

Mail Service Users Get Their 2 Cents' Worth

Dear Friend,

The Postal Rate Commission has approved a 2-cent stamp increase that is expected to go into effect January 8, 2006, raising the cost of mailing a first class letter from \$.37 to \$.39. To use a quote from our country's very first Postmaster General, Benjamin Franklin, "Penny wise is pound prudent."

Therefore, let me be penny wise with you as a valued client of mine. I am enclosing twenty \$.02 stamps that you can use with your existing \$.37 stamps to save you a little time so you don't have to rush out to the post office.

Why is this pound prudent? Well, if you consider the actual financial impact of the \$.02 increase to our American economy, it can be quite impressive.

Let's assume 10 million Americans make a special trip to purchase \$.02 stamps taking an average of 30 minutes round trip. Let's assume the average hourly value of their time is \$12 per hour. In this projection, the cost/time value of 10 million Americans buying \$.02 stamps is \$60 MILLION DOLLARS. WOW! I take comfort in the fact that the simple gesture of sending out twenty \$.02 stamps has helped save our country a bundle in lost productivity.

Sincerely,

Oh, by the way™... if you know of someone who would appreciate the level of service I provide, please call me with their name and business number and I will be happy to follow-up and take great care of them.

Signed, Sealed, Delivered... on time!



On an average day, the amount of mail the U.S. Postal Service handles would circle the globe three times. On the busiest day—typically, the Monday before Christmas—the mail could make an extra trip around Earth. And while the USPS promises “neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor the winds of change, nor a nation challenged” will interrupt them, it’s still a good idea to follow these guidelines to ensure the timely delivery of the mail you send.

USPS SERVICE	DEADLINE FOR SENDING
Parcel Post	10-14 days before intended arrival
1st Class Mail	7 days before intended arrival
Priority Mail	3-4 days before intended arrival
Express Mail	2-3 days before intended arrival
Global Economy	10-12 weeks before intended arrival to Africa, Central & South America 9-12 weeks before intended arrival to the Middle East 8 weeks before intended arrival to Asia, Australia 7 weeks before intended arrival to other international destinations
Global Air Mail	19-21 days before intended arrival to Africa, Central & South America 12 days before intended arrival to other international destinations
Global Express	2 weeks before intended arrival to Africa, Central & South America 1 week before intended arrival to other international destinations
Global Express Guaranteed	4 days before intended arrival to Canada 5 days before intended arrival to other international destinations

AN ADDRESS DIVIDED:

How do you address mail when a recipient has both a street address and a post office box? You can use either or both, but the mail will be delivered to the address immediately above the city and state. If the line above city and state contains both addresses, the mail will be delivered to the PO box. Make sure the ZIP code used matches the delivery address.

ZIP DE-CODED:

A complete ZIP code is a five-digit number followed by a hyphen and four digits, or the trademarked ZIP + 4. Translated: The first five digits represent a post office within a city; the sixth and seventh digits indicate a sector; and the eighth and ninth identify geographic units such as a side of a street, a building, a floor, a firm, a group of rural mailboxes, etc. Not sure of the ZIP? No ZIP code is better than a wrong one! Better yet, use the USPS’s ZIP Code Lookup service online or call 800-ASK-USPS.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT USPS SERVICES, VISIT THESE LINKS:

- Complete USPS services, tools and products: www.usps.com
- Holiday mailing: www.usps.com/holiday
- Customer guide explaining services, rates, standards, and more: www.usps.com/customersguide



Your guide to shipping — down to the letter!

If you aren't familiar with all of the services provided by the U.S. Postal Service, spend some time on its Web site, www.usps.com and what you find may amaze you! The self-supporting agency offers a variety of shipping options and price points, some nifty online services, and guidelines on how best to wrap packages for mailing, address packages and cards, and send military mail. Some key points are highlighted here.

	<i>Prepare:</i>	<i>Address:</i>	<i>Mail:</i>
<p><i>PACKAGES</i> Ensure your packages will arrive safe and sound by using the following tips:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With multiple items in one box, put heavier items at the bottom and place packing around each one. • For cushioning, use crumpled newspaper, styrofoam peanuts, bubble pack, shredded paper, or plain popcorn. • For hollow items, put cushioning inside and out. • Put an index card with delivery and return addresses and a list of contents inside the package—just in case. • Use 2-inch wide clear or brown packing tape, reinforced packing tape, or paper tape to seal the opening and reinforce all seams. • Pack baked goods snugly into tins, plastic, or sturdy boxes lined with food wrap, leaving no headroom. Layer cookies with food wrap between. • Put glass in zip-top plastic bags, using sealed-in air for added cushioning. Then wrap individually in bubble wrap. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the box is reused, cover previous labels and markings with new labels or black marker. • Put delivery and return addresses on the same side of the box. • Clear packing tape over the address labels prevents them from smearing or coming loose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Packages with correct postage can be handed to your mail carrier or dropped in a blue collection box. • Packages are measured by adding length plus girth. Anything over 130 inches, or that exceed 70 pounds, cannot be sent via U.S. mail. • A variety of shipping methods are available, depending on the weight of the package and when you want it to arrive.
<p><i>CARDS & LETTERS</i> Follow these guidelines to ensure your friends and family don't miss out on your personal correspondence!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a standard envelope size (3-1/2 to 6-1/8 inches high by 5 to 11-1/2 inches long) to avoid a surcharge. • A square envelope smaller than 5-by-5 inches or weighing 1 ounce will get a surcharge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print or type clearly, large enough to be read at arm's length. • Write the delivery address, as well as the return address on the front of the envelope. • Use ZIP + 4 codes and standard state abbreviations—both found at the USPS Web site. Unsure of an address? Verify that online, too. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order stamps online, by phone or with a Stamps-by-Mail order form, delivered within 7 days. Buy holiday stamps early. • Mail cards or letters at least 7 days before the desired arrival date.
<p><i>MILITARY MAIL</i> From love letters to family announcements, there's no better way to boost troop morale.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If mailing to Iraq, remember that mail is subject to extreme heat. Do not package items that melt such as candles or chocolates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the service member's full name, with grade, rank or title; unit and APO/FPO with 9-digit ZIP; and full return address. Do not include country or city. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Military mail postage is the same as domestic postage. • Transit time depends on operational conditions and unit, but generally letters arrive within 7 to 10 days; Priority Mail parcels, 10 to 15 days; Parcel Post, 24 days.