



ULTIMATE GUIDE TO THE 2012 USPS

POSTAGE RATE INCREASE



Effective January 22, 2012, the U.S. Postal Service® will raise postage rates for letter mail classes by an average of 2.1% and shipping services by an average of 4.6%. Private carriers such as UPS and FedEx are also increasing rates by 4.9% and 5.9% respectively, leaving the USPS as the cost-effective leader for all your mailing and shipping needs.

What's new?

Listed below are the 2012 USPS Commercial Base (online postage) prices by mail class.

Mail Class	2012 Price	2011 Price	Increase	Average % Increase
First-Class Letters - 1 oz.	\$0.45	\$0.44	\$0.01	2.30%
First-Class Letters - Additional Ounces	\$0.20	\$0.20	\$0.00	0.00%
First-Class Flat/Large Envelope - 1 oz.	\$0.90	\$0.88	\$0.02	2.30%
First-Class Flat/Large Envelope - Additional Ounces	\$0.20	\$0.20	\$0.00	0.00%
Postcards	\$0.32	\$0.29	\$0.03	10.30%
Express Mail - 0.5 lb.	\$12.85 & up	\$12.96 & up	-\$0.09 & up	-3.90%
Priority Mail - 1 lb.	\$4.90 & up	\$4.80 & up	+\$0.10 & up	3.00%
First-Class Package Service - 1 oz.	\$1.64	\$1.56	\$0.08	3.70%
Media Mail - 1 lb.	\$2.47	\$2.41	\$0.06	2.60%
Parcel Post - 1 lb.	\$5.20 & up	\$5.10 & up	+\$0.10 & up	2.50%
Global Express Guaranteed - 0.5 lb.	\$44.00 & up	\$35.50 & up	+\$8.50 & up	6.00%
Express Mail International - 0.5 lb.	\$26.91 & up	\$24.79 & up	+\$2.12 & up	11.60%
Priority Mail International - 1 lb.	\$22.09 & up	\$20.19 & up	+\$0.90 & up	8.70%
First-Class Mail International - 1 lb.	\$5.75 & up	\$5.58 & up	+\$0.17 & up	4.60%

New USPS Shipping Products and Services for 2012

- A new, larger Priority Mail Regional Rate Box C will hold up to 25 pounds and have 15" x 12" x 12" dimensions.
- A new Express Mail Flat Rate Box will hold up to 70 pounds and cost \$39.95 for domestic mailings.
- First-Class Package Service (formerly known as First-Class Mail Parcels) will include the Intelligent Mail® Package Barcode to provide visibility of these packages for free.
- Package Intercept will be introduced for commercial mailers. Customers can request mail be intercepted before final delivery is attempted to the initial delivery address. The shipment can be returned to sender, held for pick up at a Post Office™, or redirected to an alternate address.



Regional Rate Box C



Express Mail Flat Rate Box

Express Mail®

Express Mail is the fastest service offered by the USPS and it provides regular and overnight delivery to most U.S. addresses, including P.O. Boxes. Offers delivery in 1–2 days in the U.S. with a maximum weight of 70 pounds.

When to use Express Mail

Use Express Mail when you need a mailpiece delivered as fast as possible, regardless of price.



Pros

- Two price options—Flat Rate and by weight/distance
- Money-back guarantee*
- Includes Free Package Pickup™ at your door, \$100 in insurance, signature confirmation and delivery status info with the USPS Track & Confirm tool
- Delivery 365 days per year
- USPS provides free labels, envelopes and boxes
- Only USPS service with date-specific delivery
- No Saturday delivery charges or fuel and residential surcharges
- Up to 62% discount for buying postage online

Cons

- Most expensive USPS Mail Class

2012 Postage Rate Increase for Online Postage

- **New!** The Express Mail Flat Rate Box will be priced at \$39.95 with a maximum weight of 70 pounds.
- For the purchase of Express Mail postage online, the maximum discount off retail rates will increase to 62%.

Packages	Post Office/Retail postage rates		Stamps.com postage rates	
	2012	2011	2012	2011
Express Mail Flat Rate Envelope	\$18.95	\$18.30	\$17.75	\$17.40
Express Mail Flat Rate Legal Envelope	\$18.95	\$18.30	\$17.75	\$17.40
Express Mail Flat Rate Box	\$39.95	N/A	\$39.95	N/A
Express Mail (0.5 lb.)	\$12.95 and up	\$13.25 and up	\$12.85 and up	\$12.96 and up
Express Mail (1 lb.)	\$14.95 and up	\$15.25 and up	\$14.85 and up	\$14.89 and up
Express Mail (2 lb.)	\$17.40 and up	\$16.55 and up	\$15.30 and up	\$16.19 and up
Express Mail (3 lb.)	\$18.50 and up	\$17.60 and up	\$15.65 and up	\$17.18 and up



Need more info? [Click here](#) to view the USPS Express Mail Rate Table.

Priority Mail®

Priority Mail is an expedited service that provides delivery anywhere in the U.S. within 2–3 days. Maximum weight is 70 pounds.

When to use Priority Mail

Use Priority Mail if you are shipping more than 13 ounces, specifically if you want fast delivery for a low price.



Pros

- Three price options—Flat Rate, Regional Rate and by weight/distance
- Priority Mail Flat Rate is ideal for heavy packages as you only pay one rate
- Free Delivery Confirmation for online postage customers
- Includes Free Package Pickup and shipping supplies
- No Saturday delivery charges or fuel and residential surcharges
- Up to 15% discount for buying postage online

Cons

- More expensive than other low-cost USPS mail classes
- Less expensive options, like First-Class Mail, may be equally as fast

2012 Postage Rate Increase for Online Postage

- **New!** Priority Mail Regional Rate Box C rates will start at \$14.44 with a maximum weight of 25 pounds.
- **New!** Postage for Regional Rate Boxes can now be purchased at the Post Office for an additional \$0.75 fee.

Packages	Post Office/Retail postage rates		Stamps.com postage rates	
	2012	2011	2012	2011
Priority Mail Flat Rate Envelope	\$5.15	\$4.95	\$4.90	\$4.75
Priority Mail Padded Flat Rate Envelope	\$5.30	\$4.95	\$5.10	\$4.95
Priority Mail Flat Rate Legal Envelope	\$5.30	\$4.95	\$5.10	\$4.95
Priority Mail Small Flat Rate Box	\$5.35	\$5.20	\$5.15	\$5.00
Priority Mail Medium Flat Rate Box	\$11.35	\$10.95	\$10.85	\$10.50
Priority Mail Large Flat Rate Box	\$15.45	\$14.95	\$14.65	\$14.20
Priority Mail APO/FPO/DPO Large Flat Rate Box	\$13.45	\$12.95	\$12.65	\$12.20
Priority Mail Regional Rate Box A	\$5.79 and up	Online only	\$5.04 and up	\$4.97 and up
Priority Mail Regional Rate Box B	\$6.65 and up	Online only	\$5.90 and up	\$5.81 and up
Priority Mail Regional Rate Box C	\$15.19 and up	N/A	\$14.44 and up	N/A
Priority Mail (1 lb.)	\$5.20 and up	\$5.10 and up	\$4.90 and up	\$4.80 and up
Priority Mail (2 lb.)	\$5.30 and up	\$5.20 and up	\$5.04 and up	\$4.97 and up
Priority Mail (3 lb.)	\$6.05 and up	\$5.95 and up	\$5.24 and up	\$5.16 and up



Need more info? [Click here](#) to view the USPS Priority Mail Rate Table.

First-Class Mail (Letters, Large Envelopes & Postcards)

First-Class Mail is a service that delivers envelopes weighing up to 13 ounces, making it ideal and cost effective for letters, bills, large envelopes, and postcards. Offers delivery in 1–3 days in the U.S.

When to use First-Class Mail

Use First-Class Mail if your mailpiece is less than 13 ounces and you don't require overnight delivery or Delivery Confirmation.



Pros

- Fast delivery anywhere across the U.S. in 1–3 days
- Rates not affected by distance
- No Saturday delivery charges or fuel and residential surcharges

Cons

- Maximum weight of only 3.5 ounces for letters
- Maximum weight of only 13 ounces for flat/large envelope
- First-Class Mail letters and flats are not eligible for Delivery Confirmation

2012 Postage Rate Increase

- First-Class Letter (1 oz.) rate will increase one cent from \$0.44 to \$0.45. Each additional ounce will cost an extra \$0.20 (no change).
- First-Class Flats/Large Envelopes (1 oz.) rates will increase two cents from \$0.88 to \$0.90. Each additional ounce will cost an extra \$0.20 (no change).
- Postcard rates will increase three cents from \$0.29 to \$0.32.

Packages	Post Office/Retail postage rates		
	2012	2011	Increase
First-Class Mail Letter (1 oz.)	\$0.45	\$0.44	\$0.01
First-Class Mail Letter - each additional ounce	\$0.20	\$0.20	\$0.00
First-Class Mail Flat/Large Envelope (1 oz.)	\$0.90	\$0.88	\$0.02
First-Class Mail Flat/Large Envelope - each additional ounce	\$0.20	\$0.20	\$0.00
Postcard	\$0.32	\$0.29	\$0.03



Avoid Non-Machinable Items

Some mailpieces require additional postage because their shape or size makes it difficult for the USPS to process with mail sorting machines. These hard-to-process mailpieces, also known as non-machinable items, cost you more than standard size mailpieces. Here's what to avoid:

- Square envelopes
- Envelopes that are not flexible
- Shipments with uneven thickness (for example, an envelope containing a pen)
- Envelopes with a clasp or string closure device



Need more info? [Click here](#) to view the USPS First-Class Mail Rate Table.

First-Class Package Service (Parcels)

First-Class Package Service (formerly known as First-Class Mail Parcels) is a fast, affordable delivery service for packages weighing up to 13 ounces. Offers approximate 3-day delivery in the U.S.

When to use First-Class Package Service

Use First-Class Package Service if your package is 13 ounces or less.



Pros

- Offers significant savings over Priority Mail or Express Mail for packages weighing 13 ounces or less
- Delivery within 3 days in most cases
- Best-priced USPS service for packages up to 13 ounces
- Includes free delivery confirmation
- Up to 15% discount for online postage customers

Cons

- Limited to packages weighing 13 ounces or less

2012 Postage Rate Increase for Online Postage

- First-Class Package Service rates will start at \$1.64 (previously \$1.56).
- Delivery Confirmation will be offered for free with the addition of the Intelligent Mail Package Barcode.

Packages	Post Office/Retail postage rates		Stamps.com postage rates	
	2012	2011	2012	2011
First-Class Package Service (1 oz.)	\$1.95	\$1.71	\$1.64	\$1.56
First-Class Package Service (2 oz.)	\$1.95	\$1.71	\$1.64	\$1.56
First-Class Package Service (3 oz.)	\$1.95	\$1.71	\$1.64	\$1.56
First-Class Package Service (4 oz.)	\$2.12	\$1.88	\$1.81	\$1.73
First-Class Package Service (5 oz.)	\$2.29	\$2.05	\$1.98	\$1.90



Use First-Class Package Service for Small Parcels

If you are sending a small package under 13 ounces, the cheapest, quickest way to track and ship it is with First-Class Package Service. The service typically provides next-day delivery to local destinations and will feature the Intelligent Mail Package Barcode.



Need more info? [Click here](#) to view the USPS First-Class Package Service Rate Table.

Media Mail

Media Mail is a service restricted to the delivery of books, film, audio and other recorded media. Offers U.S. delivery within 2–8 days, depending on destination. Maximum weight of 70 pounds.



When to use Media Mail

Use Media Mail if you're sending media-specific items as defined by the USPS and longer transit times are acceptable.

Pros

- Cheapest service for anything over 13 ounces
- Intended and ideal for educational materials
- Pricing is based on weight, not distance
- No Saturday delivery charges or fuel and residential surcharges

Cons

- Much slower than most other mail classes
- Limited to books, sound recordings, recorded video tapes, printed music, or recorded computer-readable media (such as CDs, DVDs, and diskettes)
- Packages could be opened by USPS employees to verify contents meet Media Mail restrictions

2012 Postage Rate Increase

- Media Mail rates will start at \$2.47 (previously \$2.41).

Packages	Post Office/Retail postage rates		
	2012	2011	Increase
Media Mail (1 lb.)	\$2.47	\$2.41	\$0.06
Media Mail (2 lb.)	\$2.89	\$2.82	\$0.07
Media Mail (3 lb.)	\$3.31	\$3.23	\$0.08
Media Mail (4 lb.)	\$3.73	\$3.64	\$0.09
Media Mail (5 lb.)	\$4.15	\$4.05	\$0.10



Use Media Mail for Eligible Items

If you regularly send books, CDs or DVDs, Media Mail is a cost-effective mail service. Rates are based on the weight and size of your mail piece, not the distance to the destination. This makes Media Mail particularly valuable for packages being sent long distances. You can save big if your mail qualifies.



Need more info? [Click here](#) to view the USPS Media Mail Rate Table.

Parcel Post

Parcel Post is a low-cost ground service for the delivery of packages and the sole mail class for the largest of shipments with dimensions ranging from 108"–130". Price is determined by distance, weight and dimensions of the mailpiece. Offers U.S. delivery within 2–8 days, depending on destination. Maximum weight is 70 pounds.

When to use Parcel Post

Use Parcel Post if your shipment is ineligible for Media Mail, low shipping rates are more important than speed, and your package weighs over 10 pounds.



Pros

- Delivery in 2–8 days
- An economical way to send packages
- Ships larger packages that are too big for Express Mail and Priority Mail
- Priced lower than Priority Mail and Express Mail
- Offers cost savings for packages over 10 pounds

Cons

- Much slower than most other mail classes

2012 Postage Rate Increase

- Parcel Post rates will start at \$5.20 (previously \$5.10).

Packages	Post Office/Retail postage rates		
	2012	2011	Increase
Parcel Post (1 lb.) — zones 1 and 2	\$5.20 and up	\$5.10 and up	\$0.10 and up
Parcel Post (2 lb.) — zones 1 and 2	\$5.30 and up	\$5.15 and up	\$0.15 and up
Parcel Post (3 lb.) — zones 1 and 2	\$5.75 and up	\$5.65 and up	\$0.10 and up
Parcel Post (4 lb.) — zones 1 and 2	\$6.17 and up	\$6.10 and up	\$0.07 and up
Parcel Post (5 lb.) — zones 1 and 2	\$7.29 and up	\$7.23 and up	\$0.06 and up



Use Parcel Post to Save on Heavy Items

When cost savings are all-important, Parcel Post is your best option for shipping heavy items. You can save up to 50% compared to Priority Mail rates and ship packages that measure up to 130" in length and girth.



Need more info? [Click here](#) to view the USPS Parcel Post Rate Table.

Global Express Guaranteed®

Global Express Guaranteed is the USPS' fastest international service that offers date-specific delivery in 1–3 business days* to over 190 countries. Transportation and delivery is managed by FedEx Express. Maximum package weight is 70 pounds.

When to use Global Express Guaranteed

Global Express Guaranteed is the only USPS option if you need a package delivered internationally within 1–3 business days.



Pros

- Delivery abroad in 1–3 business days*
- Money-back guarantee** to virtually all international destinations serviced by the USPS
- Free Package Pickup at your door
- Includes \$100 in insurance coverage and delivery tracking info with the USPS Track & Confirm tool

Cons

- Most expensive USPS international mail class
- Dimension limitations
- Select countries have weight restrictions on shipments that could be lower than 70 pounds

2012 Postage Rate Increase for Online Postage

- Global Express Guaranteed rates will start at \$44.00 (previously \$35.50).

Packages	Post Office/Retail postage rates		Stamps.com postage rates	
	2012	2011	2012	2011
Global Express Guaranteed (0.5 lb.)	\$44.00 and up	\$35.50 and up	\$44.00 and up	\$31.95 and up
Global Express Guaranteed (1 lb.)	\$63.35 and up	\$55.50 and up	\$59.52 and up	\$49.95 and up
Global Express Guaranteed (2 lb.)	\$67.80 and up	\$59.75 and up	\$63.05 and up	\$53.78 and up
Global Express Guaranteed (3 lb.)	\$72.25 and up	\$64.00 and up	\$67.57 and up	\$57.60 and up



Need more info? [Click here](#) to view the USPS Global Express Guaranteed Rate Table.

*For many major markets. Average number of days may vary.

** Some restrictions apply. Visit usps.com for restriction details.

Priority Mail International

Priority Mail International is an international, cost-effective service that delivers mailpieces and packages weighing up to 70 pounds to over 190 countries. Offers international delivery in 6–10 days.

When to use Priority Mail International

Use Priority Mail International if you have time-sensitive shipments that must be delivered in 6–10 business days.



Pros

- Delivery in 6–10 days
- Two affordable price options—Flat Rate or by weight/distance
- Includes delivery info with the USPS Track & Confirm tool
- Free Package Pickup™ at your door
- Up to 5% discount for online postage customers

Cons

- More expensive than First-Class Mail International

2012 Postage Rate Increase for Online Postage

- Priority Mail International rates will start at \$22.09 (previously \$20.19).
- Priority Mail International Flat Rate Envelopes will start at \$22.09 (previously \$20.19).
- Rates for Priority Mail International Flat Rate Boxes will start at \$22.09 (previously \$20.19).

Packages	Post Office/Retail postage rates		Stamps.com postage rates	
	2012	2011	2012	2011
Priority Mail Intl (1 lb.)	\$23.25 and up	\$21.25 and up	\$22.09 and up	\$20.19 and up
Priority Mail Intl (2 lb.)	\$25.80 and up	\$23.10 and up	\$24.51 and up	\$21.95 and up
Priority Mail Intl (3 lb.)	\$28.35 and up	\$24.95 and up	\$26.93 and up	\$23.70 and up
Priority Mail Intl Flat Rate Envelopes - Mexico & Canada	\$12.95	\$11.95	\$12.95	\$11.35
Priority Mail Intl Flat Rate Envelopes - Other Countries	\$16.95	\$13.95	\$16.95	\$13.25
Priority Mail Intl Small Flat Rate Box - Mexico & Canada	\$12.95	\$11.95	\$12.95	\$11.35
Priority Mail Intl Small Flat Rate Box - Other Countries	\$16.95	\$13.95	\$16.95	\$13.25
Priority Mail Intl Medium Flat Rate Box - Mexico & Canada	\$32.95	\$27.95	\$32.95	\$26.55
Priority Mail Intl Medium Flat Rate Box - Other Countries	\$47.95	\$45.50	\$47.95	\$43.23
Priority Mail Intl Large Flat Rate Box - Mexico & Canada	\$39.95	\$35.50	\$39.95	\$33.73
Priority Mail Intl Large Flat Rate Box - Other Countries	\$60.95	\$58.50	\$60.95	\$55.58



Need more info? [Click here](#) to view the USPS Priority Mail International Rate Table.

Express Mail International®

Express Mail International is an international service offering delivery to over 190 countries within 3–5 days. Offers date-specific delivery and a money-back guarantee when shipping to the following: Australia, China, France (except for Corsica and Monaco), Hong Kong, Japan, Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Spain (except for the Canary Islands), South Korea and Singapore. Maximum weight of 70 pounds.



When to use Express Mail International

Use Express Mail International if you have time-sensitive shipments that must be delivered in 3–5 days, specifically if the delivery destination qualifies for date-specific delivery and a money-back guarantee.

Pros

- Two price options—Flat Rate and by weight/distance
- Date-specific delivery and money-back guarantee for select countries
- Free Package Pickup at your door
- Includes \$100 in insurance, Carrier Pickup™ and delivery status information with the USPS Track & Confirm tool
- Up to 8% discount for online postage customers

Cons

- More expensive than Priority Mail International or First-Class Mail International

2012 Postage Rate Increase for Online Postage

- **New!** Express Mail International Flat Rate Box will cost \$59.95 for delivery to Canada and \$74.95 for delivery to any other country.
- Express Mail International rates will start at \$26.91 (previously \$24.79).

Packages	Post Office/Retail postage rates		Stamps.com postage rates	
	2012	2011	2012	2011
Express Mail Intl (0.5 lb.)	\$29.25 and up	\$26.95 and up	\$26.91 and up	\$24.79 and up
Express Mail Intl (1 lb.)	\$32.90 and up	\$32.50 and up	\$30.27 and up	\$29.90 and up
Express Mail Intl (2 lb.)	\$36.85 and up	\$36.15 and up	\$33.90 and up	\$33.26 and up
Express Mail Intl (3 lb.)	\$40.80 and up	\$39.80 and up	\$37.54 and up	\$36.62 and up
Express Mail Intl Flat Rate Box - Canada	\$59.95	N/A	\$59.95	N/A
Express Mail Intl Flat Rate Box - Other Countries	\$74.95	N/A	\$74.95	N/A
Express Mail Intl Flat Rate Envelopes - Canada	\$29.25	\$26.95	\$29.25	\$24.79
Express Mail Intl Flat Rate Envelopes - Other Countries	\$38.00	\$29.95	\$38.00	\$27.55



Need more info? [Click here](#) to view the USPS Express Mail International Rate Table.

First-Class Mail International™

First-Class Mail International is the USPS' most affordable international service for the delivery of letters, big envelopes and small packages to over 190 countries. Maximum weight is 4 pounds. Delivery time varies by destination.

When to use First-Class Mail International

Use First-Class Mail International if you are shipping small, inexpensive items such as books, health and beauty products, clothing, or accessories weighing under 4 pounds.



Pros

- Most affordable international service
- Delivery time varies by destination
- Ideal for letters, big envelopes and small packages

Cons

- Exact delivery times are unknown and can be in excess of 21 days.
- No delivery confirmation or tracking services

2012 Postage Rate Increase

- First-Class Mail International rates for letters will start at \$0.85 (previously \$0.80).
- First-Class Mail International rates for packages will start at \$5.75 (previously \$5.58).

Packages	Post Office/Retail postage rates		Stamps.com postage rates	
	2012	2011	2012	2011
First-Class Mail Intl Packages - Canada (1 lb.)	\$5.75	\$5.58	\$5.75	\$5.58
First-Class Mail Intl Packages - Mexico (1 lb.)	\$9.29	\$8.95	\$9.29	\$8.95
First-Class Mail Intl Packages - Asia, Europe, Aus (1 lb.)	\$11.60	\$11.39	\$11.60	\$11.39
First-Class Mail Intl Packages - Other Countries (1 lb.)	\$11.26	\$10.89	\$11.26	\$10.89
First-Class Mail Intl Letters - Mexico & Canada (1 oz.)	\$0.85	\$0.80	\$0.85	\$0.80
First-Class Mail Intl Letters - Other Countries (1 oz.)	\$1.05	\$0.98	\$1.05	\$0.98



Need more info? [Click here](#) to view the USPS First-Class Mail International Rate Table.

USPS Special Services

Special Services	Description	Post Office/Retail postage rates		Stamps.com postage rates	
		2012	2011	2012	2011
Certified Mail	Provides proof of mailing at time of mailing and the date and time of delivery or attempted delivery. Purchasing Certified Mail service allows customers to then purchase Restricted Delivery service or a Return Receipt.	\$2.95	\$2.85	\$2.95	\$2.85
Registered Mail	Provides the sender with a mailing receipt and, upon request, electronic verification that an article was delivered. The most secure service that the USPS offers.	\$10.95 and up	\$10.75 and up	\$10.95 and up	\$10.75 and up
Delivery Confirmation	Provides the mailer with information about the date and time an article was delivered. This service is FREE on Priority Mail packages when you use Stamps.com.	\$0.75 and up	\$0.70 and up	\$0.19	\$0.19
Signature Confirmation	Provides the date and time of delivery or attempted delivery and the name of the person who signed for the item.	\$2.55	\$2.45	\$2.10	\$2.05
Collect on Delivery	Provides ability to mail an article for which the mailer has not been paid and have its price and the cost of the postage collected from the recipient. The recipient has the option to pay the charges using either cash or check.	\$5.90 and up	\$5.75 and up	\$5.90 and up	\$5.75 and up
Return Receipt (at time of mailing)	Provides a mailer with evidence of delivery (to whom the mail was delivered and date of delivery), along with information about the recipient's actual delivery address. Choose from a return receipt by mail or electronically.	\$2.35	\$2.30	\$1.15	\$1.15
Restricted Delivery	Restricted Delivery service ensures that only a specified person will receive a piece of mail. This service is only available if you also purchase Certified Mail, Insured Mail, COD, or Registered Mail.	\$4.55	\$4.50	\$4.55	\$4.50