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**MAKING A LIST, CHECKING IT TWICE**  
***Postal Service offers tips on holiday packing and shipping***

Washington, DC – More than 20 billion cards, letters and packages will be delivered by the U.S. Postal Service between Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve.

To help make sure that packages arrive safely and on time, the Postal Service has simple recommendations that will make a big difference for consumers.

When preparing packages, consider the following:

- PRINT addresses clearly
- Include all address elements (apartment numbers, suite numbers, directional information for streets – for example: 123 S. Main St. or 12456 Elm St. N.).
- Include both “to” and “from” information on packages – but only on one side.
- Always use shipping tape.
- Cushion contents appropriately. For example, fill glass and fragile hollow items, like vases, with newspaper or packing material to avoid damage due to shock. When mailing framed photographs, take the glass out of the frame and wrap it separately.

Helpful packaging tips include:

- Select a box that is strong enough to protect the contents. Leave space for cushioning inside the carton.
- Package contents with shredded or rolled newspaper, bubble wrap, or Styrofoam peanuts. Plain air-popped popcorn is also good for cushioning; it's inexpensive and environmentally friendly. Pack tightly to avoid shifting.
- Always use tape that is designed for shipping, such as pressure-sensitive tape, nylon-reinforced craft paper tape, or fiberglass-reinforced pressure-sensitive tape. Do not use wrapping paper, string, masking tape, or cellophane tape.

Placing an index card with the sender's address and recipient's address inside the package will help the Postal Service re-pack boxes that were improperly wrapped and came apart during transporting and processing.

Packages being mailed using postage stamps and weighing 16 ounces or more can be left for the letter carrier to pick up but cannot be deposited into a blue street mailbox.

And don't forget to mark the calendar: ship no later than Dec. 19 so packages arrive on time.

***Please Note: Broadcast-quality audio files are being provided for radio reporters on the U.S. Postal Service website. An Audio News Release on this topic featuring Delores Killette, Vice President and Consumer Advocate, is available in the Holiday Press Room: [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com)***

Since 1775, the Postal Service and its predecessor, the Post Office Department, has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. It is an independent federal agency that visits 142 million homes and businesses every day, six days a week and is the only service provider delivering to every address in the nation. The Postal Service receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of more than \$69 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mailing and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. The Postal Service delivers more than 46 percent of the world's mail volume—some 206 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year—and serves seven and a half million customers each day at its 37,000 retail locations nationwide. Its website, [usps.com](http://usps.com), attracts more than 21 million visitors each month.