

# Getting Started With Standard Mail—Contents

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# Introduction: Standard Mail Made Easy

**S**tandard Mail is an easy, economical way to advertise your business, reach your members, and distribute information. Standard Mail also is called “presorted” because you sort your mail according to the number of pieces to a particular destination.

Because mailers have different needs, the Postal Service has developed different ways to prepare Standard Mail. This publication makes preparing a presorted Standard Mail mailing easy to understand. If you have any questions after reading it, your local business mail entry unit (BMEU) or post office are ready to help. There is space on the inside of this book's front cover to write down information about your local post office.

**Standard Mail:** Usually circulars, printed matter, pamphlets, and merchandise that is not mailed as First-Class Mail, Periodicals, or Package Services. Standard Mail must weigh less than 16 ounces.

## Checking the Source

This publication is based on the *Domestic Mail Manual (DMM)*, the official source of domestic postal mailing standards. If there is any ambiguity or discrepancy, the DMM is the final authority to follow.

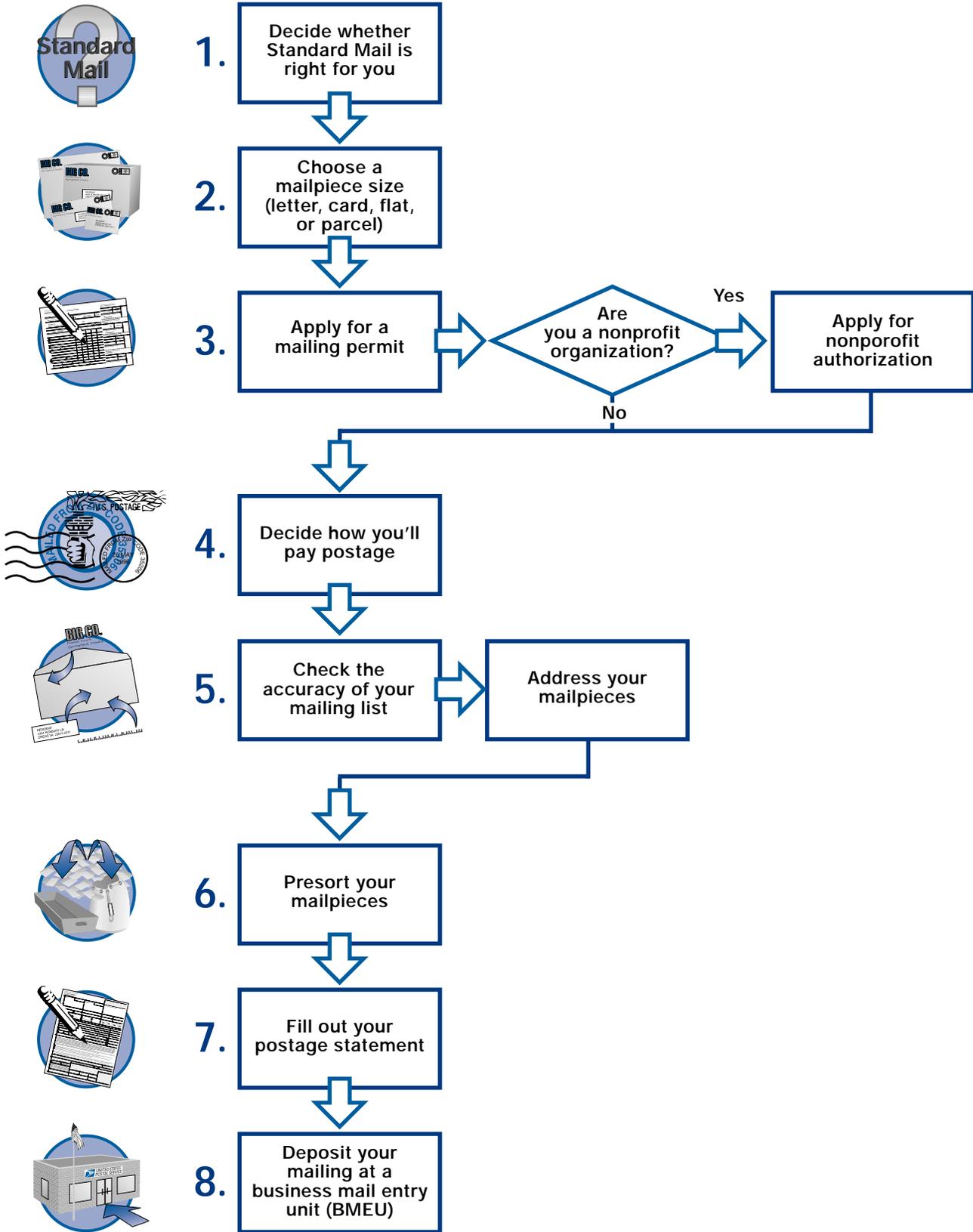
The DMM is available in two formats: paper and electronic. Contact your postal business center or business mail entry office for information about subscribing to the paper version. The electronic version of the DMM is available on the Internet at <http://pe.usps.gov> and on Postal Explorer, an interactive CD-ROM. Both contain the *Domestic Mail Manual*, the *International Mail Manual*, and other Postal Service publications; domestic and international rate calculators; zone charts; and postage statements. More information about Postal Explorer on a CD-ROM, including how to order it, is on page 80.



## Charting the Course

A good way to begin is to examine the simple flow chart on the next page for a quick overview of the process—and of the way this book is organized.

# Charting the Course



# 1 Mailing in Bulk



Is Standard Mail right for you? Thousands of businesses, organizations, and individuals use Standard Mail every day to advertise and to reach current or prospective customers and clients.

For a home-based business or a local merchant, advertising by mail is economical. Large businesses and organizations also rely on **advertising mail** in their marketing campaigns.

**advertising mail** (also known as direct mail): A sales product or promotional message mailed directly to your customers or prospective clients.

## What Is Presorted Standard Mail?

*Presorted Standard Mail* refers to mailings of at least 200 addressed pieces (or 50 pounds) of mail sorted and prepared according to postal standards. Presorted Standard Mail is a worksharing program. That is, you and the Postal Service share the work of processing the mail. When you do some of the preparation and sortation, it saves the Postal Service time and money. We pass those savings on to you in the form of postage discounts.

Presorted Standard Mail usually consists of sales flyers, form letters, or other printed pieces that are generally identical in content. Each piece must weigh less than a pound.

Standard Mail can be forwarded to customers who move. You can also choose to have address corrections sent to you, so you can stay in touch with your customers. Some types of mail—personal correspondence, bills, invoices, handwritten matter—cannot be mailed as Standard Mail. By law, these items must be mailed First-Class Mail.

### Return on Investment

Standard Mail is a cost-efficient way to communicate with your customers. Worksharing discounts offer substantial savings over the cost of First-Class Mail.

Presorted Standard Mail mailing may suit your needs if you know you can recover the cost of the permit and the annual fee.

Also, Standard Mail is not as weight-sensitive as First-Class Mail. Instead of paying by the ounce, you can mail up to 3.3 ounces for the same postage. If your organization qualifies for nonprofit rates, you can save even more.

**Cost it out!** You need to mail about 625 pieces of Standard Mail to recover the cost of the annual mailing fee. If your organization is authorized for nonprofit rates, you'll need to mail about 980 pieces to recover your costs.

### Postal Web Site

All the information you need to get started with mailing is right at your fingertips at the Postal Service web site at [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com).

At [usps.com](http://usps.com), you can:

- Access Business Mail 101, an online, interactive version of this publication, including an interactive decision tree that walks you through all the necessary steps in making a mailing. Go to [usps.com](http://usps.com) > mail/ship > Business Mail 101.
- Calculate single-piece (household) postage rates. The household calculator will calculate postage and fees for single pieces of mail. Go to [usps.com](http://usps.com) > calculate rates.
- Calculate postage for bulk mailings. The business rate calculator will calculate postage and fees for any quantity and every class of mail. Go to [usps.com](http://usps.com) > service guides, which will take you to the Postal Explorer web site. In the left frame, click on Domestic Calculators Business/Bulk.
- Learn about products and services that can improve your mailing list. Go to [usps.com](http://usps.com) > address quality.
- Verify ZIP Codes. Use the ZIP Code lookup tool to verify the ZIP Codes and ZIP+4 codes in your mailing. Go to [usps.com](http://usps.com) > find ZIP Codes.
- Track and confirm Express Mail and Priority Mail packages. Go to [usps.com](http://usps.com) > track/confirm.
- Access information and new rates and fees, view and print Postal publications, look up phone numbers and addresses of local post offices, and much more!

# 2 Creating a Mailpiece



If presorted Standard Mail is for you, it's important that you decide on the size of your mailpiece early. The size will affect the rate you pay as well as the piece's overall look and the way it enhances your message.

## How Size Affects Rate

The size of your mailpiece will determine the rates available to you. There are several processing categories (sizes) of Standard Mail: letters (which includes postcards), **flats**, and parcels.

All the pieces in your mailing must be in the same processing category—that is, all letters or all flats or all parcels. Each processing category has its own minimum and maximum size limits. Pieces that measure less than the minimum for letters are not mailable. Pieces larger than the letter-size maximum are considered to be flats and mailing them means paying nonletter rates. Pieces larger than the flat-size maximum are considered to be parcels and mailing them means paying a surcharge for each piece, in addition to the applicable postage.

When measuring your mailpiece, you might want to use the Postal Service's Notice 3-A, *Letter-Size Mail Dimensional Standards Template*. Your local post office or business mail entry unit can provide one for you.

**flats (FLTS):** Large mailpieces, sorted without bending so that they remain flat. Flat-size mail exceeds at least one of the letter-size maximums (see the next page). A flat may be unwrapped, wrapped, or enveloped.

## How Weight Affects Rate

Unlike First-Class Mail, Standard Mail doesn't use weight to determine postage for pieces that weigh less than 3.3 ounces. All such pieces of presorted Standard Mail can be mailed at the same per-piece postage rate as applicable.

If the pieces weigh more than 3.3 ounces, they are charged a per-piece rate plus a per-pound rate. Keep this weight limit in mind when you're designing your mailpiece.

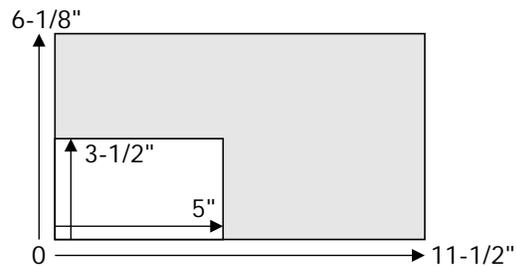
## Category Characteristics

The two processing categories discussed in this publication are letters (which includes cards) and nonletters (or flat). There is no separate postage rate for card-size pieces.

The size and weight ranges for letters and flats are shown here. Other size and weight standards may apply, depending on what you are mailing. Contact your local business mail entry unit for more specific information.

### Letter Size

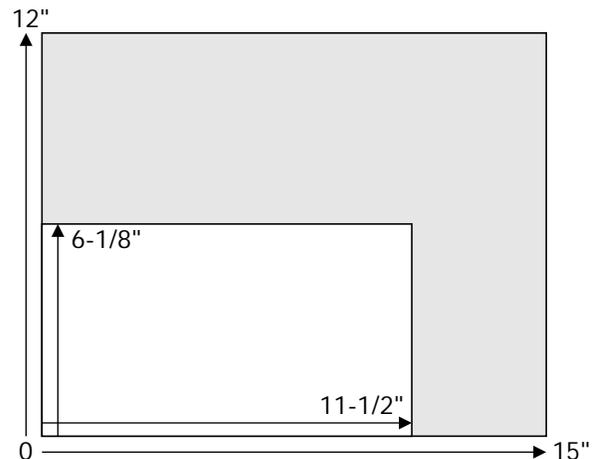
- Length:** 5 to 11-1/2 inches
- Height:** 3-1/2 to 6-1/8 inches
- Thickness:** .007 to .25 inch
- Weight:** if upgradable, up to 2.5 ounces  
if automation rate, up to 3.3 ounces  
(some restrictions apply)



### Flat Size\*

- Length:** 11-1/2 to 15 inches
- Height:** 6-1/8 to 12 inches
- Thickness:** .25 to .75 inch
- Weight:** less than 16 ounces

\* One dimension must exceed at least one of the letter-size maximums



### Parcels

Pieces that are not letter-size or flat-size are parcels, and are subject to a residual shape surcharge (\$0.18 per piece) in addition to the applicable postage. Pieces that are subject to the residual shape surcharge can qualify for a barcode discount (\$0.03) per piece and can add certain special services such as insurance or return receipt for merchandise.

This publication focuses on information about letters and flats. If you are mailing parcels, contact your local post office or business mail entry unit.

## How to Make It Automation-Compatible

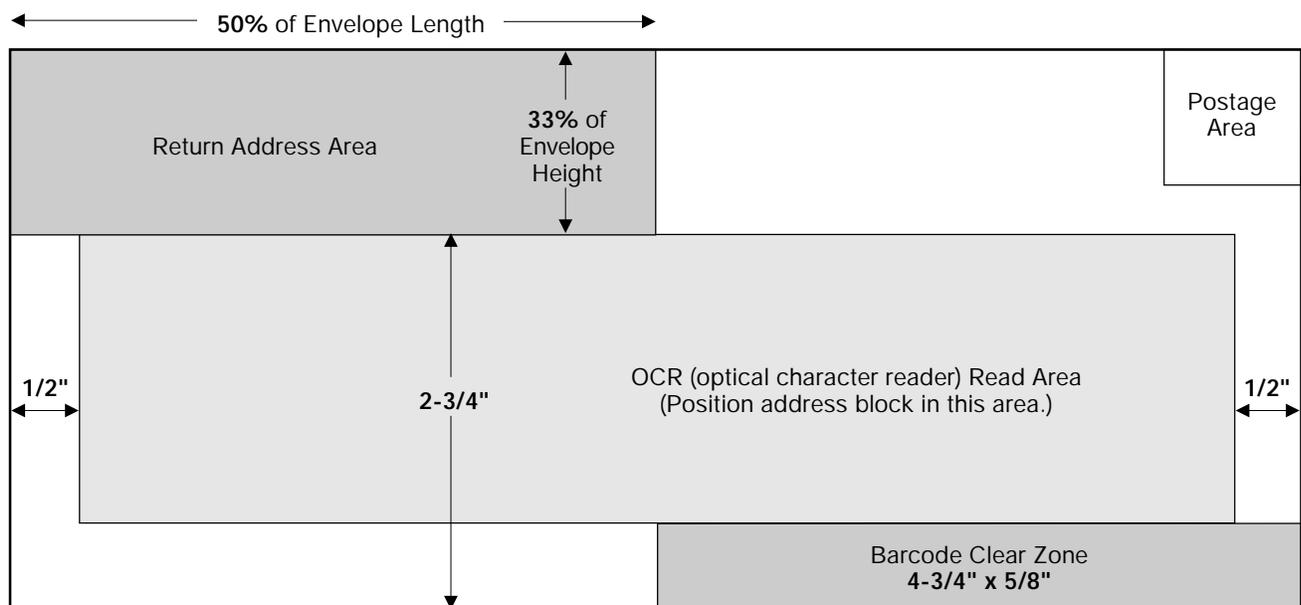
Making your mailpiece **automation-compatible** is important. Automated equipment can process mail more efficiently than manual operations, allowing the Postal Service to charge lower rates for these pieces.

Your automation-compatible mailpiece should:

- Use the size and weight standards on the previous page.
- Be made of good quality white or light-colored paper.
- Contain no sharp or bulky items.
- Be sealed securely.
- Be readable by automation equipment.

Besides using clear and simple printing, readability means making sure each kind of information is in the right place on the envelope. The illustration below shows the areas designated for major types of information.

**automation-compatible:** Mail that meets specified physical criteria so it can be scanned and processed by automated mail processing equipment such as optical character readers.



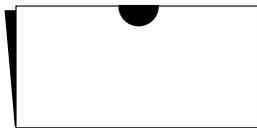
(Not Actual Size)

## Self-Mailers and Booklets

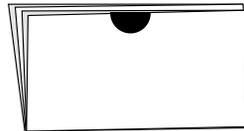
Mailpieces that are designed to be mailed without envelopes are called self-mailers and booklets. For these pieces to claim letter automation rates, their open edges need to be fastened together. This keeps the piece from getting jammed in the Postal Service high-speed processing equipment.

One of the easiest ways to keep the edges together is to use tabs or wafer seals. Where you need to put the tabs depends on how heavy the piece's paper stock is and which edge has the final fold. The illustration below shows some common acceptable configurations.

Continuous glue or spot glue can keep lengthwise edges together instead of tabs.



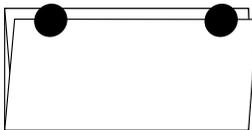
Double Card



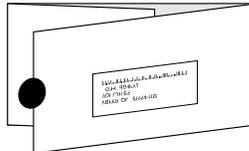
Folded Self-Mailer  
(Multiple Sheets)



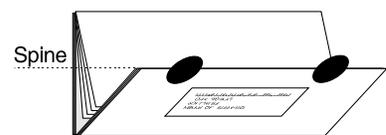
Booklet



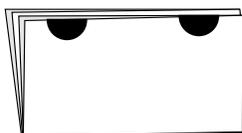
Folded Self-Mailer



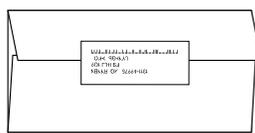
Folded Self-Mailer



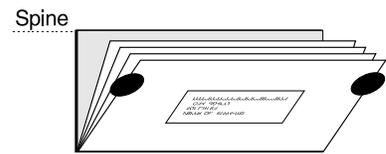
Folded Booklet



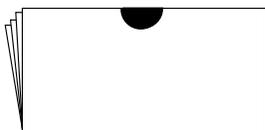
Folded Self-Mailer



Invitation Fold Self-Mailer



Folded Booklet



Folded Self-Mailer  
(Single Sheet, Multi-Fold)



Folded Self-Mailer  
(Continuous Glue Strip)



Booklet

# 3 Permits and Postage



Once you have enough mail volume and determine your mailpiece size, your next steps are to get a mailing permit and decide how you want to pay for your postage. To mail at Presorted Standard Mail postage rates, you must have a mailing permit.

Note that a permit (permission to mail) is different from a permit imprint (a way to pay postage).

## Mailing Permit

A mailing permit is simply permission to mail a certain class of mail. You must have a valid mailing permit before you can mail at Standard Mail postage rates.

## How to Apply

Applying for a mailing permit goes hand-in-hand with deciding how to pay postage (see the beginning of this chapter). Once you've chosen a method of payment, get a copy of Form 3615, *Mailing Permit Application and Customer Profile*, from your local post office or **business mail entry unit (BMEU)**. Complete the form and submit it to the post office where you'll be depositing your mail. A sample of a completed Form 3615 is reproduced on page 13. In this example, this company is applying for permit imprint authorization and precanceled stamp authorization.

Make sure the Postal Service has your correct address, telephone number, and the name of a contact person. We use this information to contact you about your mailing or about changes in postal procedures or mailing standards. If your company or organization already has a permit application on file, you can simply go to the post office and amend your Form 3615.

If your permit application has expired or lapsed for nonuse or nonpayment of fees, you may be required to reapply (and, for mailings paid with permit imprint, pay another application fee (see page 15)).

**business mail entry unit (BMEU):** The area of a postal facility where a mailer presents bulk mail or presorted mail for acceptance. It includes dedicated platform space, office space, and a staging area on the workroom floor. Formerly called bulk mail acceptance unit, platform acceptance unit, or weigher's station.

### Annual Mailing Fee

Regardless of the method of postage payment you chose, if you mail in bulk you must pay an annual mailing fee (sometimes called a “bulk mailing fee”) once every 12 months. This fee is separate from any other application fees or account deposits. Your local post office can tell you the exact amount of the annual mailing fee. You can pay this via cash or check at the post office or BMEU. There is no special form to fill out.

Paying the annual mailing fee gives you permission to mail a certain class of mail from a certain postal facility for 365 days. For instance, you would need two permits to mail at both First-Class Mail and Standard Mail bulk rates from the same office.

You cannot mail in bulk until you pay your annual mailing fee.

### Mailing from More than One Place

You must hold a mailing permit and pay an annual mailing fee at every post office where you want to deposit and pay for your mail.

### And While You're There...

When you apply for your permit, that's the time to get instructions on preparing your mailing and to pick up some bulk mailing supplies.

The Postal Service provides, free of charge, most of the materials you'll need to prepare the mailing, including:

- Rubber bands
- Color-coded pressure-sensitive package labels
- Trays (1-foot and 2-foot)
- Sacks (small and large)
- Barcoded tray and sack labels
- Postage statements
- Labeling lists (lists showing required sortations by ZIP Code)
- Quick Service Guides

Chapters 5 and 6 explain how to use each of these items.

United States Postal Service  
**Mailing Permit Application and Customer Profile**  
 (See instructions on reverse)

**A. Applicant Information (Please print or type)**

1. Individual or Company Name  
**My Company Inc.**

2. Applicant's Signature  
*Signature*

3. Date  
**1/5/01**

4. Address (Street and number, apt. or suite no., city, state, and ZIP + 4)  
**123 Main St  
 Mytown, VA 22222-1234**

5. Other Names Under Which Company Does Business (If applicable)  
**N/A**

6. Contact Person  
**Anne Company**

7. Federal Agency Cost Code (If applicable)  
**N/A**

8. Telephone  
**( 000 ) 123-4567**

9. Will Present Plant Verified Drop Shipment (PVDS)?  
 Yes  No **For Postal Service Use**

**B. Check Type of Permit/Authorization Requested**

**Permit Imprint Authorization** (Fee applies)  
 First-Class Mail(A)  Std Mail (B)  Company Permit

**Precanceled Stamp or Government Precanceled Stamped Envelope Authorization** (No fee)

**Notification to Present Metered Mail in Bulk** (No fee)

Class of Mail  
 First-Class  Mail(A)  Std Mail (B)

**Business Reply Mail (BRM) Authorization** (Fee applies)

a. Post office where BRM will be received

b. Post office where BRM permit number was issued and annual fee was paid, if applicable

**BRM Advance Deposit Account**  **BRMAS Approved** (Fee applies)

**Merchandise Return Service (MRS) Authorization** (Fee applies)

a. Type of Application  
 Initial  Reapplication

b. Return Location (See over)  
 Single  Multiple  Each Location  Centralized

d. Permit Applied For  
 First-Class/Priority Mail (A)  Std Mail (B)  PP  BPM  LR  LR

PS Form 3615, September 1997

**Permit Imprint Authorization**  
 (See instructions on reverse)

Permit Number **1** Date Permit Issued **1/5/01**

Fee Due **PAID** AIC **140**

**Please Keep This Card for Your Records**  
 Postmaster or Designee Signature  
*Postmaster*

**Precanceled Stamps Authorization or Notification to Present Metered Mail in Bulk**  
 (See instructions on reverse)

Permit Number **12** Date Permit Issued **1/5/01**

**Please Keep This Card for Your Records**  
 Postmaster or Designee Signature  
*Postmaster*

**Business Reply Mail Authorization**  
 (See instructions on reverse)

Permit Number \_\_\_\_\_ Date Permit Issued \_\_\_\_\_

Fee Due \_\_\_\_\_ AIC **134**

BRM w/Advance Deposit Account Fee Due \_\_\_\_\_ AIC **116**

**Please Keep This Card for Your Records**  
 Postmaster or Designee Signature

**Merchandise Return Service Authorization**  
 (See instructions on reverse)

Permit Number \_\_\_\_\_ Date Permit Issued \_\_\_\_\_

Fee Due \_\_\_\_\_ AIC **141**

**Please Keep This Card for Your Records**  
 Postmaster or Designee Signature

## Making Your Choice

There are three ways to pay for presorted Standard Mail postage:

- Precanceled stamps or envelopes.
- Permit imprint.
- Postage meter.

For some of these ways you need to get additional permits, and for permit imprint you need to pay a one-time application fee. But you can apply for and use as many of these payment methods as you want.

All three methods are described in the sections that follow.

### Permit Imprint

A **permit imprint** is a popular way to pay for postage. Instead of having to put stamps or use a meter to print postage on each piece, the mailer prints permit imprint information, called an **indicia**, in the upper right corner of the mailpiece.

The permit imprint indicia can be printed directly on the mailpiece or on a label, including an address label, that is permanently affixed to the mailpiece.

The indicia must include the words "Presorted Standard" or "PRSRT STD" or, if applicable, "Nonprofit Organization" (or "Nonprofit Org" or "Nonprofit") and below that, "U.S. Postage Paid." It also includes the city and state where the permit is held and the mailer's mailing permit number, except for company-style permits.

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
HOUSTON, TX  
PERMIT NO. 1

PRSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
NEW YORK, NY  
PERMIT NO. 1

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
WASHINGTON, DC  
PERMIT NO. 1



**permit imprint:** Printed indicia, used in place of an adhesive postage stamp or meter stamp, that shows postage prepayment through the authorized mailer's advance deposit account. Permit imprints must be used at least once every two years or they will be cancelled.

**indicia:** An imprinted designation on a mailpiece that denotes postage payment (for example, a permit imprint in place of a postage stamp or a meter stamp).

## Company Imprints

A company-style permit uses the company's name in the indicia instead of its permit number, city, and state. If you want to use a company-style permit imprint, just request authorization. You can then replace your permit number and city/state in the indicia with the exact name of your company or the person who holds the permit.

Examples of properly designed permit imprints are shown at right.

If you do use a company imprint, you will need to:

- Keep records on file for each mailing for at least 1 year. The records must include a sample of the piece (unless it's a parcel), the number of pieces mailed, the rate paid, and documents that show what made the mailing eligible for the rate that was claimed.
- Print a complete U.S. return address on each piece or, in the indicia, print the ZIP Code of the office where the mailing records are kept or whose postmaster has been notified of where to find the records.

PRESORTED STANDARD U.S. POSTAGE PAID JOHN DOE COMPANY
--

NONPROFIT U.S. POSTAGE PAID HAPPY HEART SOCIETY
--

## Authorizations and Fees

To use permit imprint, you need:

- A permit imprint number. To apply, fill out Form 3615, *Mailing Permit Application and Customer Profile* (see page 13). Check the box next to "Permit Imprint Authorization" and check "Standard Mail." If you will be doing company permit, check that box. If you have already applied for a different permit and have a Form 3615 on file at the local post office, the Postal Service will amend that form to show the permit imprint authorization. There is a one-time application fee for permit imprint, which covers the administrative costs of setting up your account. When you have paid the application fee and your application is approved, you will receive your permit number. This is the number that is printed in the postage area of your mailpieces.
- To pay the annual mailing fee (see page 12). Paying the annual mailing fee gives you authorization to mail at presorted Standard Mail rates for 12 months.

### How to Use a Permit Imprint

Your authorizing post office will explain any local rules, but generally you must:

- Bring all permit imprint mail to the office where the permit was issued, unless the Postal Service approves otherwise. Do not put the mail in a street collection box or give it to a letter carrier.
- Make a deposit into your postage account (called an advanced deposit account). You may make the deposit by cash, check, or money order. When you bring in a mailing, postage will be deducted from this account. You don't have to keep a balance in this account—you can make a deposit when you bring in your mailing.
- Print the permit imprint large enough and in a color that contrasts enough with the color of the mailpiece so it's clear and easy to read. Keep a clear space around it.
- Print the permit imprint with a printing press, hand stamp, lithograph, mimeograph, computer printer, or similar device. Don't write it by hand or type it with a typewriter.
- If you use a company permit imprint, be sure each piece has a complete U.S. return address.
- Permit imprints must be used once every 24 months or they become invalid.

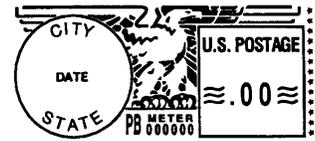
## Postage Meter

Using a **postage meter** is a convenient way to pay for postage. Meters are leased from authorized meter manufacturers.

The meter company you choose will install your meter and, after you request it, the post office will issue you a meter license and set your meter for the amount of postage you wish to purchase. Only the Postal Service can refill (reset) your meter when you are ready to purchase additional postage.

Postage meters cannot be sold or given to one mailer by another mailer. Lost, stolen, or found meters must be reported to the Postal Service immediately, as must anyone who offers to sell you a meter.

Only companies licensed by the Postal Service are authorized to lease meters. You can find the telephone number for meter vendors in your telephone directory under "Business Machines."



**postage meter:** An electronic postage imprinter used to print postage on gummed tape or directly onto envelopes or cards.

### Authorizations and Fees

To use a postage meter for Standard Mail, you need:

- A postage meter and a meter license (see page 18).
- Authorization to mail with a postage meter (mailing permit). To apply, fill out Form 3615, *Mailing Permit Application and Customer Profile* (see page 13). Check the box next to "Notification to Present Metered Mail in Bulk" and check "Standard Mail." If you have already applied for a different permit and have a Form 3615 on file at the local post office, the Postal Service will amend that form to show the metered mail authorization. There is no fee for this authorization. When your application is approved, you will receive a permit number. You DO NOT print this number on your mailpieces; simply keep this on file for your records.
- To pay the annual mailing fee (see page 12). Paying the annual mailing fee gives you authorization to mail at presorted Standard Mail rates for 12 months.

#### Applying for a License

Complete a meter license application—Form 3601-A, *Application or Update for a License to Lease and Use Postage Meters* (May 1996 or later edition only)—at the post office where you will have your meter refilled. Your meter vendor will complete this form, and submit it to the Postal Service on your behalf.

#### How to Use a Postage Meter

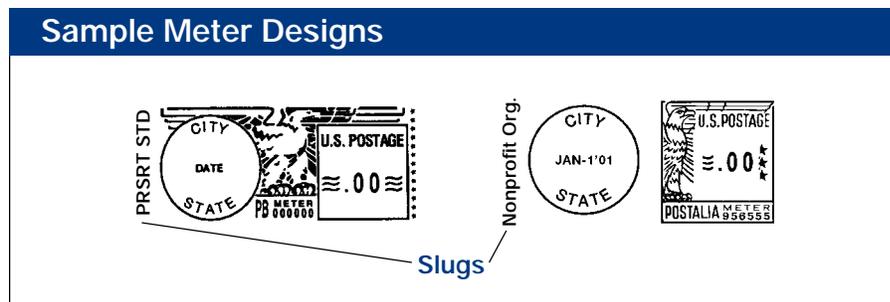
Your authorizing post office will explain any local rules, but these standards generally apply:

- Insert a “Presorted Standard” or “Nonprofit Organization” **slug** into your meter according to your authorization. Your meter vendor will supply these.
- Print on each piece the exact amount of postage due. Some mailers meter each piece at the lowest claimer postage rate and then “pay up” the difference when they bring the mail to the post office. Ask your local postal employees about this option.
- If you print a date in the meter impression, you must use the date you actually deposit the mail at the post office. Meter impressions on Standard Mail mailings do not have to show a date. Meter tapes need only show the month and year (not the day) of the mailing.
- Make sure the meter stamps are legible and don’t overlap, or they will not be accepted when postal employees examine the mail for postage.
- Use fluorescent ink for postage imprints on letter-size metered mail, or your license may be revoked. Ask your meter manufacturer for ink recommendations.
- Always deposit the mail at locations designated by the postmaster of the licensing post office shown in the meter stamp unless you’re authorized by the Postal Service to deposit it at a different location.

**slug:** An attachment to the meter machine that can be obtained from your meter supplier. Used to print postal endorsements or advertising on a mailpiece when the postage is printed.

**Warning!** When using a postage meter to print postage on your mail pieces, check, double check and triple check that the postage amount is actually what you want (\$.15 not \$1.50 or \$.15 not \$.015).

If you overpay and request a refund, you must turn in the envelopes and will only receive 90% reimbursement of the postage affixed.



## Precanceled Stamps

If you want your mailing to look more personalized, use **precanceled stamps**. They look very much like other stamps, and you can buy them at your local post office.

You can also buy envelopes with precanceled stamps already imprinted.

Precanceled stamps come in two versions: nondenominated versions and versions with specific denominations of postage printed. The Postal Service does not print these stamps in all rate denominations. See your local post office for a list of available stamps and denominations.



## Authorizations and Fees

To use precanceled stamps or envelopes, you need:

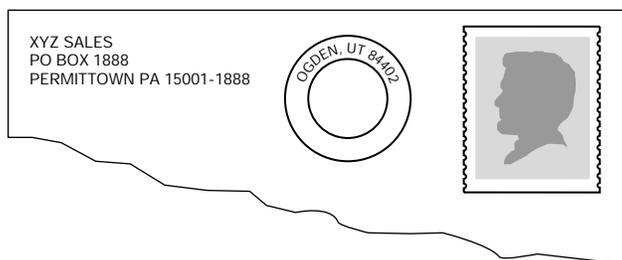
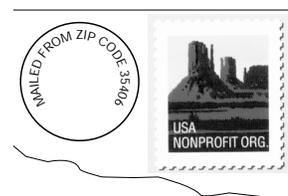
- Precanceled stamp authorization. To apply, fill out Form 3615, *Mailing Permit Application and Customer Profile* (see page 13). Check the box next to "Precanceled Stamp." If you have already applied for a different permit and have a Form 3615 on file at the local post office, the Postal Service will amend that form to show the precanceled stamp authorization. There is no fee to apply for permission to use precanceled stamps. When your application is approved, you will receive a customer number to use when you buy precanceled stamps or envelopes.
- To pay the annual mailing fee (see page 12). Paying the annual mailing fee gives you authorization to mail at presorted Standard Mail rates for 12 months.

#### How to Use Precanceled Stamps

Your authorizing post office will explain any local rules, but generally you must:

- Use stamps that are appropriate for the class of mail (regular rate or nonprofit Standard Mail precanceled stamps).
- Precanceled stamps have a fixed value (\$0.10 for regular Standard Mail, \$0.05 for nonprofit Standard Mail). Because your postage for each piece will be more than that, you must “pay up” the difference when you bring your mail to the post office. When you fill out a postage statement (see chapter 6), you’ll calculate how much postage you still owe. You can pay the additional postage with a check, by affixing a meter strip on the back of the postage statement (see chapter 6), or through an **advance deposit account** (see details in the “Permit Imprint” section of this chapter).
- You must bring the mail to the post office where the precanceled stamp permit was issued. Do not put the mail in a street collection box or give it to a letter carrier.
- Precanceled stamps purchased from the Postal Service are preprinted with the required “PRSRT STD” (presorted standard) or “Nonprofit Org” markings.
- A U.S. return address must be printed on each piece, preferably in the upper left corner on the address side.
- If the post office shown in the return address is not the post office where you deposit the mail, then either:
  - Show, in a cancellation endorsement, the city, two-letter state abbreviation, and ZIP Code where the mail was deposited (as in the example below), or “Mailed from ZIP Code” followed by the 5-digit ZIP Code assigned to the office of mailing (as shown above).
  - Before you deposit your mailing, mail a copy of the postage statement and a sample mailpiece to the postmaster at the post office of the return address.

**advance deposit account:** A Postal Service account into which a mailer deposits funds, which are held until postage is deducted at the time of mailing.



## Special Rates for Nonprofit Mailers

You may be aware that lower nonprofit rates are available for some Standard Mail mailers, but you may not know who is eligible for the rates. The following information will help you determine if you may be eligible for nonprofit postage rates.

Organizations wishing to mail at nonprofit Standard Mail rates first must be authorized to mail at the nonprofit rates. Then, they must make sure that the material being mailed complies with strict requirements for nonprofit rates. Nonprofit postage rates are available only for domestic mail, not for international mail.

### Who Qualifies for Nonprofit Rates?

Organizations that typically are eligible for nonprofit rates include:

- Agricultural
- Educational
- Fraternal
- Labor
- Philanthropic
- Religious
- Scientific
- Veterans
- Some political committees

Individuals and certain nonprofit organizations usually are NOT eligible for nonprofit rates. For example, business leagues, chambers of commerce, social and hobby clubs, and certain political organizations usually are NOT eligible.

Nonprofit authorization allows an organization to mail at reduced postage rates, but there are restrictions as to what may be mailed at those rates. There are restrictions on the amount and kind of advertising you can do, and there are some ads that are restricted (ads for insurance and travel) and some that are prohibited (ads for credit cards). It's always best to check with your local business mail entry staff before you design and print your mailpiece.

Quick Service Guide 670, *Standard Mail Nonprofit Eligibility*, gives an overview of nonprofit rates and eligibility. Publication 417, *Nonprofit Standard Mail Eligibility*, provides complete information about nonprofit eligibility, including the types of materials that may be mailed at the Nonprofit rates and instructions for applying for nonprofit mailing privileges. Both of these publications are available from [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com) or from your local post office.

### How to Apply for Nonprofit Rates

1. Obtain a copy of Form 3624, *Application to Mail at Nonprofit Standard Mail Rates*, from your postmaster or local business mail entry unit.
2. Fill out Form 3624. Lines 1-5 and Lines 7-14 are self-explanatory. For Line 6, check the category (ONLY ONE) under which you are applying.
3. Required documentation. You must submit some documentation with your application to support your claim for nonprofit rates:
  - Formative papers (e.g., articles of incorporation, constitution, or charter).
  - IRS letter of exemption from payment of federal income tax.
  - Other evidence of nonprofit status-e.g., a financial statement prepared by an independent auditor substantiating organization's nonprofit status (statement must include balance sheets, notes, etc.).
4. Some mailers provide additional supporting documentation:
  - List of the organization's activities during the past 12 months.
  - Financial statement showing receipts and expenditures for the past fiscal year, plus the budget for the current year.
  - Other documents of operation-e.g., the organization's bulletins, minutes of meetings, brochures.
5. Submit the completed form and supporting documentation to your postmaster or at the business mail entry unit. **There is no fee to apply for nonprofit status.** However, you will need to pay an annual mailing fee and, if you decide to pay with permit imprint, a permit imprint fee.

6. Your application will be reviewed by the Postal Service. If there are any questions about the application or if additional supporting documentation is needed, a postal specialist will contact you directly. It usually takes about two weeks for your application to be approved.
7. You can mail your organization's material while the nonprofit application is pending. Until you receive nonprofit authorization, you must pay postage at the regular Standard Mail rates. Then, once your nonprofit application is approved, you can request a refund of the difference between the regular and nonprofit rates.

When your application is approved, you will receive an authorization letter from the Postal Service. A copy will also go to the post office where you are authorized to mail at Nonprofit Standard Mail Rates. Be sure to save your copy of the letter as evidence that you have been authorized.

8. To request a refund, complete Form 3533 and submit it along with a copy of your dated application and copies of your postage statements. If you have not kept copies of your postage statements, the USPS can usually provide the postage records. It usually takes up to two weeks to receive your refund check.

Once you have been approved to mail at nonprofit rates, in order to keep that authorization, you must make a mailing at nonprofit rates at least once during a two-year period at each office where you are authorized. Otherwise, your authorization will be revoked due to nonuse.

- If your organization has existing authorization to mail at a specific post office (city) and would like to mail from additional offices, apply by submitting Form 3623, *Application for Nonprofit Standard Mail Rates at Additional Mailing Office* to your local post office.

### How to Prepare Nonprofit Mail

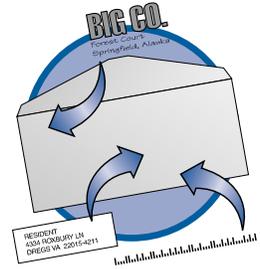
Except for the restrictions on content, mail sent at nonprofit rates looks just like regular Standard Mail. The only difference is the required marking for nonprofit mail. NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION or NONPROFIT ORG must appear:

- In the permit imprint indicia
- On a nonprofit precanceled stamp
- As part of the meter impression
- Printed on the mailpiece, outside of the postage area

In addition, the exact name and address of the nonprofit organization **must** be shown, either on the outside of the mailpiece or in a prominent place within the contents.

Nonprofit mail is sorted and prepared the same way as regular Standard Mail. See Chapter 5.

# 4 Addressing Your Mail



In chapter 2, you learned that a mailpiece's design greatly affects the ease with which that piece can be processed and delivered. Two other elements vital to efficient processing and delivery are covered in detail in this chapter: accurate addressing and **barcoding**.

Often, the most neglected part of a mailing is the quality of address information. However, customers are becoming more aware of address quality. They know that an incorrect address just may mean the piece will not be delivered or will create a negative response to a mailing's message.

## Accurate Addressing

Cost-effective, consistent, and timely delivery of every mailpiece depends on an accurate address that is complete and correct in all its elements. Accurate addressing helps the Postal Service keep costs—and rates—for providing and receiving mail service as low as possible. It also ensures that the mail can be processed on Postal Service automated equipment and is delivered promptly. An incomplete or inaccurate address needs additional handling, including manual processing, which can delay delivery.

To ensure that your mailing receives the best delivery service possible, always use addresses that are accurate and complete.

Updating your mailing lists regularly is always a good idea. To mail at Standard Mail rates, you must certify that the 5-digit ZIP Codes on the mailpieces have been verified as accurate in the last 12 months.

**barcode:** A series of vertical bars and half bars representing the delivery address. The barcode allows automated processing by barcode reader equipment.

**undeliverable:** Standard Mail that is undeliverable and has no ancillary endorsement is disposed of as waste by the delivery unit.

## Addressing for the “Computer Eye”

You can take advantage of the accurate, high-speed processing machines called **optical character readers (OCRs)**. It's easy—just remember these important steps when addressing your mail:

- Use only machine-printed addresses and a clear, non-script font.
- Make sure the delivery name and address are complete. Include apartment numbers, suite numbers, and directionals (like S, NW) when they apply.
- Use the correct ZIP Codes or ZIP+4 codes.

Proper addressing can also make your mailing **upgradable** and make sorting simpler (see page 59).

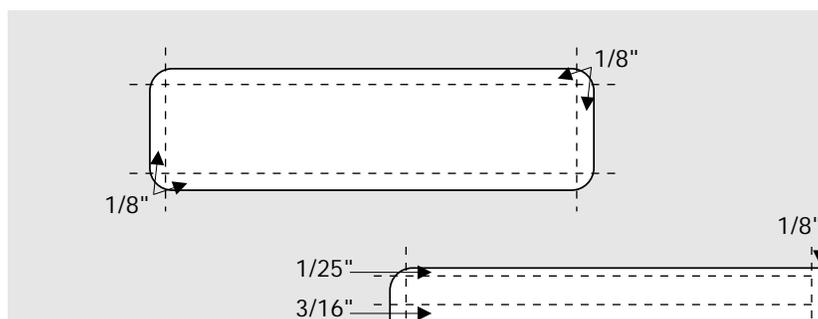
### Other Points To Remember

- **Line spacing:** Single-space the address block.
- **Word spacing:** Put at least one full space—but not more than five—between any character groups.
- **Window envelopes:** Make sure that only the address block is visible through the window and that the entire address is visible no matter how much the **insert** slides around. For an address window, there should always be a 1/8-inch margin on all sides. For a barcode window, there should always be at least 1/8 inch between the barcode and the sides of the window, 1/25 inch between the barcode and the top edge of the window, and 3/16 inch between the barcode and the bottom edge of the mailpiece.
- **Extra data:** If you use data that's not related to the address information, put the data line above the address block. Rule of thumb: Keep the space beside and below the delivery address line clear of printing except for the address itself.
- **Type style:** Keep a clear vertical space between each character. Avoid type that touches or overlaps.

**OCR (optical character reader):** An automated mail sorting machine that interprets the address information on a letter-size mailpiece and prints the corresponding delivery information onto the piece as a barcode.

**upgradable mail:** Mail that the Postal Service can place barcodes on with automated equipment. Upgradable mail is letter-size, has machine-printed nonscript addresses, has an OCR read area and a barcode clear zone that meet reflectance requirements, and is made of paper that accepts ink.

**insert:** A letter, card, or other item placed in an envelope (often a window envelope) for mailing.



## Barcoding

A barcode is a series of long and short bars that represent a series of numbers. Some barcodes represent ZIP Codes, ZIP+4 codes, and delivery addresses. The Postal Service uses automated equipment that reads these barcodes to process and sort mail. A barcode by itself does not qualify a mailpiece for a lower rate. To get lower postage rates, a mailpiece must have certain characteristics (one of which is a barcode).

In general, the Postal Service recommends that, unless you are preparing a mailing for automation rates, you should NOT put barcodes on the mailpieces. As long as the mailing address is correct, you mail will still be processed efficiently without a barcode—and you won't need to worry about having the wrong barcode on you mail. A bad (incorrect) barcode is much worse than no barcode at all. A bad barcode can cause your mailpiece to travel to the wrong destination.

If you would like more information about barcodes and lower automation postage rates, contact your local postmaster or customer service representative.

## Address Hygiene

There are several software products available that can help your mailing qualify for the lower postage rates. Just be sure the product has been certified by the Postal Service.

For information on getting a mailing list, see chapter 9.

The addresses in an automation-rate mailing must be matched using a Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS)-certified process within 6 months before the mailing date.

There are many products that can help you evaluate the quality of your address list before you mail. These products can also add and correct ZIP Codes and ZIP+4 codes.

Pages 28-34 list some of the Postal Service's products and services for address hygiene. You can also call 1-800-238-3150 for information on products and services supplied by private companies and approved by the Postal Service.

Some specific Postal Service address hygiene services and their costs are shown in the chart on the following page.

## Address Change and Correction Services

A complete listing of all addressing products offered by the Postal Service is on the web at: [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com) > Address Quality.

### Address List Correction Service

Lets you submit business and residential mailing lists to the Postal Service for correction. Lists must be typewritten, hand-printed, or prepared by computer in sheet form.

### Address List Sequencing Service

Arranges your carrier route addresses in delivery sequence order at no charge. There is a charge for adding correct addresses and removing incorrect addresses.

Address Service Fees*	
Service	Fee (dollars)
Address Correction Service	Manual, per notice issued 0.60
	Electronic, per notice issued 0.20
Address Sequencing Service	Per card corrected, changed, removed by Postal Service 0.25
Mailing List Services	Corrections: per occupant list name and address 0.25
	Minimum charge per list 7.50
	Sortation: per 1,000 or fraction to cards by ZIP Code 73.00
Weighted Fee	Charged for pieces endorsed "Address Service Requested" or "Forwarding Service Requested" that are undelivered as addressed. Covers the postage for the returned piece and indirectly covers the postage for forwarding other pieces. Fee = 2.472 x First-Class Mail single-piece rate.

\* The fees listed are those in effect as of January 7, 2001. Check with your local post office to make sure these are current.

You can also use the special endorsements called ancillary service endorsements (see next page) to request new address information and forwarding of your pieces to a correct address.



## 4 Address Change and Correction Services

Endorsements for Standard Mail	
MAILER ENDORSEMENT	USPS ACTION ON UNDELIVERABLE-AS-ADDRESSED PIECES
No endorsement	Mailpiece disposed of by USPS.
Return Service Requested	Mailpiece returned with new address or reason for nondelivery attached; single-piece First-Class Mail or Priority Mail rate (as applicable) for weight of piece charged; address correction fee not charged.
Address Service Requested	<p><b>If undeliverable:</b> Mailpiece returned with reason for nondelivery attached; weighted fee charged<sup>2</sup>; address correction fee not charged.</p> <p><b>Months 1 through 12:</b> Mailpiece forwarded at no charge to addressee. Separate notice of new address provided to sender; address correction fee charged.<sup>3</sup></p> <p><b>Months 13 through 18:</b> Mailpiece returned with new address or reason for nondelivery attached; weighted fee charged<sup>2</sup>; address correction fee not charged.</p> <p><b>After month 18:</b> Mailpiece returned with reason for nondelivery attached; weighted fee charged<sup>2</sup>; address correction fee not charged.</p>
Change Service Requested	Separate notice of new address or reason for nondelivery provided to sender; in either case, address correction fee charged <sup>3</sup> ; mailpiece disposed of by USPS.
Forwarding Service Requested <sup>1</sup>	<p><b>If undeliverable:</b> Mailpiece returned with reason for nondelivery attached; weighted fee charged<sup>2</sup>; address correction fee not charged.</p> <p><b>Months 1 through 12:</b> Mailpiece forwarded at no charge to addressee.</p> <p><b>Months 13 through 18:</b> Mailpiece returned with new address or reason for nondelivery attached; weighted fee charged<sup>2</sup>; address correction fee not charged.</p> <p><b>After month 18:</b> Mailpiece returned with reason for nondelivery attached; weighted fee charged<sup>2</sup>; address correction fee not charged.</p>

<sup>1</sup> This endorsement is intended primarily for parcels and is not recommended to Standard Mail letters or flats.

<sup>2</sup> Weighted fee is: appropriate First-Class or Priority Mail rate multiplied by 2.472, rounded to next whole cent.

<sup>3</sup> Address correction fee is: \$.60 manual.

### Return Address

When using an endorsement, you must use a full return address on the addressed side of the mailpiece and it must read in the same direction as the recipient's address (to the upper left of the delivery address).

### Spacing

Leave 1/4 inch of clear space both above and below the endorsement.

### Size

The type size of the endorsement must be 8 points or larger.

### Payment

When using an endorsement you **must** pay for the service requested on the pieces returned.

### Colors

Endorsements must stand out clearly against the background. Brilliantly colored envelopes and reverse printing are not permitted.

### Fees

See endorsement table on page 30 for a description of fees.

## Getting Started in Quality Addressing and Barcoding

### Diskette Coding

The Postal Service offers a free, one-time only service called Diskette Coding to help you get started in barcoding. Diskette Coding is a Postal Service program designed to improve the quality of small address lists. This free service standardizes the elements of addresses and adds ZIP+4 codes, delivery point codes, and carrier route information to address files.

Customers submit address files to the **NCSC** or to a postal business center in compatible diskette formats. Your file is copied and matched against the Postal Service National ZIP+4 File to correct and standardize the addresses. The Postal Service will correct your ZIP Code, standardize the format, identify undeliverable addresses, and explain what is wrong with each. You can then correct these addresses before mailing. Some restrictions apply, so see your postal business center for details.

After this initial cleanup, you must keep the addresses accurate using computer software or some other postal-approved method. The address files must be cleaned (updated) at least every 6 months.

**National Customer Support Center (NCSC):**  
A Postal Service organization that provides information, services, and products designed to improve the quality of addresses for mailing.

### National Change of Address (NCOA) System

Lets you update your address lists with the most current forwarding information (for individuals, families, and businesses that have moved within the last 36 months) before you mail. This system can also correct ZIP+4 codes and standardize addresses. Private companies are licensed by the Postal Service to provide this service for a fee.

#### Software Vendors

Many companies sell “presort software,” which is special computer software that you run against your mailing list. This software corrects elements in your addresses, presorts your mailpieces, determines which mailpieces qualify for which postage rates, and prints presort documentation and your postage statement. Presort software can cost anywhere from \$100 (for simple packages) to thousands of dollars (for very sophisticated software). You can find this presort software at your local office supply store. Look for a package that is “PAVE certified”—this means that the software has been tested and approved by the Postal Service.

#### Presort Bureaus

Presort bureaus are companies that provide mail processing services. You can give them unsorted mail and they will prepare the mailing for you. Many presort bureaus already have invested in software that can certify your addresses as deliverable and may even be able to reduce your postage by placing delivery point barcodes on the mail. Presort bureaus may even be able to sell you a mailing list. Remember, if you’re buying a mailing list, make sure that it has been run through USPS-approved software.

## Doing It Yourself

### ZIP Code Verification

For Presorted mailings, you must verify the accuracy of the ZIP Codes on the mailpieces once every 12 months. You may use one of several methods to do this. If you use software to maintain address lists on a computer, you can use CASS-certified address matching software and current Postal Service Address Information Systems (AIS) products to qualify your addresses for Presorted rate mailings within 12 months before the mailing.

For manually maintained lists or small computerized lists, you may:

- Manually verify the ZIP Codes using the most recent edition of Publication 65, *National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory*. This is available from your local post office or can be purchased by calling 1-800-238-3150.
- Survey the addressees on your mailing list to inquire about any address or ZIP Code changes.
- Use the current manual list correction service (see *Domestic Mail Manual A910*).
- Use a service bureau or address matching service provider to verify ZIP Code information.
- Use an electronic lookup service such as the one on the Postal Service Internet home page. ZIP Code lookup is in the free access portion of RIBBS ([www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com) > Find ZIP Codes).
- Use certified address matching software and a current AIS product.

Mailers certify that they have met the verification standard when signing the postage statement (see Chapter 6). Signing the postage statement and certifying that this standard has been met when in fact the criteria has not been met is a serious offense.

For information about these programs, contact a local postal business center or the National Customer Support Center at 1-800-238-3150. You also can access addressing information at [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com).

**Publications.** These publications help with designing your mail. They are available free of charge by contacting your local post office or by calling 1-800-238-3150 to order copies. Many of these publications are available for free from the Postal Explorer web site (<http://pe.usps.gov>).

Publication 25, *Designing Letter and Reply Mail*

Publication 28, *Postal Addressing Standards*

Publication 40, *Address Information Systems Product Directory*

Publication 63, *Designing Flat Mail*

Publication 95, *Quick Service Guide*

Publication 221, *Addressing for Success*

Notice 186, *ZIP+4 Code*

Remember, there are also a wide variety of address improvement products available from private firms in the mailing industry. If you choose to use one of these products, be certain that you ask for proof of Postal Service certification.

# 5 Presorting a Mailing



**M**any mailers choose to presort their mail because it reduces the amount of postage they pay. Because you're doing some of the work, it costs the Postal Service less money to process and deliver your mail. We pass those savings on to you in the form of reduced postage rates.

Basically, "presorting" means grouping your mail by ZIP Code. All of the pieces going to the same destination get grouped into the same package, then into a tray or sack. You'll start by sorting to specific areas (such as a 5-digit ZIP Code), and then work your way up to more general areas. Leftover mailpieces all get put together.

Some beginning mailers choose not to presort their mail; instead, they pay the full First-Class Mail rate, put stamps on their mailpieces, and drop them in a collection box. That's easy!

Other mailers don't want to presort their mail but still want to get the lower postage rates. To do that, they use a presort bureau or lettershop to prepare their mail.

This chapter will show you how to presort your mail. There are three major steps:

1. Get supplies.
2. Sort the mail by creating packages, and then putting those packages in containers.
3. Prepare the containers of mail.

Once you've sorted your mail, you'll fill out a postage statement (Chapter 6). When you are finished with these steps you'll be ready to go to the BMEU or post office to drop off your mailing.

## General Rules

Here are some general rules you should review before you begin sorting your mailing:

- Your annual mailing fee must be paid before you deposit your first mailing.
- Each mailing must have at least 200 pieces or 50 pounds of mail.
- Each piece must have a complete delivery address with the correct ZIP Code or ZIP+4 code. ZIP Codes must be updated yearly using a USPS-certified process.
- Postage claimed for each piece is based on the sort level of the mail in the tray or sack.
- Pieces at Regular rates must be marked “Presorted Standard” or “PRSRT STD.” Pieces at nonprofit rates must be marked “Nonprofit Organization” or “Nonprofit Org” or “Nonprofit.”
- There are two types of presorted letter mail—ordinary and upgradable—that both qualify for the same rates. The ordinary option covers all kinds of letter pieces, but the upgradable option is only used with pieces that can be processed on automation equipment. Upgradable has easier preparation standards. (There are more details on upgradable letters later in this chapter.)

## Supplies

You'll need some supplies to sort and prepare your mail. Most of these are available at the business mail entry unit (BMEU) and you can pick them up during normal business hours. A BMEU clerk will help you find exactly what you need. Most BMEUs have a work area for customers; that's where you'll find the supplies you need. If you need something but don't see it, just ask!

The Postal Service supplies these for free:

1. **Rubber bands.** Take a handful. Be sure to use the sturdy rubber bands provided by the Postal Service to package your mail. Your mail might get jostled during processing and transportation and thin rubber bands tend to break.

2. **Trays**

For Standard Mail letters: The Postal Service has 1-foot and 2-foot trays. If this is the first time you've mailed, take a few of each. You can always return the extras, and the next time you do a mailing you'll have a better idea of the number of trays you need.

For "tall" Standard Mail letters: The Postal Service has special trays called EMM trays that are deeper than the regular 1-foot and 2-foot trays. EMM trays come only in 2-foot lengths.

For Standard Mail flats: Flats get sorted into white sacks. Do not use brown, green, or orange sacks.

3. **Sleeves or lids.** "Sleeves" are tray lids, and each tray needs one. Get the same number and size (1-foot or 2-foot) to fit the number of trays you need.

4. **Package Labels.** These colored stickers identify your packages of mail. Get a roll of each of the four stickers:



- Red "D." 5-digit (all pieces for the same 5-digit ZIP Code) (also called "direct").



- Green "3." 3-digit (all pieces for the same first three digits of a ZIP Code).
- Origin or entry 3-digit (pieces for the 3-digit areas served by the sectional center facility in your area).



- Pink "A." ADC (all for the same **area distribution center**).

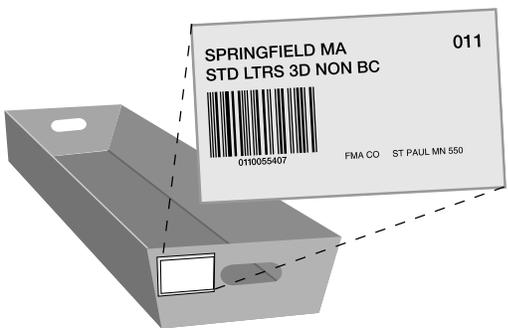


- Tan "MXD." Mixed ADC (pieces for two or more area distribution centers).

**area distribution center (ADC):** A mail processing facility that receives, processes, and distributes mail destined for specific ZIP Code areas.

5. **Container labels.** Every container of mail (tray or sack) **MUST** have a label. The label tells the Postal Service the destination of the mail in that tray or sack. Ask the business mail entry unit clerk to help you find the right labels. For your future mailings, you'll have a better idea of what labels you use on a regular basis. Your BMEU stocks barcoded labels for local destinations.

**Size:** Tray labels are 2" x 3". Sack labels are 1" x 3".



Labels tell the Postal Service where to send your container of mail for processing and delivery.

6. **Labeling Lists.** The Postal Service publishes lists of ZIP Codes called labeling lists. Mailers use the information in these lists to label sacks and trays. These lists are included in the *Domestic Mail Manual*. They are available in hard copy from the BMEU or via the Postal Explorer web site (<http://pe.usps.gov>, in Adobe PDF format and HTML).

For Presorted Standard Mail, you'll need: Labeling List L002, *3-Digit ZIP Code Matrix*; Labeling List L004, *3-Digit ZIP Code Groups -- ADC Sortation*; and L005, *3-Digit ZIP Code Prefix Groups -- SCF Sortation*.

For Upgradable Standard Mail letters, you will also need: Labeling List 801, *AADCs -- Letter-Size Mailings* and Labeling List 803, *Non-BMC/ASF Entry -- Periodicals and Standard Mail*.

7. **Quick Service Guides.** These two-page guides use words and pictures to show you how to sort mail for any class of mail or any presort level. The Quick Service Guides are available in hard copy from the BMEU or via the Postal Explorer web site (<http://pe.usps.gov>, in Adobe PDF format and HTML).
8. **Postage statement.** This document records the number of pieces in your mailing and helps you calculate the postage you must pay. Copies are available from the BMEU or can be downloaded from [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com) > Forms. In Chapter 6, you'll learn how to fill out a postage statement.

You'll also need:

**Strapping material.** Trays of mail must be secured with a single strap around the length of the sleeved tray. Most large office supply stores carry strapping material.

Once you have all of your supplies, you're ready to sort your mail.

**3-Digit ZIP Code Prefix Matrix** L002

L000 General Use  
**L002 3-Digit ZIP Code Matrix**

This matrix provides information about 3-digit ZIP Code prefixes as follows:

- a. ZIP Code: Use this column to find a 3-digit ZIP Code prefix. Those prefixes indicated by an **X** are unassigned.
- b. Column A for 3-Digit Destinations: Use this information for Line 1 on 3-digit containers (subject to the standards for the rate claimed). Unique 3-digit cities are indicated by a **U**.
- c. Column B for 3-Digit Scheme Destinations: Use this information for Line 1 on 3-digit/scheme containers (subject to the standards for the rate claimed). Line 2 for destinations indicated by an **S** must include either "SCHEME" or the specific information shown (3-digit groups by scheme group, where applicable, are shown in L003).
- d. Column C for SCF Destinations: Use this information for line 1 on SCF containers (subject to the standards for the rate claimed). SCFs serving only a single 3-digit area are indicated by a **D** (3-digit groups by SCF are shown in L005). Destination SCF, Standard Mail (A) rates or SCF zone Periodicals rates are available only to those ZIP Code areas for which an SCF is shown. **Exception:** Mail destinating in 572 may be deposited at Watertown, SD; mail destinating in 573 may be deposited at Mitchell, SD.

To order labels from the USPS Label Printing Center, use Form 1578-B and indicate set number 001 (unique 3-digit cities only), set number 002 (3-digit destinations), or set number 003 (SCF destinations). Requests are supplied in lots of 300 (minimum) for each label on the list.

(1) = Mail destinating in 3-digit ZIP Code area 008 must be labeled as shown in L601 for Standard Mail machinable parcels, L603 for Standard Mail irregular parcels, and L004 for all other mail.

3-Digit ZIP Code Prefix	Column A 3-Digit Destination <sup>(1)</sup> Label to	Column B 3-Digit/Scheme Destinations Label to	Column C SCF Destinations Label to
001	X		
002	X		
003	X		
004	X		
005	MID-ISLAND NY 005	MID-ISLAND NY 005	SCF MID-ISLAND NY 117
006	SAN JUAN PR 006	SAN JUAN PR 006 <sup>S</sup>	SCF SAN JUAN PR 006
007	SAN JUAN PR 007	SAN JUAN PR 006 <sup>S</sup>	SCF SAN JUAN PR 006
008	(1)	SAN JUAN PR 006 <sup>S</sup>	(1)
009	SAN JUAN PR 009 <sup>U</sup>	SAN JUAN PR 006 <sup>S</sup>	SCF SAN JUAN PR 006

An example of a labeling list from the DMM.

## Packaging

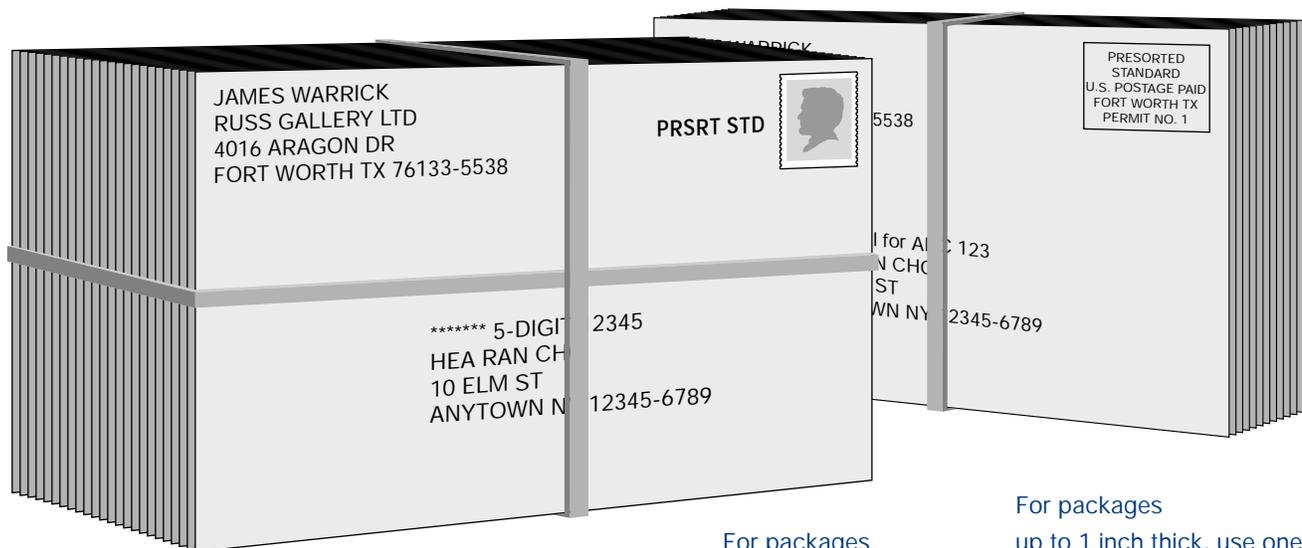
Presorted mailpieces must be put into “packages.” That’s just a postal term for a handful of mail held together with rubber bands. Packaging steps are the same for letters and flats.

- Make sure all addresses face in the same direction.
- Secure packages with rubber bands. Be sure to use the sturdy rubber bands provided by the Postal Service to package your mail. First put a rubber band around the length (parallel to the address) and then around girth (perpendicular to the address). If the package buckles (because there aren’t enough pieces to hold the rubber band), then just put one rubber band around the girth.
- Packages cannot be thicker than 6 inches. If a package is thicker than 6 inches, break it up into multiple packages.

For upgradable preparation, you DO NOT have to package your mailpieces. That saves you time! See page 59.

**package:** A group of 10 or more addressed pieces assembled and secured together (by tying or banding) and handled as a single unit.

**faced:** Mail arranged with all addresses and stamps or indicia facing the same way.



For packages between 1 and 6 inches thick, use two bands—one around the length and one around the height. When using rubber bands, *always band the length first.*

For packages up to 1 inch thick, use one band around the height.

## Counting

You'll need to keep a running total of the exact number of pieces in each package. This will help you calculate postage and tell you whether you have enough mail to qualify for certain rates. One way to do this is to write each package's number of pieces on a tally sheet or in the lower left corner of the top piece of each package. After you make all the packages, you can copy those numbers onto your tally sheet and stick the adhesive labels over the numbers on the packages.

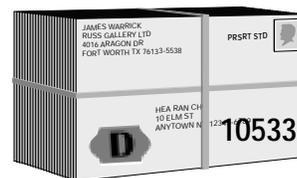
Now you're ready to sort your mail.

## Making Packages

### Step 1: Create 5-Digit Packages

In this **required** step you will package together all pieces going to the same 5-digit ZIP Code.

1. Group or stack your mail according to the destination ZIP Code.
2. Where there are 10 or more pieces to the same 5-digit ZIP Code, band those pieces together into a package. If you have fewer than 10 pieces to a single 5-digit ZIP Code, set them aside and go to Step 2. First put a rubber band around the length (parallel to the address) and then around the girth (perpendicular to the address). If the package buckles (because there aren't enough pieces to hold the rubber band), then just put one rubber band around the girth. If a package is thicker than 6 inches, break it up into multiple packages, making sure that each package has at least 10 pieces.
3. Put a red "D" sticker in the lower left corner of the top mailpiece of the package. **DO NOT** put a sticker on EACH mailpiece in a package! The Postal Service just needs to identify the package, so one sticker on the top mailpiece is fine.
4. Count the number of pieces in the package and record the ZIP Code and number of pieces on your tally sheet. Put the package aside.
5. Continue packaging each 5-digit ZIP Code into groups of 10 or more until all possible 5-digit packages have been made.



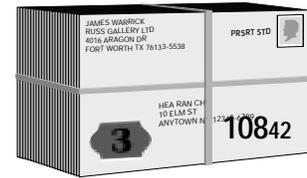
### Step 2: Create 3-Digit Packages

In this **required** step you will package together all pieces going to the same 3-digit ZIP Code area (the first 3 digits of the ZIP Code on the mailpieces).

1. Group or stack all of the remaining pieces according to the first 3 digits of the destination ZIP Code.
2. Where there are 10 or more pieces to the same 3-digit ZIP Code area, band those pieces together into a package. First put a rubber band around the length (parallel to the address) and then around the girth (perpendicular to the address). If the package buckles (because there aren't enough pieces to hold the rubber band), then just put one rubber band around the girth. If a package is thicker than 6 inches, break it up into multiple packages, making sure that each package has at least 10 pieces.

If you have fewer than 10 pieces to any single 3-digit ZIP Code area, set them aside and go to Step 3. If you have more than 10 pieces to any 5-digit ZIP Code, you must go back to Step 1.

3. Put a green "3" sticker in the lower left corner of the top mailpiece of the package. **DO NOT** put a sticker on **EACH** mailpiece in a package! The Postal Service just needs to identify the package, so one sticker on the top mailpiece is fine.
4. Count the number of pieces in the package and record the 3-digit ZIP Code area and number of pieces on your tally sheet. Put the package aside.
5. Continue packaging each 3-digit ZIP Code into groups of 10 or more until all possible 3-digit packages have been made.



### Step 3: Create ADC Packages

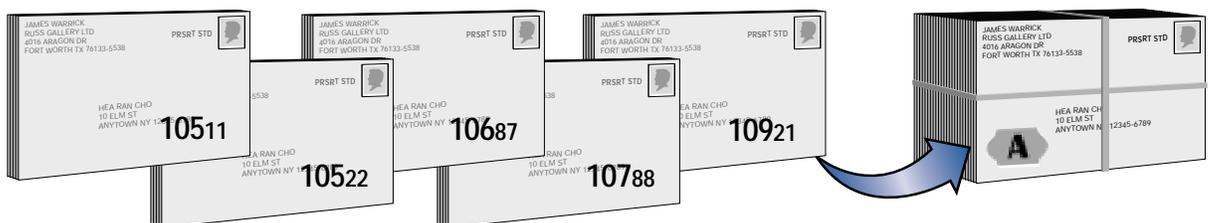
In this **required** step you will package together any remaining pieces going to the same postal processing facility (area distribution center, or ADC). Because ADCs sort mail for many different ZIP Codes, ADC packages can contain mail for as few as 2 or 3 3-digit areas or as many as 10 or 11 3-digit areas.

1. Using your copy of Labeling List L004, group or stack the remaining mailpieces according to the 3-digit areas listed in Labeling List L004.
2. Where there are 10 or more pieces to the same ADC, band those pieces together into a package. First put a rubber band around the length (parallel to the address) and then around the girth (perpendicular to the address). If the package buckles (because there aren't enough pieces to hold the rubber band), then just put one rubber band around the girth. If a package is thicker than 6 inches, break it up into multiple packages, making sure that each package has at least 10 pieces.

**NOTE:** Most mailers who mail locally will not have ADC packages.

If you have fewer than 10 pieces to the same ADC, set them aside and go to Step 4. If you have more than 10 pieces to any 3-digit ZIP Code area, you must go back to Step 2.

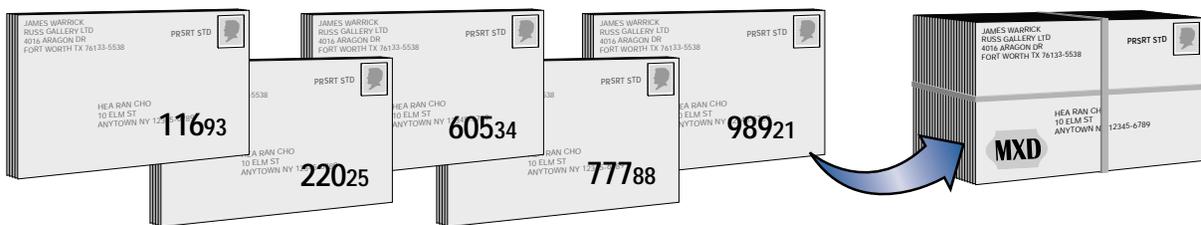
3. Put a pink "A" sticker in the lower left corner of the top mailpiece of the package. DO NOT put a sticker on EACH mailpiece in a package! The Postal Service just needs to identify the package, so one sticker on the top mailpiece is fine.
4. Count the number of pieces in the package and record the ADC and number of pieces on your tally sheet. Put the package aside.
5. Continue packaging all ADC ZIP Codes into groups of 10 or more until all possible ADC packages have been made.



### Step 4: Create Mixed ADC Packages

In this **required** step you will package together all of the remaining pieces. If you don't have any pieces left, then you're ready to put your packages into trays or sacks (go to Step 5).

1. Package any remaining pieces, regardless of destination ZIP Code, into groups up to 6 inches thick. It's OK to have a package with fewer than 10 pieces. First put a rubber band around the length (parallel to the address) and then around the girth (perpendicular to the address). If the package buckles (because there aren't enough pieces to hold the rubber band), then just put one rubber band around the girth. If a package is thicker than 6 inches, break it up into multiple packages,
2. Put a tan "MXD" sticker in the lower left corner of the top mailpiece of the package. **DO NOT** put a sticker on **EACH** mailpiece in a package! The Postal Service just needs to identify the package, so one sticker on the top mailpiece is fine.
3. Count the number of pieces in the package and record "Mixed ADC" and number of pieces on your tally sheet.



At this point, all of your mailpieces should be bundled into a 5-digit package, a 3-digit package, an ADC package, or an MXD package. If you have any individual mailpieces left over that are **NOT** in a package, figure out where they belong and put them in the right package. Be sure to adjust your tally sheet.

## Step 5: Separate Packages Into 3-Digit ZIP Code Areas to Determine Rate Eligibility

In this required step you will separate all of the 5-digit and 3-digit packages into 3-digit areas and count the total number of pieces that are going to each 3-digit area. Put aside the ADC (pink “A”) and mixed (tan “MXD”) packages for now. We’ll return to them later.

### For Letters: The 150-Piece Rule for 3/5 Rate Eligibility

For letters, the postage rate you pay depends on whether you have at least 150 pieces to a single 3-digit ZIP Code area. The 150-piece rule applies to regular presorted mailings and to upgradable mailings (except, of course, that upgradable mailings don't have to be packaged, so you'll just separate and group the pieces).

1. Put all of your 5-digit and 3-digit packages into groups by each 3-digit ZIP Code area.
2. Using the tally sheet, count the number of pieces to each 3-digit ZIP Code area. These pieces could be in 5-digit packages or 3-digit packages.
3. If you have at least 150 pieces to a single 3-digit ZIP Code area, then the pieces in those 5-digit and 3-digit packages will qualify for the lower Standard Mail **3/5 letter rate**. Go to Step 1 on page 47 to begin putting your packages into 5-digit trays.
4. If you do not have at least 150 pieces to a single 3-digit ZIP Code area, then all of your pieces will qualify for the Standard Mail **basic letter rate**. Go to Step 3 on page 50 to begin putting your packages into 3-digit origin trays.

**TIP:** For letters, this 150-piece rule is how quantity can affect the rate you pay. If you have 146 pieces to a 5-digit ZIP Code, do you want to add a few pieces of mail to that ZIP Code? Maybe. 5-digit trays and 3-digit trays get the same postage rate, so it's more important to “make the quantity” with your 3-digit trays.

### For Flats: The 125 Pieces/15 Pounds Rule

For flats, the postage rate you pay depends on whether you have at least 125 pieces or 15 pounds to a 5-digit ZIP Code or a 3-digit ZIP Code area placed in corresponding 5-digit sacks and 3-digit sacks. The 125 pieces/15 pounds rule is used two ways: first, to qualify your pieces for the lower 3/5 postage rate. Second, most sack sort levels (even for basic rate) require each sack to have at least 125 pieces or 15 pounds. If you don't have that much mail to meet that minimum, you must drop to the next sack level.

1. Put all of your 5-digit and 3-digit packages into groups by each 3-digit ZIP Code area.
2. Using the tally sheet, count the number of pieces to each 3-digit ZIP Code area. These pieces could be in 5-digit packages or 3-digit packages. Also calculate the weight of the mail to each 3-digit ZIP Code area (simply multiply the weight per piece by the number of pieces).
3. If you have at least 125 pieces or 15 pounds to a single 3-digit ZIP Code area, then those pieces will qualify for the lower Standard Mail **3/5 nonletter rate**. Go to Step 1 on page 54 to begin putting your packages into 5-digit sacks.
4. If you do not have at least 125 pieces or 15 pounds to a single 3-digit ZIP Code area, then all of your pieces will qualify for the Standard Mail **basic nonletter rate**. Go to Step 3 on page 56 to begin putting your packages into 3-digit origin sacks.

**TIP:** For flats, 2 ounces is the determining factor. If your flats weigh at least 2 ounces, then you'll reach 15 pounds before you reach 125 pieces. That means that the heavier your pieces are, the fewer number of pieces you need to qualify for the lower 3/5 rate.

There is no minimum for a mixed ADC sack.

If your flat weighs this much (in ounces):	You'll meet the minimum with this many pieces:
2.0	120
2.5	97
3.0	80
3.3	73

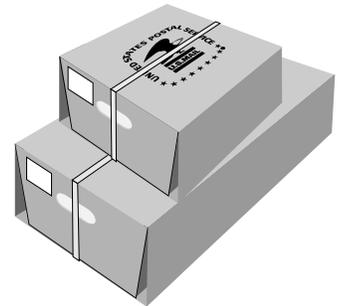
## Making Trays

### Types of Trays

**full letter tray:** A tray filled with faced, upright pieces, to at least three-fourths of its length. Each tray must be physically filled to capacity before the filling of the next tray.

**less-than-full tray:** A tray that contains mail for the same destination that was not preceded by a full tray for that destination. Less-than-full trays may be prepared only if permitted by the standards for the rate claimed.

**overflow tray:** A less-than-full tray that contains all pieces remaining after preparation of full trays for the same destination. Overflow trays may be prepared only if allowed by the standards for the rate claimed.



All letter mailings must be prepared in trays.

### Step 1: Make 5-Digit Trays

In this **required** step you will put packages to the same 5-digit destination into FULL letter trays. Because all the pieces are going to the same 5-digit ZIP Code, we call this a “5-digit tray.” These trays will contain only 5-digit (“D”) packages. Just like you grouped pieces to the same destination into the same package, in this step you’ll group packages to the same destination into the same tray.

1. Check a group (that is, a group of 150 or more pieces going to the same 3-digit ZIP Code area) to see if you have enough pieces going to the same 5-digit ZIP Code to fill one or more trays to at least three-fourths full. If you do, then put those packages into 5-digit trays. If you cannot fill even one tray, or if you have packages left over after filling one or more trays, then go to Step 2.
2. On your tally sheet, record how many pieces are in each 5-digit tray.
3. Prepare a label for the tray:

[DESTINATION CITY] [STATE ABBREVIATION] [5-DIGIT ZIP CODE]  
**STD LTRS 5D NON BC**  
 [YOUR CITY] [YOUR STATE ABBREVIATION]

4. Slip the tray label into the label carrier on the front of the tray. The mail in this tray will qualify for the Standard Mail **3/5 letter rate**.

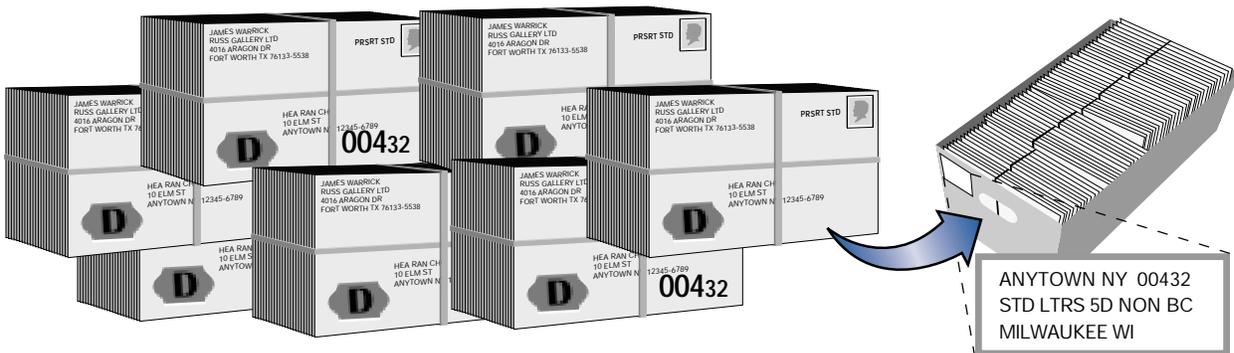
“**STD LTRS 5D NON BC**” means Standard Mail (STD) letters (LTRS) sorted to a 5-digit ZIP Code (5D) that are not barcoded (NON BC).

## 5 Making Trays

- Slide the correct-sized sleeve (i.e., a 1-foot sleeve for a 1-foot tray) over each letter tray. The sleeve slips over the entire tray, leaving the ends of the tray (and the label) exposed.
- Secure each tray with a single plastic strap around the length of the sleeved tray.

Packaging is not required if there are enough pieces to fill the tray. No less-than-full trays are allowed at the 5-digit level.

Once you have made as many FULL 5-digit trays as you can, go to Step 2.



### Step 2: Make 3-Digit Trays

In this **required** step you will put remaining 5-digit and 3-digit packages (for which you had at least 150 pieces) into trays that are going to the same 3-digit ZIP Code area. These are called “3-digit trays.” These trays may contain:

- 5-digit (“D”) packages
- 3-digit (“3”) packages

going to the same 3-digit ZIP Code area. Each different 3-digit ZIP Code area must have its own tray.

- Place all of the remaining 5-digit and 3-digit packages going to the same 3-digit ZIP Code area into the same tray. **DO NOT** take any packages out of 5-digit trays you made in Step 1. These trays **DO NOT** have to be full. In fact, you could have a single package in a 3-digit tray. If you couldn’t make a FULL 5-digit tray in Step 1, then all those 5-digit packages for the same 3-digit ZIP Code area will be placed in a 3-digit tray.
- On your tally sheet, record how many pieces are in each 3-digit tray.

3. Prepare a label for the tray. Using Labeling List L002, Column A, label each 3-digit tray. Find the 3-digit ZIP Code area in the left column, then use the corresponding entry in Column A for the top line of the tray label:

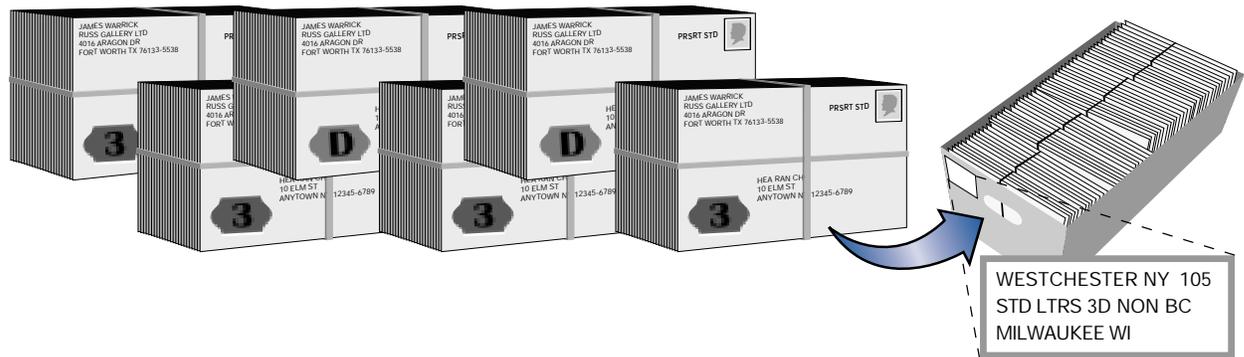
[DESTINATION CITY] [STATE ABBREVIATION]  
 [3-DIGIT ZIP CODE AREA] (from L002, Column A)  
**STD LTRS 3D NON BC**  
 [YOUR CITY] [YOUR STATE ABBREVIATION]

“**STD LTRS 3D NON BC**” means Standard Mail (STD) letters (LTRS) sorted to a 3-digit ZIP Code area (3D) with no barcodes (NON BC).

4. Slip the tray label into the label carrier on the front of the tray. The mail in this tray will qualify for the Standard Mail **3/5 letter rate**.
5. Slide the correct-sized sleeve (i.e., a 1-foot sleeve for a 1-foot tray) over each letter tray. The sleeve slips over the entire tray, leaving the ends of the tray (and the label) exposed.
6. Secure each tray with a single plastic strap around the length of the sleeved tray.

Once all of the 3-digit packages (for which you have at least 150 pieces to a 3-digit ZIP Code area) are grouped into 3-digit trays, move on to Step 3.

**STOP!** All of the 5-digit and 3-digit ZIP codes for which you have 150 pieces should be in a tray.



### Step 3: Make 3-Digit Origin Trays

To keep local mail at the local level, gather any remaining packages going to the 3-digit ZIP Code prefixes in your local service area and put them into one or more 3-digit trays, called “origin” trays. You can find your local ZIP Codes by checking Labeling List L005. This is a **required** step. These trays may contain:

- 5-digit (“D”) packages
- 3-digit (“3”) packages

destined for ZIP Codes within your local service area. **DO NOT** take any packages out of 5-digit or 3-digit trays that you made in previous steps. If you don’t have any “origin” packages, then go to Step 4.

1. Using the list of local ZIP Codes serviced by your **SCF**, put all of the packages for each origin 3-digit ZIP Code area into separate trays. It’s OK to have only 1 or 2 packages in a single tray. If you don’t have very many pieces in a 3-digit origin tray, use a 1-foot tray.
2. On your tally sheet, record the number of pieces in each tray to each 3-digit ZIP Code area.
3. Prepare a label for the tray. Using Labeling List L002, Column A, label each origin 3-digit tray. Find the 3-digit ZIP Code area in the left column, then use the corresponding entry in Column A for the top line of the tray label:

[YOUR TOWN] [YOUR STATE ABBREVIATION]  
 [3-DIGIT ZIP CODE AREA] (from L002, Column A)  
**STD LTRS 3D NON BC**  
 [YOUR CITY] [YOUR STATE ABBREVIATION]

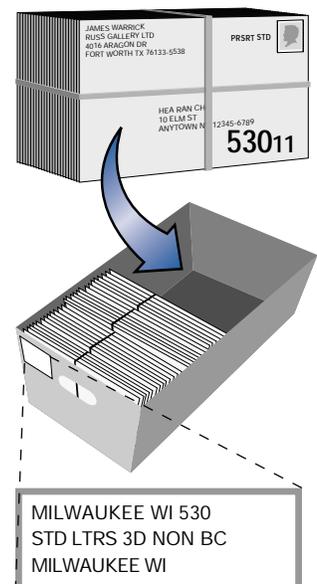
4. Slip the tray label into the label carrier on the front of the tray. The mail in this tray will qualify for the Standard Mail **basic rate**.
5. Slide the correct-sized sleeve (i.e., a 1-foot sleeve for a 1-foot tray) over each letter tray. The sleeve slips over the entire tray, leaving the ends of the tray (and the label) exposed.
6. Secure each tray with a single strap around the length of the sleeved tray.

All of the 5-digit and 3-digit packages should be in trays. You’re ready to move on to Step 4.

Mail for local ZIP Codes (within the service area where you deposit the mail) is called “origin mail”; it should be separated so it can be processed locally.

**SCF (Sectional Center Facility):** A local postal facility that processes mail for many ZIP Codes.

“**STD LTRS 3D NON BC**” means Standard Mail (STD) letters (LTRS) sorted to a 3-digit ZIP Code area (3D) with no barcodes (NON BC).



#### Step 4: Make ADC Trays

In this **required** step you will put all the remaining packages going to the same area distribution center (ADC) into the same tray. These are called “ADC trays.” Each ADC must have its own tray. These trays must be full. They may contain:

- 5-digit (“D”) packages
- 3-digit (“3”) packages
- ADC (“A”) packages

going to the same area distribution center.

1. Using Labeling List L004, put all of the remaining packages going to the same ADC into separate trays. **DO NOT** take packages out of trays that you made in previous steps. If you cannot make a **FULL TRAY** to an ADC, then go to Step 5. There is **NO** 150-piece requirement for ADC trays—they just have to be full.

2. On your tally sheet, record the number of pieces in each ADC tray.

3. Prepare a label for the tray. Using Labeling List L004, label each tray:

ADC [DESTINATION CITY] [STATE ABBREVIATION]  
[3-DIGIT ZIP CODE AREA]

**STD LTRS ADC NON BC**

[YOUR CITY] [YOUR STATE ABBREVIATION]

4. Slip the tray label into the label carrier on the front of the tray. The mail in this tray will qualify for the Standard Mail **basic letter rate**.

5. Slide the correct-sized sleeve (i.e., a 1-foot sleeve for a 1-foot tray) over each letter tray. The sleeve slips over the entire tray, leaving the ends of the tray (and the label) exposed.

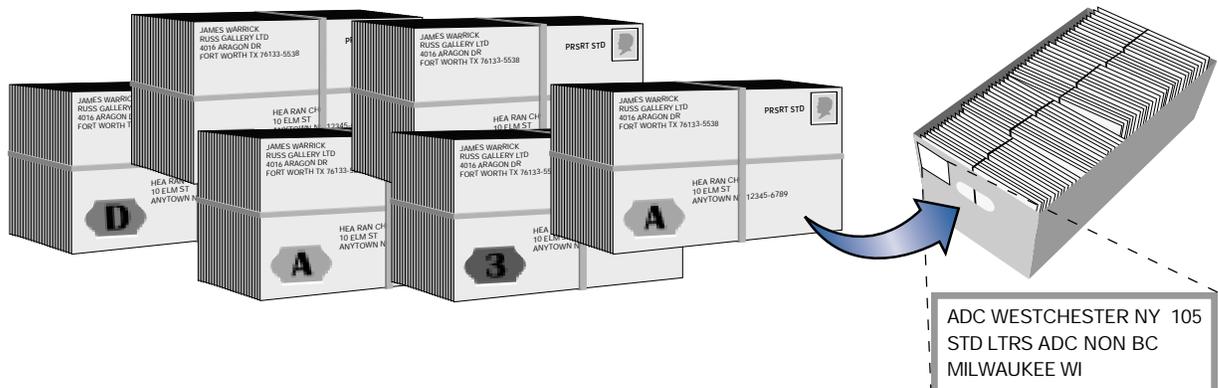
6. Secure each tray with a single strap around the length of the sleeved tray.

Once all of the remaining 5-digit, 3-digit, and ADC packages are grouped into **FULL** ADC trays, you’re ready to move on to Step 5.

On Labeling List L004, notice that for some ADCs, different classes of mail get labeled to different places. “STD” means Standard Mail. Be sure you’re labeling your ADC trays to the right place.

“**STD LTRS ADC NON BC**” means Standard Mail (STD) letters (LTRS) sorted to an area distribution center (ADC) with no barcodes (NON BC).

**NOTE:** Most mailers who only mail locally do not have ADC trays.



## Step 5: Make Mixed ADC Trays

In this **required** step you will put all of the remaining mail into mixed ADC trays. These trays may contain:

- 5-digit (“D”) packages
- 3-digit (“3”) packages
- ADC (“A”) packages
- Mixed ADC (“MXD”) packages

1. Put all of the remaining packages into one or more trays. Your last tray does not have to be full. **DO NOT** take packages out of trays that you made in previous steps.
2. On your tally sheet, record the number of pieces in each mixed ADC tray.
3. Prepare a label for the tray. Using Labeling List L004, find the 3-digit ZIP Code area of the post office where you hold your permit. Read across to Column B. Label the tray:

MXD [CITY] [STATE ABBREVIATION] [3-DIGIT ZIP CODE AREA]  
(from Column B of L004)

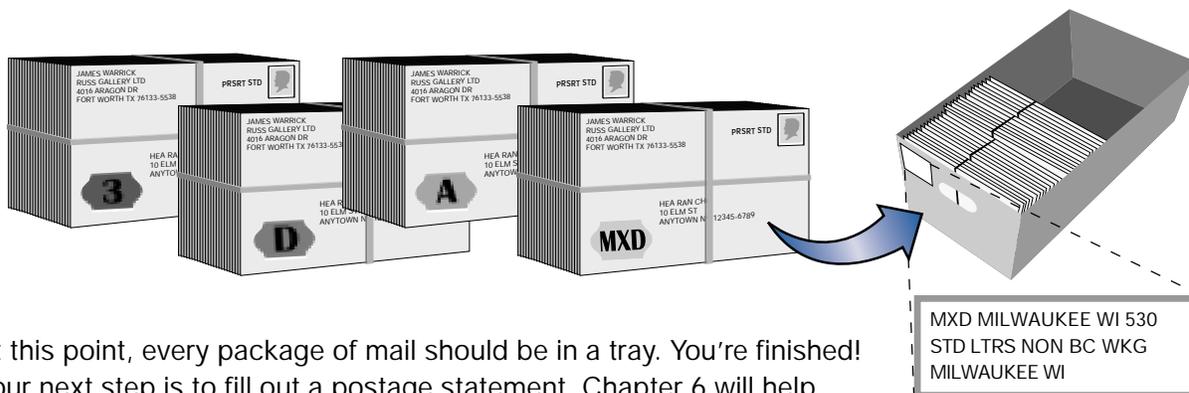
**STD LTRS NON BC WKG**

[YOUR TOWN] [YOUR STATE ABBREVIATION]

4. Slip the tray label into the slot on the front of the tray. The mail in this tray will qualify for the Standard Mail **basic letter rate**.
5. Slide the correct-sized sleeve (i.e., a 1-foot sleeve for a 1-foot tray) over each letter tray. The sleeve slips over the entire tray, leaving the ends of the tray (and the label) exposed.
6. Secure each tray with a single strap around the length of the sleeved tray.

Be sure to put  
MXD (for mixed).

**“STD LTRS NON BC WKG”** means Standard Mail (STD) letters (LTRS) that are not barcoded (NON BC) and are a mix of destinations that need to be “worked” (sorted) (WKG).



At this point, every package of mail should be in a tray. You’re finished! Your next step is to fill out a postage statement. Chapter 6 will help you with that.

## Making Sacks

Flat-size mail must be in white canvas or plastic Postal Service sacks. Flats in sacks must be packaged, not loose. Flat-size mail CANNOT be put into trays.

Although 70 pounds is the maximum weight for each sack, 40 pounds is preferred. The minimum quantity per sack for most presort levels is 125 pieces or 15 pounds of mail.



### General Rules

- Package flat-size pieces in the same manner as letter-size pieces (see pages 41-44). Except for pieces in mixed ADC packages, packages of fewer than 10 pieces are not allowed.
- The rules for sacks are similar to those for trays, but the dividing line is at 125 pieces or 15 pounds. If you have that much for the same presort level (i.e., 5-digit, 3-digit), you must separately sack them, and to claim the 3/5-digit rate, you need at least that many.
- For sacked mail, the postage rate for each piece is based on the sort level of the sack it's in.

If you have not packaged your flats, go back to page 41 and group them into packages. Then come back to this section to put those packages into sacks.

### Step 1: Make 5-Digit Sacks

In this **required** step you will put packages to the same 5-digit destination into sacks. Because all the pieces are going to the same 5-digit ZIP Code, we call this a "5-digit sack." These sacks will contain only 5-digit ("D") packages. Just like you grouped pieces to the same destination into the same package, in this step you'll group packages to the same destination into the same sack.

1. Check a group (that is, a group of 15 pounds or 125 pieces to the same 3-digit ZIP Code area) to see if you have at least 125 pieces or 15 pounds of mail going to the same 5-digit ZIP Code. If you do, put those packages into a sack. If you do not have at least 125 pieces or 15 pounds, or if you have any leftover 5-digit packages, then go to Step 2.
2. On your tally sheet, record how many pieces are in each 5-digit sack.
3. Prepare a label for the sack:

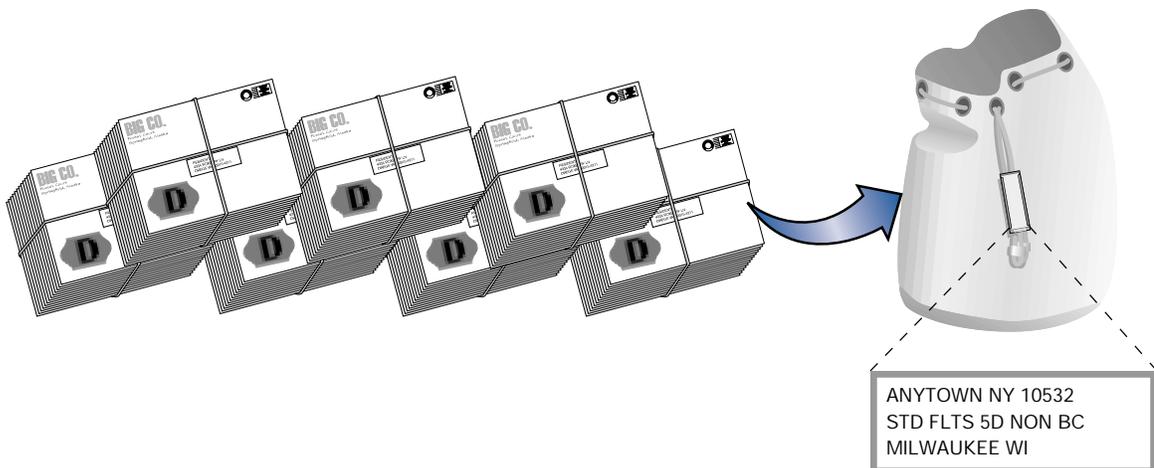
[DESTINATION CITY] [STATE ABBREVIATION] [5-DIGIT ZIP CODE]  
**STD FLTS 5D NON BC**  
[YOUR CITY] [YOUR STATE ABBREVIATION]

4. Slip the sack label into the carrier at the top of the sack. The mail in this sack will qualify for the Standard Mail **3/5 nonletter rate**.

Once you have made as many 5-digit sacks as possible, go to Step 2.

Remember, 125 pieces or 15 pounds qualifies you for the 3/5-digit rate **and** is the minimum quantity required for most sack sort levels.

**"STD FLTS 5D NON BC"** means Standard Mail (STD) flats (FLTS) sorted to a 5-digit ZIP Code (5D) that are not barcoded (NON BC).



## Step 2: Make 3-Digit Sacks

In this **required** step you will put remaining 5-digit and 3-digit packages (for which you had at least 15 pounds or 125 pieces to a 3-digit ZIP Code area) into sacks that are going to the same 3-digit ZIP Code area. These are called “3-digit sacks.” These sacks may contain:

- 5-digit (“D”) packages
- 3-digit (“3”) packages

going to the same 3-digit ZIP Code area. Each different 3-digit ZIP Code area must have its own sack.

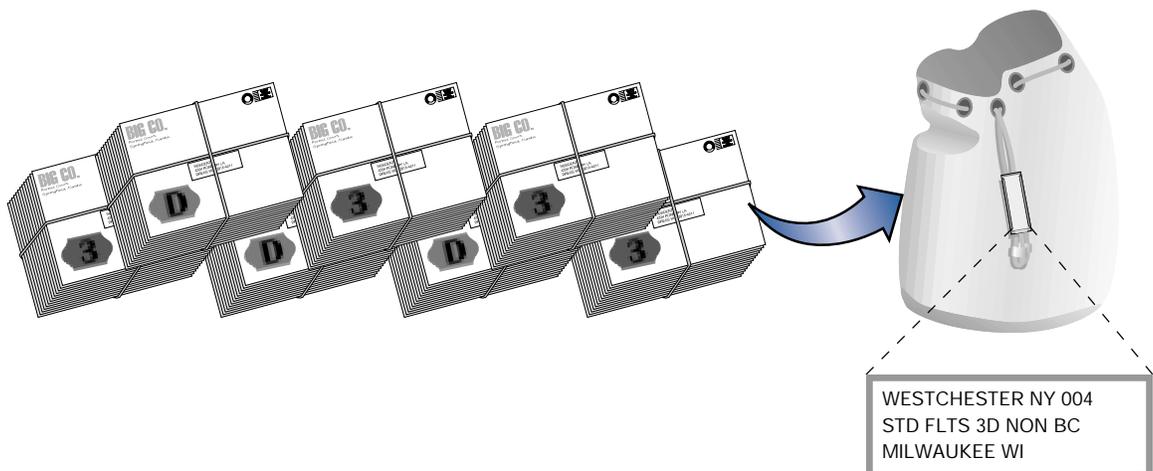
1. Group your remaining 5-digit and 3-digit packages going to the same 3-digit ZIP Code area. If you have at least 125 pieces or 15 pounds of mail going to a single 3-digit ZIP Code area, then put those packages into the same sack. **DO NOT** take any packages out of the 5-digit sacks that you made in Step 1. If you do not have at least 125 pieces or 15 pounds to a single 3-digit ZIP Code area, then go to Step 3.
2. On your tally sheet, record how many pieces are in each 3-digit sack.
3. Prepare a label for the sack. Using Labeling List L002, Column A, label each 3-digit sack. Find the 3-digit ZIP Code area in the left column, then use the corresponding entry in Column A for the top line of the sack label:

[DESTINATION CITY] [STATE ABBREVIATION]  
 [3-DIGIT ZIP CODE AREA] (from L002, Column A)  
**STD FLTS 3D NON BC**  
 [YOUR CITY] [YOUR STATE ABBREVIATION]

4. Slip the sack label into the carrier at the top of the sack. The mail in this sack will qualify for the Standard Mail **3/5 nonletter rate**.

Once you have prepared all 3-digit sacks, move on to Step 3.

“**STD FLTS 3D NON BC**” means Standard Mail (STD) flats (FLTS) sorted to the 3-digit ZIP Code areas (3D) with no barcodes (NON BC).



### Step 3: Make 3-Digit Origin Sacks

To keep local mail at the local level, gather any remaining packages going to the 3-digit ZIP Code prefixes in your local service area and put them into one or more 3-digit sacks, called “origin” sacks. You can find your local ZIP Codes by checking Labeling List L005. This is a **required** step. These sacks may contain:

- 5-digit (“D”) packages
- 3-digit (“3”) packages

destined for ZIP Codes within your local service area. **DO NOT** take any packages out of 5-digit or 3-digit sacks that you made in previous steps. This sack level **DOES NOT** have to meet the 125-piece or 15-pound sack minimum. If you don’t have any “origin” packages, then go to Step 4.

1. Using the list of local ZIP Codes serviced by your **SCF**, put the packages for each origin 3-digit ZIP Code area into separate sacks. It’s OK to have only 1 or 2 packages in a sack.
2. On your tally sheet, record the number of pieces in each sack to each 3-digit ZIP Code area.
3. Prepare a label for the sack. Using Labeling List L002, Column A, label each origin 3-digit sack. Find the 3-digit ZIP Code area in the left column, then use the corresponding entry in Column A for the top line of the sack label:

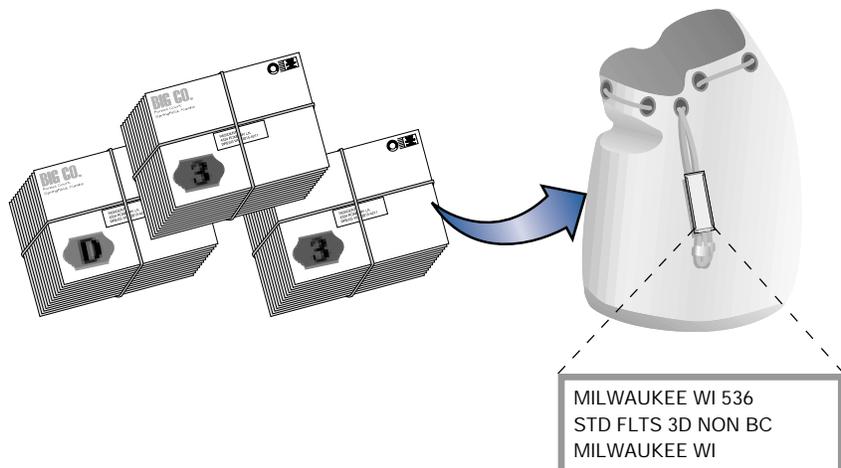
[YOUR TOWN] [YOUR STATE ABBREVIATION]  
 [3-DIGIT ZIP CODE AREA] (from L002, Column A)  
**STD FLTS 3D NON BC**  
 [YOUR CITY] [YOUR STATE ABBREVIATION]

4. Slip the sack label into the carrier at the top of the sack. The mail in this sack will qualify for the Standard Mail **basic nonletter rate**.

Mail for local ZIP Codes (within the service area where you deposit the mail) is called “origin mail”; it should be separated so it can be processed locally.

**SCF (Sectional Center Facility):** A local postal facility that processes mail for many ZIP Codes.

“**STD FLTS 3D NON BC**” means Standard Mail (STD) flats (FLTS) sorted to a 3-digit ZIP Code area (3D) with no barcodes (NON BC).



### Step 4: Make ADC Sacks

In this **required** step you will put all of the remaining packages going to the same area distribution center (ADC) into the same sacks. These are called "ADC sacks." These sacks may contain:

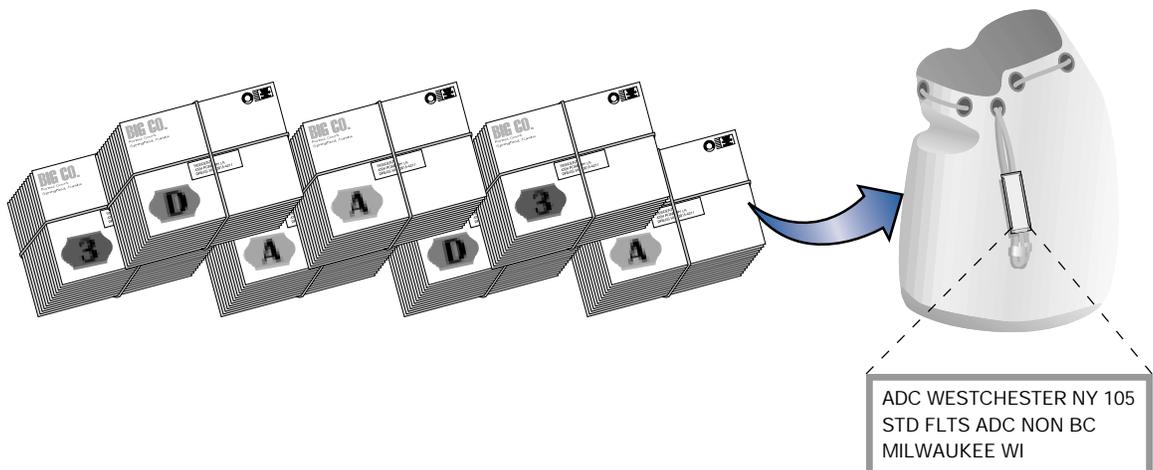
- 5-digit ("D") packages
- 3-digit ("3") packages
- ADC ("A") packages

going to the same area distribution center. Each different ADC must have its own sack.

1. Using Labeling List L004, group all of the remaining packages to the same ADC into separate groups. If you have at least 125 pieces or 15 pounds of mail going to a single ADC, then put those packages into the same sack. **DO NOT** take any packages out of sacks that you made in previous steps. If you do not have at least 125 pieces or 15 pounds of mail to a single ADC, then go to Step 5.
  2. On your tally sheet, record the number of pieces in each ADC sack.
  3. Prepare a label for the sack. Using Labeling List L004, label each sack:  
 ADC [DESTINATION CITY] [STATE ABBREVIATION]  
 [3-DIGIT ZIP CODE AREA]  
**STD FLTS ADC NON BC**  
 [YOUR CITY] [YOUR STATE ABBREVIATION]
  4. Slip the sack label into the carrier at the top of the sack. The mail in this tray will qualify for the Standard Mail **basic nonletter rate**.
- Once you have prepared as many ADC sacks as possible, go to Step 5.

On Labeling List L004, notice that for some ADCs, different classes of mail get labeled to different places. "STD" means Standard Mail. Be sure you're labeling your ADC trays to the right place.

"STD FLTS ADC NON BC" means Standard Mail (STD) flats (FLTS) sorted to an area distribution center (ADC) with no barcodes (NON BC).



### Step 5: Make Mixed ADC Sacks

In this **required** step you will put all of the remaining mail into mixed ADC sacks. These sacks may contain:

- 5-digit (“D”) packages
- 3-digit (“3”) packages
- ADC (“A”) packages
- Mixed ADC (“MXD”) packages

1. Put all of the remaining packages into one or more sacks. There is **NO MINIMUM** amount of mail for a sack. **DO NOT** take packages out of sacks that you made in previous steps.
2. On your tally sheet, record the number of pieces in each mixed ADC sack.
3. Prepare a label for the sack. Using Labeling List L004, find the 3-digit ZIP Code area of the post office where you hold your permit. Read across to Column B. Label the sack:

MXD [CITY] [STATE ABBREVIATION] [3-DIGIT ZIP CODE AREA]  
(from Column B of L004)

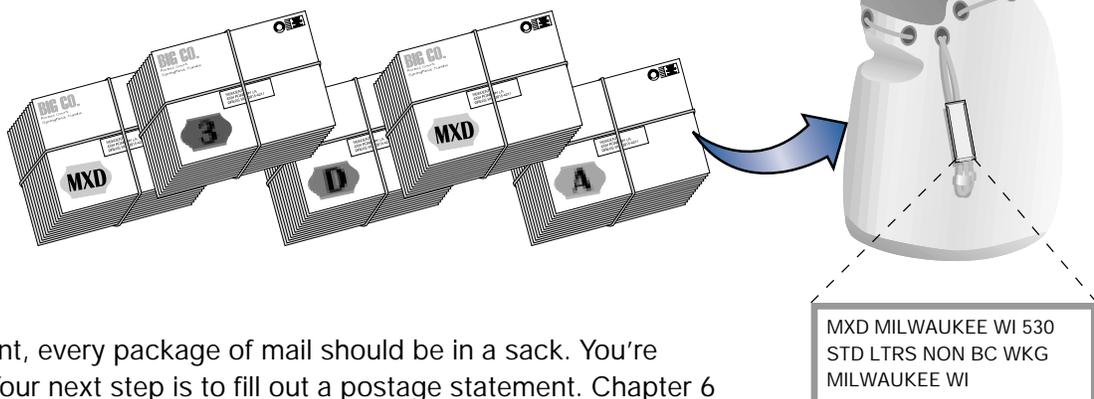
**STD FLTS NON BC WKG**

[YOUR TOWN] [YOUR STATE ABBREVIATION]

4. Slip the sack label into the carrier at the top of the sack. The mail in this tray will qualify for the Standard Mail **basic nonletter rate**.

Be sure to put “MXD”  
(for mixed), not “ADC.”

“**STD FLTS NON BC WKG**” means Standard Mail (STD) flats (FLTS) that are not barcoded (NON BC) and are a mix of destinations that need to be “worked” (sorted) (WKG).



At this point, every package of mail should be in a sack. You’re finished! Your next step is to fill out a postage statement. Chapter 6 will help you with that.

## Upgradable Letter Mailings

Upgradable letters are designed and printed with characteristics that allow the Postal Service to process the pieces with automated equipment and spray a barcode on each piece. This is an OPTIONAL method of preparation, and does NOT qualify your mail for lower postage rates than the regular preparation for presorted letters.

Upgradable letters have the following characteristics:

- Addresses must be machine-printed.
- The background in the MLOCR read area and barcode clear zone has to be white or a light color.
- Each piece cannot weigh more than 2.5 ounces.
- The pieces must be automation-compatible according to DMM C830.

### **Advantages of “Upgrading”**

The main advantage of preparing your mail as upgradable is that you don't have to package your mail. That means you can skip some steps and save time!

### **Before You Begin**

Before you begin putting your mail into trays, first group all of the pieces by 3-digit ZIP Code prefix. This will help you determine if you have at least 150 pieces to a 3-digit ZIP Code area (which qualifies those pieces of your mail for the lower 3/5-digit rate). Go to page 45 to review the “150-piece rule” for letters.

### Step 1: Make 5-Digit Trays

In this **optional** step you will put all pieces to the same 5-digit destination into FULL letter trays. Because all the pieces are going to the same 5-digit ZIP Code, we call this a “5-digit tray.”

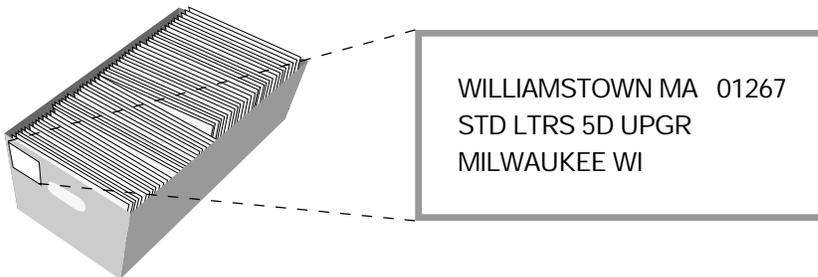
1. Check a group (that is, a group of 150 or more pieces going to the same 3-digit ZIP Code prefix) to see if you have enough pieces going to the same 5-digit ZIP Code to fill one or more trays to at least three-fourths full. If you do, then put all the mail to the same 5-digit ZIP Code into a tray. If you cannot fill even one tray, or if you have mail left over after filling one or more trays, then go to Step 2.
2. On your tally sheet, record how many pieces are in each 5-digit tray.
3. Prepare a label for the tray. On a tray label, write:

[DESTINATION CITY] [STATE ABBREVIATION] [5-DIGIT ZIP CODE]  
**STD LTRS 5D UPGR**  
[YOUR CITY] [YOUR STATE ABBREVIATION]

4. Slip the tray label into the label carrier on the front of the tray. The mail in this tray will qualify for the Standard Mail **3/5 letter rate**.
5. Slide the correct-sized sleeve (i.e., a 1-foot sleeve for a 1-foot tray) over each letter tray. The sleeve slips over the entire tray, leaving the ends of the tray (and the label) exposed.
6. Secure each tray with a single strap around the length of the sleeved tray.

Once you have made as many FULL 5-digit trays as you can, go to Step 2.

**“STD LTRS 5D UPGR”**  
means Standard Mail (STD)  
letters (LTRS) sorted to a  
5-digit ZIP Code (5D) that  
are upgradable (UPGR).



## Step 2: Make 3-Digit Trays

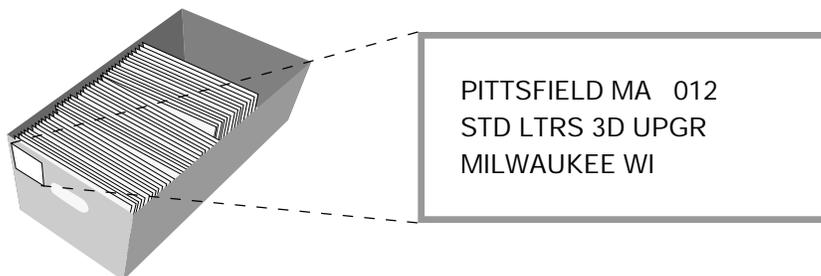
In this **required** step you will put remaining 5-digit and 3-digit mail into trays that are going to the same 3-digit ZIP Code area. These are called “3-digit trays.” Each different 3-digit ZIP Code area must have its own tray.

1. Place all of the remaining 5-digit and 3-digit mail going to the same 3-digit ZIP Code area into the same tray. These trays DO NOT have to be full. In fact, you could have just a handful in a 3-digit tray but mail in less-than-full trays must be packaged. If you couldn't make a FULL 5-digit tray, then all those 5-digit mailpieces for the same 3-digit ZIP Code area will be placed in a 3-digit tray. DO NOT take any mail out of 5-digit trays that you made in Step 1.
2. On your tally sheet, record how many pieces are in each 3-digit tray.
3. Prepare a label for the tray. Using Labeling List L002, Column A, label each 3-digit tray. Find the 3-digit ZIP Code area in the left column, then use the corresponding entry in Column A for the top line of the tray label:

[DESTINATION CITY] [STATE ABBREVIATION]  
 [3-DIGIT ZIP CODE AREA] (from L002, Column A)  
**STD LTRS 3D UPGR**  
 [YOUR CITY] [YOUR STATE ABBREVIATION]

4. Slip the tray label into the label carrier on the front of the tray. The mail in this tray will qualify for the Standard Mail **3/5 letter rate**.
5. Slide the correct-sized sleeve (a 1-foot sleeve for a 1-foot tray) over each letter tray. The sleeve slips over the entire tray, leaving the ends of the tray (and the label) exposed.
6. Secure each tray with a single strap around the length of the sleeved tray.

Once you have made all possible 3-digit trays, move on to Step 3.



**“STD LTRS 3D UPGR”**  
 means Standard Mail (STD)  
 letters (LTRS) sorted to a  
 3-digit ZIP Code area (3D)  
 that are upgradable (UPGR).

### Step 3: Make 3-Digit Origin Trays

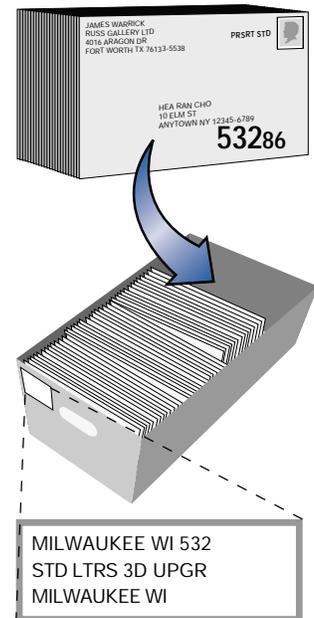
To keep local mail at the local level, gather any remaining mail going to the 3-digit ZIP Code prefixes in your local service area and put them into one or more 3-digit trays, called “origin” trays. You can find your local ZIP Codes by checking Labeling List L005. This is a **required** step. **DO NOT** take any mail out of trays that you made in previous steps. If you don’t have any remaining pieces for an origin 3-digit ZIP Code area, then go to Step 4.

1. Using the list of local ZIP Codes serviced by your SCF (local mail processing facility), put all of the pieces for each origin 3-digit ZIP Code area into separate trays. It’s OK to have only a handful of mail in a single tray. If you don’t have very many pieces in a 3-digit origin tray, use a 1-foot tray.
2. On your tally sheet, record the number of pieces in each tray to each 3-digit ZIP Code area.
3. Prepare a label for the tray. Using Labeling List L002, Column A, label each origin 3-digit tray. Find the 3-digit ZIP Code area in the left column, then use the corresponding entry in Column A for the top line of the tray label:

[YOUR TOWN] [YOUR STATE ABBREVIATION]  
 [3-DIGIT ZIP CODE AREA] (from L002, Column A)  
**STD LTRS 3D UPGR**  
 [YOUR CITY] [YOUR STATE ABBREVIATION]

4. Slip the tray label into the label carrier on the front of the tray. The mail in this tray will qualify for the Standard Mail **basic letter rate**.
5. Slide the correct-sized sleeve (i.e., a 1-foot sleeve for a 1-foot tray) over each letter tray. The sleeve slips over the entire tray, leaving the ends of the tray (and the label) exposed.
6. Secure each tray with a single strap around the length of the sleeved tray.

Once you have made as many 3-digit origin trays as possible, you’re ready to move on to Step 4.



**“STD LTRS 3D UPGR”**  
 means Standard Mail (STD) letters (LTRS) sorted to 3-digit ZIP Code areas (3D) that are upgradable (UPGR).

#### Step 4: Make AADC Trays

In this **required** step you will put all the remaining pieces going to the same automated area distribution center (AADC) into the same tray. These are called “AADC trays.” Each AADC must have its own tray. These trays must be FULL.

1. Using Labeling List 801, put all of the remaining pieces going to the same AADC into separate trays. **DO NOT** take mail out of trays that you made in previous steps. If you cannot make a FULL TRAY to an AADC, then go to Step 5.
2. On your tally sheet, record the number of pieces in each AADC tray.
3. Prepare a label for the tray. Using Labeling List L801, label each tray:

AADC [DESTINATION CITY] [STATE ABBREVIATION]  
[3-DIGIT ZIP CODE AREA]

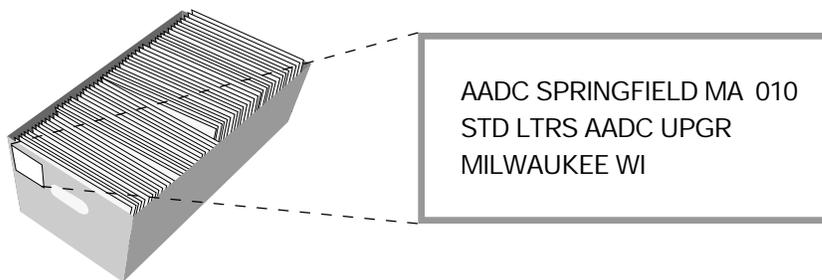
**STD LTRS AADC UPGR**

[YOUR CITY] [YOUR STATE ABBREVIATION]

4. Slip the tray label into the label carrier on the front of the tray. The mail in this tray will qualify for the Standard Mail **basic letter rate**.
5. Slide the correct-sized sleeve (a 1-foot sleeve for a 1-foot tray) over each letter tray. The sleeve slips over the entire tray, leaving the ends of the tray (and the label) exposed.
6. Secure each tray with a single strap around the length of the sleeved tray.

Once you have made as many FULL ADC trays as possible, you’re ready to move on to Step 5.

“**STD LTRS AADC UPGR**” means Standard Mail (STD) letters (LTRS) sorted to an automated area distribution center (AADC) that are upgradable (UPGR).



### Step 5: Make Mixed AADC Trays

In this **required** step you will put all of the remaining pieces into mixed AADC trays.

1. Put all of the remaining pieces into one or more trays. Your last tray does not have to be full. **DO NOT** take mail out of trays that you made in previous steps.
2. On your tally sheet, record the number of pieces in each mixed AADC tray.
3. Prepare a label for the tray. Using Labeling List L803, find the 3-digit ZIP Code area of the post office where you hold your permit. Read across to Column B. Label the tray:

MXD [CITY] [STATE ABBREVIATION] [3-DIGIT ZIP CODE AREA]  
(from Column B of L803)

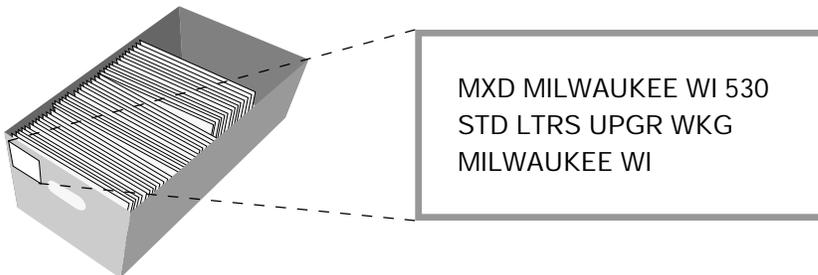
**STD LTRS UPGR WKG**

[YOUR TOWN] [YOUR STATE ABBREVIATION]

4. Slip the tray label into the slot on the front of the tray. The mail in this tray will qualify for the Standard Mail **basic letter rate**.
5. Slide the correct-sized sleeve (i.e., a 1-foot sleeve for a 1-foot tray) over each letter tray. The sleeve slips over the entire tray, leaving the ends of the tray (and the label) exposed.
6. Secure each tray with a single strap around the length of the sleeved tray.

Be sure to put MXD  
(for mixed).

**“STD LTRS UPGR WKG”**  
means Standard Mail  
(STD) letters (LTRS) that  
are upgradable (UPGR)  
and are a mix of destina-  
tions that need to be  
“worked” (sorted) (WKG).



At this point, all of your mail should be in a tray. You're finished!  
Your next step is to fill out a postage statement. Chapter 6 will help  
you with that.

## Destination Entry Discounts

The Postal Service offers discounted rates for mail that gets dropped off at certain postal facilities. We offer these discounts because we don't have to move the mail as far to get it to its final destination. That saves the Postal Service money and the savings are passed on to you.

For Standard Mail, lower postage rates are available for dropping your mail off at a bulk mail center (BMC) or sectional center facility (SCF), or at the destination delivery unit (DDU).

Some mailers who live near a large mail processing plant may be able to take advantage of these lower postage rates simply by driving a short distance to drop off their mail. You may want to consider this when applying for your mailing permit. Your local business mail entry unit staff can talk to you about your options.

On the postage statement, these lower rates are listed under DBMC (destination bulk mail center), DSCF (destination sectional center facility), and DDU (destination delivery unit). You'll learn more about this in the next chapter.



# 6 Using Postage Statements



**W**hen your mailing is otherwise ready to go to the post office, you'll need a **postage statement** to document—and help you determine—the amount of postage to pay for your mailing.

## How to Choose a Form

The payment method and rate of mailing (regular or nonprofit) determine which form to use.

For regular rates, use these statements:

- **Form 3602-EZ** for presorted letters and flats. This simplified form is easy to fill out.
- **Form 3602-R** for permit imprint mailings.
- **Form 3602-PR** for metered or precanceled stamped mailings.

For nonprofit rates, use these statements:

- **Form 3602-NZ** for presorted letters and flats. This simplified form is easy to fill out.
- **Form 3602-N** for permit imprint mailings.
- **Form 3602-PN** for metered or precanceled stamped mailings.

The form number and suffix are printed in the lower left corner on both sides, and on the front along the top and right side in white characters on black boxes.

Current versions of Postal Statements are available on the Internet at [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com) > forms. You can also contact your local post office for the most recent versions, and for postage rates and fees.

### postage statement:

Documentation provided by a mailer to the Postal Service that reports the volume of mail being presented and the postage payable or affixed. By signing the statement, the mailer certifies that the mail meets the applicable eligibility and addressing standards for the rate claimed.

Postage statements are available on the Postal Service web site in two formats: print-only and fill-in forms. Print-only forms are in PDF format. They are printed locally and filled in manually. Fill-in forms provide on-screen data entry, automatic postage calculations, and the ability to save data. The Internet address is [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com).

### How to Fill Out Your Form

On pages 69-73, you'll find a copy of Form 3602-EZ, along with instructions on how to fill it out. If you have any questions, contact your local business mail entry unit for help.

Form 3602-EZ is a simplified postage statement designed specifically for small business mailers who are mailing Standard Mail cards, letters, and flats and are paying via permit imprint. To download a print-only version of Form 3602-EZ, go to [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com) and click on "Forms" in the gray bar. If you are a nonprofit mailer, use Form 3602-NZ (a form designed specifically for nonprofit mailers). The forms are almost identical, so you can use the instructions below for both the regular and the nonprofit postage statements.

If your pieces weigh more than 3.3 ounces (which means that you pay a piece rate for each piece in the mailing, plus a pound rate for the total weight of the mailing), or if you have affixed postage to your mailpieces, then you cannot use Form 3602-EZ (you must use a different Form 3602).

You are required to complete the entire postage statement. If you have additional questions about how to fill out a postage statement, an employee at your local post office will help you.

United States Postal Service  
**Postage Statement — Standard Mail — Easy**  
**Nonautomation Letters or Flats — Permit Imprint**

Post Office: Note Mail Arrival Time

This form may be used only for a single nonautomation rate mailing of identical-weight pieces paid with permit imprint. All other mailings must use the appropriate version of PS Form 3602.

General Information	Permit Holder's Name and Address, and Email Address If Any	Telephone	Permit No.	Federal Agency Cost Code	Weight of a Single Piece 0 _____ pounds
			Mailing Date	Statement Seq. No.	If Sacked, Based on <input type="checkbox"/> 125 Pcs. <input type="checkbox"/> 15 Lbs. <input type="checkbox"/> Both
			Post Office of Mailing		Number of Containers
			Processing Category (DMM C050) <input type="checkbox"/> Letters <input type="checkbox"/> Flats	Total Pieces	Total Weight

Postage Computation (DMM P013)	Entry Discount Presorted Pieces 3.3 Oz. (0.2063 Lb.) or Less	Presort Level	Rate per Piece	Number of Pieces	Totals
	None	1. 3/5 Letter		.230	x
2. Basic Letter			.250	x	
3. 3/5 Flat			.263	x	
4. Basic Flat			.319	x	
DBMC	5. 3/5 Letter		.211	x	
	6. Basic Letter		.231	x	
	7. 3/5 Flat		.244	x	
	8. Basic Flat		.300	x	
DSCF	9. 3/5 Letter		.206	x	
	10. Basic Letter		.226	x	
	11. 3/5 Flat		.239	x	
	12. Basic Flat		.295	x	

Postmaster: Report total postage in AIC 130. **Total Postage (Add lines above) →**

For USPS Use Only: Additional Postage Payment (State reason)

Postmaster: Report total adjusted postage in AIC 130. **Total Adjusted Postage (Add additional postage to total postage) →**

**Certification**

The signature of a mailer certifies that he or she will be liable for and agrees to pay, subject to appeals prescribed by postal laws and regulations, any revenue deficiencies assessed on this mailing. (If this form is signed by an agent, the agent certifies that he or she is authorized to sign this statement, that the certification binds the agent and the mailer, and that both the mailer and the agent will be liable for and agree to pay any deficiencies.)

I hereby certify that all information furnished on this form is accurate, truthful, and complete; that the material presented qualifies for the rates of postage claimed; and that this mailing does not contain any hazardous materials prohibited by postal regulations.

I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including multiple damages and civil penalties).

**For ZIP Codes (Presorted rates only):** I certify that the ZIP Codes appearing on the pieces described above have been verified and corrected where necessary within 12 months of the date of this mailing using a USPS-approved method.

Signature of Permit Holder or Agent (Both principal and agent are liable for any postage deficiency incurred.) Telephone

USPS Use Only	Weight of a Single Piece 0 _____ pounds	Are figures at left adjusted from mailer's entries? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
	Total Pieces	Total Weight	If "Yes," Reason		
	Total Postage		Round Stamp (Required)		
	Check One (If applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Presort Verification Not Scheduled <input type="checkbox"/> Presort Verification Performed as Scheduled				
	I CERTIFY that this mailing has been inspected concerning: (1) eligibility for postage rate claimed; (2) proper preparation (and presort where required); (3) proper completion of postage statement; and (4) payment of required annual fee.				
	Verifying Employee's Signature		Verifying Employee's Name	Time	AM PM

## 6 How to Fill Out Your Form

United States Postal Service					Post Office: Note Mail Arrival Time	
Postage Statement — Standard Mail — Easy Nonautomation Letters or Flats — Permit Imprint						
This form may be used only for a single nonautomation rate mailing of identical-weight pieces paid with permit imprint. All other mailings must use the appropriate version of PS Form 3602.						
<b>General Information</b>	Permit Holder's Name and Address, and Email Address If Any	Telephone	Permit No. <b>2</b>	Federal Agency Cost Code <b>3</b>	Weight of a Single Piece <b>8</b> 0 _____ pounds	
	<b>1</b>		Mailing Date <b>4</b>	Statement Seq. No. <b>5</b>	If Sacked, Based on <b>9</b>	Number of Containers <b>10</b>
			Post Office of Mailing <b>6</b>			
	Processing Category (DMM C050)		Total Pieces <b>11</b>		Total Weight <b>12</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Letters <input type="checkbox"/> Flats <b>7</b>						
Entry Discount Presorted Pieces 3.3 Oz. (0.2063 Lb.) or Less			Presort Level	Rate per Piece	Number of Pieces	Totals

### General Information

1. Permit Holder's Name and Address, and Email Address: Write the name of your company or organization, your address, and an email address. Be sure to include a phone number where you can be reached during regular business hours. If there are questions about your mailing, someone from the post office will call you.
2. Permit No.: Write your permit number here. Don't remember it? It's written on the receipt you got when you first applied for a permit. Also, your permit number will be printed in the postage area of each mailpiece.
3. Federal Agency Cost Code: Federal agencies use this block to record an agency number. If you're not a federal agency, leave this block blank.
4. Mailing Date: Fill in today's date. This must be the date that you drop your mail off at the post office.
5. Statement Sequence Number: Some mailers have more than one mailing per day. When this happens, the postage statements may have sequence numbers (1 of 4, 2 of 4, etc.). Those numbers would go here. If you are doing just a single mailing, leave this block blank.

6. **Post Office of Mailing:** Write the city and state of the post office where you are dropping off your mail. This will be the same post office where you hold your permit.
7. **Processing Category:** Check the box for the size of the pieces in your mailing. There is no separate postage rate for Standard Mail cards, so check "Letters" if you are mailing cards or letters. Remember, if you are mailing Standard Mail parcels you must use a different postage statement (Form 3602-PS or Form 3602-RS).
8. **Weight of a Single Piece:** Fill in the weight of a single mailpiece, in decimal pounds to four digits. If you don't have a scale that measures to four digits, wait until you bring your mailing to the post office to fill this in. A postal clerk will weigh one of your mailpieces, and then you can fill in this block. Remember, you can only use the "EZ" form if your pieces each weigh 3.3 ounces or less.
9. **If Sacked, Based on:** Standard Mail flats must be put into sacks. Check the box to show which sacking criteria you used to prepare your flat-size mail. If your pieces weigh 2 ounces or more, then you probably used the "15 pounds" criteria (because you'll make the sack minimum with 15 pounds before you get to 125 pieces).
10. **Number of Containers:** In this space, enter the total number and type of containers (for instance, "5 trays" or "10 sacks").
11. **Total Pieces:** Refer to the tally sheet that you kept while you were traying or sacking the mail. Fill in the total number of pieces in the entire mailing in this block. This must be an EXACT NUMBER — you can't estimate.
12. **Total Weight:** Because you're paying via permit imprint, all of the pieces in your mailing must be identical in weight. To calculate the total weight of your mailing, simply multiply the weight of a single piece by the total number of pieces. This will equal the total weight of the mailing.

## 6 How to Fill Out Your Form

		<input type="checkbox"/> Letters	<input type="checkbox"/> Flats			
Postage Computation (DMM P013)	Entry Discount Presorted Pieces 3.3 Oz. (0.2063 Lb.) or Less <b>13</b>	Presort Level <b>14</b>	Rate per Piece <b>15</b>	Number of Pieces <b>16</b>	<b>17</b> Totals	
	None	1. 3/5 Letter	.230	x		
		2. Basic Letter	.250	x		
		3. 3/5 Flat	.263	x		
		4. Basic Flat	.319	x		
	DBMC	5. 3/5 Letter	.211	x		
		6. Basic Letter	.231	x		
		7. 3/5 Flat	.244	x		
		8. Basic Flat	.300	x		
	DSCF	9. 3/5 Letter	.206	x		
		10. Basic Letter	.226	x		
		11. 3/5 Flat	.239	x		
		12. Basic Flat	.295	x		
Postmaster: Report total postage in AIC 130.				<b>Total Postage</b> (Add lines above) →	<b>18</b>	
For USPS Use Only: Additional Postage Payment (State reason)						
Postmaster: Report total adjusted postage in AIC 130.				<b>Total Adjusted Postage</b> (Add additional postage to total postage) →		
The signature of a mailer certifies that he or she will be liable for and agrees to pay, I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading						

### Postage Computation

Remember, with a permit imprint mailing, you print a "postage paid" indicia in the upper right corner of each mailpiece, then pay the total postage amount when you bring the mailing to the post office. This area of the postage statement helps you calculate the amount of postage that you will have to pay when you drop off your mailing.

- 13.** Entry Discount: First, choose the correct destination entry discount, if any, from the left column. Most beginning mailers will not qualify for destination entry discounts, so choose "none." However, some mailers holding their permits at a post office that is also a mail processing facility (called a "sectional center facility") may qualify for the "DSCF" discount. Ask your business mail acceptance clerk which Zip Codes qualify for this discount.
- 14-17.** Presort Level, Rate per Piece, and Number of Pieces: Refer to the tally sheet that you kept when you were putting your mail into trays or sacks. Add up the total number of pieces that qualify for the Standard Mail basic rate, and write that number in the Number of Pieces column. Do the same for the total number of pieces that qualify for the Standard Mail 3/5-digit rate. Be sure to choose the correct row (letter vs. flat)! Then, multiply the Rate per Piece by the Number of Pieces, and enter that number in the Totals column.

18. Total Postage: Add all of the rows in the Totals column and write that number here. This is the total amount of postage that you owe for your entire mailing. This is the amount of money that will be deducted from your permit imprint account when you bring your mailing to the post office.
19. Total Adjusted Postage (gray area): Do not write in this area—it is reserved for use by the post office. Sometimes when postal clerks check a mailing that's brought in, they'll find that the mailer's calculations are incorrect. That postage adjustment is recorded in this area.

Postmaster: Report total adjusted postage in AIC 130.		<b>Total Adjusted Postage</b> (Add additional postage to total postage) →		
Certification	The signature of a mailer certifies that he or she will be liable for and agrees to pay, subject to appeals prescribed by postal laws and regulations, any revenue deficiencies assessed on this mailing. (If this form is signed by an agent, the agent certifies that he or she is authorized to sign this statement, that the certification binds the agent and the mailer, and that both the mailer and the agent will be liable for and agree to pay any deficiencies.)		I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including multiple damages and civil penalties).	
	I hereby certify that all information furnished on this form is accurate, truthful, and complete; that the material presented qualifies for the rates of postage claimed; and that this mailing does not contain any hazardous materials prohibited by postal regulations.		<input type="checkbox"/> <b>For ZIP Codes (Presorted rates only):</b> I certify that the ZIP Codes appearing on the pieces described above have been verified and corrected where necessary within 12 months of the date of this mailing using a USPS-approved method.	
Signature of Permit Holder or Agent (Both principal and agent are liable for any postage deficiency incurred.)			Telephone	
USPS Use Only	Weight of a Single Piece <span style="float: right;">0 _____ pounds</span>	Are figures at left adjusted from mailer's entries? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
	Total Pieces <span style="float: right;">Total Weight</span>	If "Yes," Reason		
	Total Postage			
	Check One (If applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Presort Verification Not Scheduled <input type="checkbox"/> Presort Verification Performed as Scheduled		Date Mailer Notified	Contact
	I CERTIFY that this mailing has been inspected concerning: (1) eligibility for postage rate claimed; (2) proper preparation (and presort where required); (3) proper completion of postage statement; and (4) payment of required annual fee.		By (Initials)	
Verifying Employee's Signature		Verifying Employee's Name	Time <span style="float: right;">AM PM</span>	
Round Stamp (Required)				

PS Form 3602-EZ, January 2001 (Page 1 of 1) This form available at www.usps.com

## Certification

This area of the postage statement requires mailers to certify that they have prepared their mail correctly and paid the correct amount of postage. Check the box to show that you have verified the ZIP Codes in your address list. Sign your name and be sure to include a phone number. If there are questions about your mailing, someone from the post office will call you.

## USPS Use Only

This gray area is reserved for use by the post office. When postal clerks check and verify your mailing, they will record information in this area.

### Tips for Filling Out a Postage Statement

1. The Postage Statement Wizard is a FREE, interactive program that helps you fill out your postage statements. It does all of the calculations for you, so you can be sure that your numbers are correct! You also can save your postage statement for the next time you mail. Go to [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com) > forms > postage statement wizard.
2. Destination Entry Discounts: You can get better rates by taking your mail to certain postal facilities. These are called destination entry discounts. Most small mailers drop their mail at the local post office and do not qualify for destination entry discounts. However, if you happen to hold your permit at a postal facility that is also a sectional center facility, you may be able to qualify for these discounts. Ask the business mail entry unit staff.
3. Choosing the right rate: You can't just pick any rate you want from the postage statement. You can only pay the rate you qualify for. As you're looking at the back of the postage statement you'll see lots of rates, some of them less than the rate you're paying. How can you find out about how to qualify for those rates? The Business Mail 101 web site ([www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com) > mail or ship) has an interactive decision that that will help you decide if you can qualify for lower postage rates. But remember: Getting a lower postage rate means that you're doing more work. Some of the requirements for those lower postage rates may mean more work than you're willing to do. Look and see, investigate your options, and cost it out.
4. Heavier mail pieces (over 3.3 ounces) pay a per piece charge and a per pound charge. The business mail entry clerk can help you calculate this. The Postage Statement Wizard will calculate this for you automatically.
5. If you want a copy of your postage statement for your records, make a copy to take with you to the post office. The postal clerk will date stamp your copy as a receipt.

# 7 Getting to the Post Office



**A**fter the mail is sorted, the containers are prepared, the postage is calculated and the postage statement is filled out, you're ready to take your mail to the post office.

## Where to Go to Drop Off Your Business Mail

All Standard Mail must be brought into the post office or business mail entry unit (BMEU) where your permit is held. **YOU MAY NOT GIVE BULK MAIL TO A LETTER CARRIER OR DEPOSIT IT IN A COLLECTION BOX!**

You must take your mailing to the office where you hold your mailing permit. For most mailers, this will be your local business mail entry unit, but if you're in a small town you may have to take your mail directly to the retail window. If you are taking advantage of destination entry discount, first you must go to the office where you hold your mailing permit. That office will verify and accept your mailing, and then you can take your destination entry mail to the correct postal facility.

In some large metropolitan areas, business mail entry units have separate entrances or counters for commercial mailers and small mailers. Look for the signs.

All presorted mailings are deposited at their designated BMEUs or drop points with completed, accurate postage statements.

**TIP:** Mail early in the day, early in the week, and early in the month.

**TIP:** Call first! Find out exactly where at the post office you need to go and the best hours to drop off your mail. Most business mail entry units are open during business hours and even into the evening. Also ask about parking, especially if you're dropping off your mail in the evening. Many letter shops and commercial mailers drop their mail off between 4pm and 8pm and the BMEU gets really busy.

### What to Take with You to the Post Office

Here's a list of what to take with you when you're ready to drop off your mail:

- All of your mail (count your containers!).
- Signed and dated postage statement(s).
- Supporting documentation (your tally sheet or printout from presort software). The Postal Service uses this documentation to verify the rates you've claimed on your mail.
- Check or cash to cover any additional postage due (if you've used precanceled stamps or meter postage on your mail).
- Money for your annual mailing fee (if you haven't already paid it).

### What Happens at the Post Office

The business mail entry unit (BMEU) clerk will tell you where to place your trays or sacks and may ask you to sign in so that customers get served in the order they arrived. When it's your turn, bring your mail to the counter and give your postage statement and any required documentation to the clerk.

The clerk checks to make sure that you've prepared your mail properly. The clerk will open at least one of your trays to check your mail for:

- Eligibility of contents (for Standard Mail, the clerk will actually open one of your mailpieces to check that the contents qualify for the rate you're claiming)
- Markings and endorsements
- Sortation
- Postage payment

If you're paying with permit imprint, the clerk will check to see that there's enough money in your advance deposit account to cover the cost of your mailing.

When you bring in your first mailing ever, the clerk will perform an in-depth presort verification. Because you followed all of the instructions in this publication, your mail will be perfectly sorted. The clerk will sign off on your postage statement (and your copy, if you've brought one), and take your mail. You're finished, and your mail is on its way! You won't get a "receipt" for your mail unless you bring a copy of your filled-out postage statement with you for the clerk to sign and date. You will always get a receipt for the deposits you make into your advance deposit (permit imprint) account.

In some instances, there may be problems with your mail. Don't be surprised if the first time you bring a mailing in it needs a little fine-tuning. If your mail is not presorted correctly, the clerk will point the problems out to you and tell you how to fix the sortation. There's usually room right there in the BMEU for you to re-sort your mail and fill out a new postage statement. The business mail entry unit clerk checks both your presort and your piece count. If either of those are off by a certain amount, you can either fix it or pay extra postage.

If there are problems with the characteristics of your mailpiece, you might have to pay additional fees or surcharges. In some very rare cases, the contents of your mailing may not be eligible for the rates you're claiming, and you may have to pay a higher rate of postage.

The clerks at the business mail entry unit are there to help you get your mail into the system. They welcome questions and have lots of good tips for helping you with your mail.

Business mail entry units have rubber bands, stickers, trays, sleeves (tray lids), sacks, rolling carts, tray labels, postage statements, and instructions for presorting your mail. The Postal Service DOES NOT provide strapping materials for customers, so be sure to do that before you come. There's also usually some work space for customers for fix their mail.

No one wants unpleasant surprises at the post office. It's frustrating for customers and for the Postal Service, too. So do a little work up front. When you're designing a mailpiece, talk to your local mailpiece design analyst (a special postal employee who specializes in helping customers design their mailpieces) to make sure that your mailpiece is the right measurements to get the rates you want.

### Checklist for Mailers

Think you're finished? Print out this checklist and use it to make sure you've completed every step.

- Decide on a class of mail
- Create your mailpiece
- Get an address list
- Check the accuracy of your address list
- Address your mail
- Choose a postage payment method
- Get a mailing permit
- Pay an annual mailing fee
- Get supplies
- Sort the mail
- Prepare the containers of mail
- Fill out a postage statement
- Go to the post office

# 8 Help!

**T**his chapter tells you where you may go for more information on using Standard Mail. These sources can give you valuable tips and “tricks of the trade.” As always, if you don’t see what you need here, contact your local post office.

## Additional Resources for Business Mailers

The Postal Service has many different people and tools that can help you with all aspects of your mailing. All of these services are available, free of charge!

### For general questions about the Postal Service

- 1-800-ASK-USPS is a 24-hour information hotline.
- Customer service representatives can answer your questions about the Postal Service and your mailing needs.
- Postmasters are in daily contact with customers and can advise you who to call with questions about your mail.

### For help designing a mailpiece

- Mailpiece Design Analysts (MDAs) are postal employees specially trained to answer your questions regarding mailpiece design. These employees provide advice and issue rulings regarding acceptability for automated rates. MDAs provide technical assistance on mailpiece design to envelope manufacturers, printers, advertising agencies, and graphic designers.

Your local post office or business mail entry unit can assist you in locating the MDA responsible for your ZIP Code area. Mailpiece Design Analysts are available for:

- Testing paper and actual mailpiece samples for acceptable thickness, background color, flexibility, rigidity, and barcode print tolerances.
- Assigning unique ZIP+4 for Business Reply Mail (BRM) mailpieces.
- Providing camera ready artwork for the proper Facing Identification Marks (FIM) and barcodes for Business Reply Mail (BRM) and Courtesy Reply Mail (CRM).
- Reviewing artwork prior to printing.
- Review and approval of vender prepared “privately printed” forms for USPS special services.
- Analysis of optical character reader (OCR) readability and automation compatibility of prospective or actual mailpieces.

### For help with nonprofit mail

Publication 417, Nonprofit Standard Mail Eligibility, is available on [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com) or from your local post office.

### For help sorting your mail

- Quick Service Guides, which describe every class of mail and rate discount, are available on [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com) or from your local post office.
- Business mail entry staff specialize in bulk mailing standards and answer any technical questions about the content or presort of your mail. Business mail entry offices offer free bulk mail training seminars for beginning mailers.

### For official Postal Service mailing standards

- The Postal Explorer web site is a complete collection of mailing standards and Postal Service publications (<http://pe.usps.gov>).
- The Mailers Companion is a free monthly newsletter that keeps you up-to-date on recent changes in mailing requirements. You can subscribe by sending an email to [mncsc@email.usps.gov](mailto:mncsc@email.usps.gov). Include your name and mailing address.

## Non-Postal Service Sources

Some mail-related services are handled by private companies rather than by the Postal Service. Several are listed below.

### Mailing Lists

If you do not have your own address file, finding the right mailing list may take some effort. The Postal Service does not provide address lists to customers. However, we have many products to help improve the quality of mailing lists.

Your local business mail entry unit and postal business center can provide you with a list of postal business partners—local companies in the mailing industry who have been trained and certified as knowledgeable in postal mailing standards.

To buy a mailing list, look under “Mailing Lists” in your local telephone directory. Whether you want to reach businesses or consumers, you can find a list that targets the best prospects for you.

Lists are compiled from many sources, such as voter registration lists, attendees at trade shows, buyers at stores, residents in specific neighborhoods, or members of social organizations and other groups. Check all lists for duplicate addresses and missing data.

There are list compilers who can create a list for you focusing on the type of persons you wish to reach with your mailing. This customized list can be sold or rented to you. You can include a reply card with your mailing asking if that person wishes to continue to receive mail from you. A return card allows you to track responses to your mailing and will provide you with a valid address that can be permanently added to your list.

You can also get mailing lists from the following sources:

- Magazine publishers
- Churches
- Attendance rosters
- Public records data banks
- Newsletter publishers
- Community associations
- Business directories
- Previous customers

**TIP:** When purchasing a mailing list, insist on a list that is ZIP+4 coded and has a current CASS document. This will guarantee that all addresses are deliverable.

List rental fees are based on several factors including the quantity and quality of the list, the age and buying history of those on the list, and whether or not the list contains specific names, titles, and telephone numbers. Generally, business lists are more expensive than consumer lists.

Check the background of companies you decide to do business with to ensure you receive good service for your time and money. The list should be processed through Postal Service address-matching requirements before you purchase it. Lists can be provided to you as a hard copy list or on index cards, address labels, and computer disks. You may also wish to swap lists with someone who is mailing to a similar market but with a different product or service.

**TIP:** If you purchase a barcoded list with a current CASS certificate, you may be eligible for automation rates.

### Postage Meters

To lease a postage meter, look under "Mailing Equipment" in your local telephone directory. See page 16 of this publication for more information on postage meters.

### Presort Service Bureaus

To find a presort service bureau, look under "Mailing Services" in your local telephone directory. See page 32 to find out more about service bureaus.

# Glossary of Terms

**AADC (automated area distribution center):** An area distribution center (ADC) that is equipped with multiline optical character readers, barcode sorters, and other mail processing equipment designed for sorting automation-compatible mail. Also see *ADC*.

**ACS (Address Change Service):** An automated process that provides change-of-address information to participating mailers who maintain computerized mailing lists. The information is captured in the Computerized Forwarding System II units and sent to mailers electronically to eliminate manual input of change information into their mailing systems.

**ADC (area distribution center):** A mail processing facility that receives, processes, and distributes mail destined for specific ZIP Code areas. This facility is one point within the national distribution network and covers a specific service area.

**advance deposit account:** A debit account into which a mailer deposits funds that are held by the Postal Service and from which postage is later deducted at the time of mailing.

**advertising mail:** A sales product or promotional message mailed directly to customers or prospective clients. Also known as direct mail.

**ASF (auxiliary service facility):** A mechanized facility, usually part of a general mail facility, that serves as a subordinate mail processing hub for a parent bulk mail center.

**aspect ratio:** The dimension of a mailpiece expressed as a ratio of length (that is, the direction parallel to the address) divided by height. For example, a postcard 5-1/2 inches long by 3-1/2 inches high has an aspect ratio of 1.57. An aspect ratio between 1.3 and 2.5, inclusive, improves mail handling.

**automation-compatible mail:** Mail that can be scanned and sorted by automated mail processing equipment such as a barcode sorter.

**barcode:** A series of vertical bars and half bars representing the ZIP Code information for the delivery address on a mailpiece. The barcode facilitates automated processing by barcode reader equipment. Each numeric digit is represented by a series of five bars (always a combination of two full bars and three half bars). A complete barcode contains two bars framing the code; the five, nine, or eleven digits containing ZIP Code and address information; and a final correction digit that allows the machine to check its reading of the ZIP Code number. See also *DPBC* and *POSTNET*.

**BMC (bulk mail center):** A highly mechanized mail processing plant that is part of the National Bulk Mail System. This facility distributes Standard Mail and Periodicals in bulk form and Package Services in both piece and bulk form.

**BMEU (business mail entry unit):** The area of a postal facility where a mailer presents for acceptance bulk mail or presorted mail. It includes dedicated platform space, office space, and a staging area on the workroom floor. Formerly called bulk mail acceptance unit, platform acceptance unit, or weigher's station.

**BRM (business reply mail):** Specially printed postcards, envelopes, cartons, and labels that may be mailed without postage prepayment. Postage and fees are collected when the mail is delivered back to the original sender. This domestic service enables authorized mailers to receive First-Class Mail, without prepaid postage, back from customers by paying the postage and fee on receipt of the mailpieces.

**carrier route (CR):** Usually the addresses served by a postal employee (generally a city carrier or rural carrier) to deliver mail to customers. This can include city routes, rural routes, and highway contract routes.

**CASS (Coding Accuracy Support System):** A service offered to mailers, service bureaus, and software vendors that evaluates the accuracy of delivery point barcodes, ZIP+4 codes, 5-digit ZIP Codes, and carrier route information on mailpieces. CASS provides a common platform to measure the quality of address matching software and useful diagnostics to correct software problems.

**collection box:** A blue-painted street box with the Postal Service logo used by the public to deposit mail. Each box is equipped with a security lock. It has a uniform appearance and a nationwide identification system that distinguishes the type of service provided at each box.

**CRM (courtesy reply mail):** A preaddressed return envelope or postcard that business mailers provide to a customer for returning a remittance, order, or response. The customer pays the postage. In many cases, the envelope is also prebarcoded.

**destination delivery unit (DDU):** The facility where the carrier cases the mail for delivery.

**DMM (Domestic Mail Manual):** A directive that contains the basic Postal Service standards for domestic mail services; a description of and requirements for each mail class, special service, and ancillary service and conditions governing their uses; and standards for rate eligibility and mail preparation.

**DPBC (delivery point barcode):** A POSTNET barcode that contains a ZIP+4 barcode plus two additional digits (10 additional bars) that designate a specific delivery point. It consists of 62 bars with beginning and ending frame bars and 5 bars each for the 9 digits of the ZIP+4, the last 2 digits of the primary street address (or post office box, etc.), and a correction digit. This type of barcode allows automated sortation of mail at the carrier route level in walk sequence.

**faced:** Mail arranged with all addresses and stamps or indicia facing the same way.

**facing slip:** A paper label attached to the top of a mail package that shows the postal unit where the mail is due to be distributed, the class and type of mail, and the country or military post office.

**FIM (facing identification mark):** A series of vertical bars used by automated postal equipment that identifies, orients, and separates business reply mail, courtesy reply mail, and official mail. These bars are positioned in the upper right corner of the mailpiece to the left of the indicia (or area reserved for postage). A FIM serves as an orientation mark for automated facing and canceling equipment.

- First-Class Mail (FCM):** A mail class that includes all matter wholly or partly in handwriting or typewriting, all actual and personal correspondence, all bills and statements of account, and all matter sealed or otherwise closed against inspection. First-Class Mail comprises three subclasses: cards, letters and sealed parcels, and Priority Mail. Any mailable matter may be sent as First-Class Mail. "First-Class Mail" is a USPS trademark.
- flats (FLTS):** The general term for flat-size mail, so called because the large mail is sorted without bending it so that the mail remains flat. Flat-size mail exceeds at least one of the maximum dimensions for letter-size mail (11-1/2" long, 6-1/8" high, 1/4" thick). A flat may be unwrapped, paper-wrapped, sleeve-wrapped, or enveloped. If automation-compatible, it must have minimum dimensions of 6" x 6" and maximum dimensions of 15" long, 12" high, and 3/4" thick. It must also meet other physical requirements and be part of a mailing that is ZIP+4 or delivery point barcoded.
- fluorescent ink:** An ink that contains special substances that help Postal Service equipment face, cancel, and process mail. Also called luminescent ink.
- indicia:** An imprinted designation on a mailpiece that indicates postage payment (for example, a permit imprint in place of a postage stamp or a meter stamp).
- insert:** A letter, card, or other item placed in an envelope (often a window envelope) for mailing.
- international mail:** Surface mail or airmail originating in one country and destinating in another.
- label:** A typewritten or printed strip of heavy paper placed in the label holders of sacks, pouches, trays, or other containers. The label bears information about destination, class, type of mail, and routing instructions.
- machinable:** The suitability of a mailpiece for sorting by mail processing equipment. (Compare to *nonmachinable*.)
- mail sack/mail bag:** Canvas or nylon bag or sack used to transport mail.
- mailing list service:** A service available from the Postal Service for a fee that mailers use to correct name and address lists, to correct occupant lists, or to sort mailing lists on cards by 5-digit ZIP Code. The Postal Service also provides address changes to election boards and voter registration commissions.
- metered mail:** Any class of mail with postage printed by a USPS-approved postage meter. In general, the privileges and conditions that apply to mail with stamps also apply to mail with a meter imprint. Metered mail must be deposited within the jurisdiction of the post office shown in the meter stamp.
- minimum size requirement:** The smallest dimensions allowable for all mailable matter. Except for keys and identification items, a mailpiece less than 1/4" thick must be rectangular and meet the minimum criteria listed below; otherwise, it is nonmailable and will be returned to sender:
- At least 5" long,
  - At least 3-1/2" high, and
  - At least .007" thick.
- mixed ADC:** A designation for a bundle, sack, tray, or other container that holds mail for delivery in more than one ADC.
- MXD (mixed):** A code used on mail container labels that identifies the contents as mixed mail for different destinations (such as for multiple ADCs).

**NCOA (National Change of Address) System:**

An address correction service that the USPS provides to mailers through USPS licensees. The licensees match mailing lists submitted to them on tape or disk against change-of-address information for the entire country from all Computerized Forwarding System units. NCOA can correct an address before it is used on a piece of mail.

**NCSC (National Customer Support Center):**

A USPS organization that provides information, services, and products (for example, zone charts, directories, software programs, testing of ZIP+4 code or delivery point code address matching software) that are designed to improve the quality of addressing for mailings that qualify for certain rates.

**nonmachinable:** The unsuitability of a mailpiece for sorting on mail processing equipment because of size, shape, content, or address legibility. Such mail must be processed by manual distribution.

**overflow tray:** A less-than-full tray that contains pieces remaining after preparing full trays for the same destination. Overflow trays may be prepared only if allowed by the standards for the rate claimed.

**package:** A package is a group of addressed pieces assembled and secured together (by tying or banding) and handled as a single unit for mail processing.

**PAVE (Presort Accuracy Validation and Evaluation):** A USPS program that provides testing for certain categories of presort software products to determine their accuracy in sorting address information according to *Domestic Mail Manual* (DMM) standards.

**permit:** Any authorization required for specific types of preparation or postage payment. Specifically, an authorization to mail without postage affixed by using indicia (see page 14) or an imprint. Payment is made against an advance deposit account that is established with the Postal Service for postage and special services.

**permit imprint:** Printed indicia, used in place of an adhesive postage stamp or meter stamp, that shows postage prepayment by an authorized mailer.

**postage meter:** Mechanical or electromechanical device and postage imprinter used to print postage on gummed tape or directly onto envelopes or cards. Available for lease only from designated manufacturers.

**postage statement:** Documentation provided by a mailer to the Postal Service that reports the volume of mail being presented and the postage payable or affixed and certifies that the mail meets the applicable eligibility and addressing standards for the rate claimed.

**POSTNET (Postal Numeric Encoding Technique):**

The barcode system for encoding the delivery point information and ZIP+4 codes on letters and flats. See also *DPBC*.

**precanceled stamps:** Stamps canceled by printing across the face before they are sold to mailers for bulk mailings.

**presort:** The process by which a mailer prepares mail by sorting it to the finest extent required for the rate claimed. Generally, presort is performed sequentially by ZIP Codes, from the lowest (finest) level to the highest level, or by carrier route.

**PRSRT STD (Presorted Standard):** basic rate marking requirement for regular rate mailings categorized as “nonautomation presort (3/5 and basic) Standard Mail” including Enhanced Carrier Route.

**RCSC (rates and classification service center):** A field office of Business Mail Acceptance that provides guidance to field personnel and customers on mail classification, postage rates, mail preparation, and postage payment programs.

**route:** Scheduled course followed by postal employees or contractors in performing mail delivery duties.

**RR (rural route):** A delivery route served by a rural carrier.

**SCF (sectional center facility):** A postal facility that serves as the processing and distribution center (P&DC) for post offices in a designated geographic area defined by the first three digits of the ZIP Codes of those offices. Some SCFs serve more than one 3-digit ZIP Code range. Also, a designated geographical area defined by ZIP Codes. The sectional center facility is used for presort and makeup of certain classes of mails, computation of certain postal charges, distribution, and dispatch.

**scheme:** Systematic plan for the distribution of mail to its destination.

**sleeve:** A paperboard jacket that fits over the four sides of a letter tray to keep the mail inside the tray from falling out.

**slug:** An attachment to the meter machine that can be obtained from a meter supplier. Used to print postal endorsements or advertising on a mailpiece when the postage is printed.

**surcharge:** An additional fee for nonstandard size mail or certain nonmachinable parcels.

**tray:** A container used to hold letters and flats for purposes of preparing mail to qualify for discounted postage rates.

**unique ZIP Code:** A ZIP Code assigned to a company, government agency, or entity with sufficient mail volume, based on average daily volume of letter-size mail received, availability of ZIP Code numbers in the postal area, and Postal Service cost-benefit analyses.

**upgradable mail:** Mail that the Postal Service can process on a multiline optical character reader (MLOCR) to apply a barcode. Upgradable mail is letter-size, automation-compatible pieces with machine-printed nonscript addresses, OCR read area, and barcode clear zones meeting reflectance requirements, and paper that can accept ink.

**verification:** A system of checks used to determine if a mailing was properly prepared and if the correct postage was paid.

**working (WKG) mail:** Mail requiring sorting and distribution by the Postal Service.

**ZIP (Zone Improvement Plan) Code:** Established in 1963, the system of 5-digit numeric codes that identifies the individual post office or delivery station associated with an address. “ZIP Code” is a USPS trademark.

