preparing a StarTrack pallet

- Restrain and confine freight within the pallet dimensions
- Wrap pallets for transport and label on all five sides
- Pallet dead weight must not exceed 800kg
- Pallets must be in a serviceable condition and suitable for transport with maximum dimensions of L 1.17m x W 1.17m x H 1.8m

Refer to our StarTrack Oversize Charge guide for more information.

Hassle-free returns

Returns are part and parcel of the online shopping experience and just as important as the checkout and delivery experience.

A transparent and seamless return policy plays a subtle but important role in customers' decision-making.

Here's how to make it easy:

- Include a new prepaid satchel or large returns label so customers can cover the original address for quicker processing
- Use Print at Post for a printer-free return solution. Email your customers a QR code that they can show at a participating Post Office⁴ to print their label for free.
- Keep the process simple for you and your customers by offering free returns or returns at a flat rate

If you're a Returns Portal customer with 5,000 or more returns a year, ask your Australia Post Account Manager about upgrading to Returns Portal Plus. You'll have access to additional features including real time data, enhanced page by page customisation, and direct API integration.



If you're an **SMB**, here's what best practice returns look like.

If you're an **Enterprise**, here's what best practice returns look like.



International sending at your fingertips

As an eCommerce business, the world is your oyster. Whether you're new to international markets or already have a global presence, these essentials will make for smoother sending overseas.

- 1 Monitor international delivery times and service updates on our website
- 2 Choose compact packaging to optimise space on international flights
- 3 Include recipient contact details on your lodgement form to avoid delivery delays or the parcel being returned to sender
- 4 If you expect a spike in international orders, notify us well in advance so we can secure sufficient airplane cargo space



VIDEO

If you're an **SMB**, here's what best practice for international sending looks like.

If you're an **Enterprise**, here's what best practice for international sending looks like.



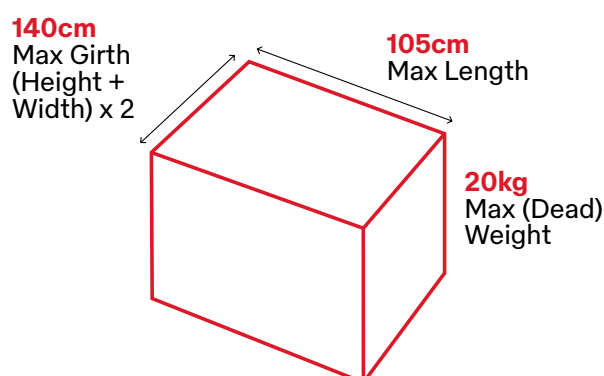
Handy references:

International export tools help you classify goods easily and accurately and understand taxes and duties that may be charged at destination Customs.⁵

International postal guide has the rules and guidelines for sending to a particular destination.

- 5 Australia Post's international peak season centres on Black Friday, with most of our deliveries being fashion items to the U.S. If this is your sector, have early discussions with your Account Manager about delivery times and cargo space.
- 6 Complete the HS tariff code, addresses and postcodes in advance (even for optional fields) for items sent to Electronic Advance Data (EAD) mandated destinations and European Union (EU) countries. Submit this information through the business lodgement systems to avoid items being returned to sender.

Australia Post international size and weight guidelines¹



Optional extras for more peace of mind when sending internationally.

Pre-arrival clearance for EU-bound items to ensure you supply the right and complete data to destination countries.

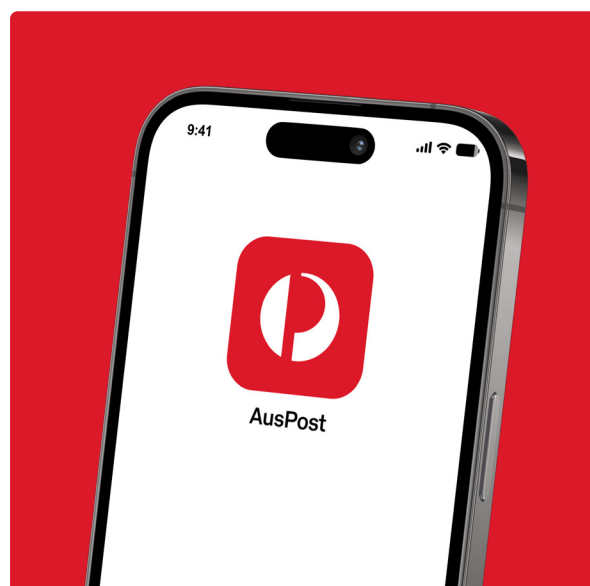
A positive delivery experience

The AusPost app

Parcel tracking gives shoppers more peace of mind and visibility of their parcel's journey – which means less calls to your customer service team.

Encourage customers to [download the AusPost app](#) and [sign up for a MyPost account](#), so they can:

- Raise enquiries directly with Australia Post instead of your customer service team
- Track all Australia Post deliveries in one place
- Access our 4,800+ collection points, including 24/7 Parcel Lockers
- Have confidence that our notifications are secure, accurate and legitimate. The AusPost app's high security features mean customers can trust the notifications aren't a scam.
- Manage delivery preferences, including whether to have a parcel [left in a safe place](#) or [redirect it](#)



Promote the AusPost app

- On the confirmation screen at checkout
- On your shipping page
- In your FAQs, wherever you mention shipping or order tracking

24/7 Parcel Lockers

The security and convenience of 24/7 Parcel Lockers offer a better delivery experience for customers who aren't always home to receive their deliveries. Offering this option could reduce customer enquiries and improve your NPS.

Here are two easy ways to add the collection points option to your website:

- 1 [Collections widget](#) – free to download and easy to integrate
- 2 [Australia Post Collect Shopify app](#) – via your eCommerce site



If you're an **SMB**, here's what best practice [parcel tracking](#) and [24/7 Parcel Lockers](#) looks like.

If you're an **Enterprise**, here's what best practice [parcel tracking](#) and [24/7 Parcel Lockers](#) looks like.



Save time with our self-service tools



eParcel Contract customers

Use the [Business Support Portal \(BSP\)](#) to log an enquiry on behalf of your customers. It can help you track, redirect or recall a parcel in transit, or check its status.

MyPost Business customers

Use the 'Support' tab in the [MyPost Business portal](#) to chat with a team member. You can also create an online enquiry or call us at 13 76 78 (in Australia) or +61 3 8847 9045 (from overseas).

StarTrack customers

Use [myStarTrack Online](#) to manage parcels and freight, pickup bookings and [Track & Trace](#). For all other enquiries, call StarTrack on 13 23 45.

If you prefer to speak to us, call our support team (Monday to Friday, excluding national public holidays).

- For business customers:
13 11 18 from 8am-6pm local time
- From overseas:
+61 3 8847 9980 from 7am-6pm AEST

You can also [book an interpreter](#) or get 24-hour calling assistance if you're hearing or speech impaired. [Details on our website.](#)

References



¹ Australia Post may refuse to carry any parcel that falls outside these size and weight limits and where the parcel is refused, an Administrative Fee and the Return to Sender Fee will be charged. For any parcel over the maximum limits consigned to us that does make it into our network, an Over Maximum Limits fee of \$100 (incl. GST) will be charged by Australia Post (acting reasonably having regard to the size and/or weight of the parcel), in addition to the normal delivery charge for that parcel. A Manual Handling Surcharge (MHS) will apply to any item which exceeds the StarTrack Road Express or StarTrack Premium size and weight dimensions.

² A Manual Handling Surcharge (MHS) will apply to any item which exceeds the StarTrack Road Express or StarTrack Premium size and weight dimensions.

³ A Manual Handling Surcharge will apply to any item that is incompatible with, or which cannot be safely sorted on our automatic sorting machines, and which exceeds the StarTrack Road Express or StarTrack Premium size and weight dimensions. Please note that any incompatible packaging items purchased from Australia Post sent via StarTrack will incur a Manual Handling Surcharge. An Oversize Charge will be applied instead of the Manual Handling Surcharge for items falling within the oversize ranges listed in the StarTrack Oversize guide.

⁴ Our Dangerous Goods exemptions policy does permit very small quantities of some dangerous goods (known as "exempted" dangerous goods) when carried on a contract basis and by road transport only. For more information view our [dangerous goods guide](#) and [Australia Post Terms & Conditions](#)

⁵ Only available at select Post Offices. Visit our Post Office locator to search for your nearest outlet offering Print at Post.

⁶ Only available to parcel services customers using an enabled 3rd party platform or direct API.