

INTRODUCTION

1. WHY A HIGH STANDARD OF PACKING IS NECESSARY FOR THE POST

Parcels sent by post have to be conveyed from place to place in mail bags. All kinds of parcels go in the same bag and the bags often have to be stacked on each other. A parcel in a bag at the bottom of a stack should therefore be able to withstand heavy pressure as well as the knocks and jolts which are inevitable on the railway. To do this it must be very well packed, and in fact a higher standard of packing is necessary for post transit by post than by ordinary road or rail transport, which can be handled individually throughout. The standard method for packing is described under *HOW TO PACK*.



POST OFFICE

2. TYING AND SEALING

Every year the Post Office has to repack large numbers of parcels which become unfastened in the post and shed their contents. To ensure that a parcel reaches its destination intact it should be securely fastened with strong string, fibre strapping or stout adhesive tape at least one inch wide. It is advisable to use string or fibre strapping in addition to adhesive tape when packing heavy parcels. String should be passed round the parcel in at least two directions and secured separately each end.

PACKING

Metal band and wire may be used for securing parcels by the Post Office, may also be used subject to the following conditions:

(a) The outer packing must consist of a single box of wood, metal, fibreboard, or other strong material. The parcel must be so packed as to rest on a rigid and unyielding surface when the metal band or wire is applied.

for the

INLAND POST

(b) The metal band or wire must be applied to the parcel both lengthwise and crosswise, careful attention being given to the application and to the proper sealing of all joints. Metal band joints must be secured with a metal clip or other satisfactory device and any loose covering material above or below the joints must be removed. Where wire is used, the wire ends must be secured.

(c) The metal band or wire must be applied to the parcel so that it rests closely to the sides of the box or container and must be attached in such a way that it cannot injure officers of the Post Office handling the parcels.

(d) Parcels must in other respects be made up in accordance with the general rules governing the packing of Inland Parcels as set out in this leaflet.

3. REGISTERING IS NOT A SAFEGUARD AGAINST DAMAGE

Registered parcels are carried in mail bags like other postal packets and must therefore be packed and sealed as usual. If the contents of a registered packet are damaged in the post, the Post Office will not be liable. It is suggested that a copy of this leaflet be held in all packing and despatch departments.

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4. NOTES

*Further copies may be obtained on request
from the Head Post Office*

The Post Office will not be liable for any obvious defects in packing, but naturally it will not accept parcels unless the internal packing is adequate. There is also the possibility of an effective check on the packing when parcels are collected direct into sorting offices. The Post Office cannot therefore accept responsibility for any failure to notice defects in the packing or fastening at the time of posting. The clerk may refuse to accept a badly packed parcel for registration and may offer to accept it as an unregistered parcel at the sender's risk.

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2. TYING AND SEALING

Every year the Post Office has to repack large numbers of parcels which become unfastened in the post and shed their contents. To ensure that a parcel reaches its destination intact it should be securely fastened with strong string, fibre strapping or stout adhesive tape at least one inch wide. It is advisable to use string or fibre strapping in addition to adhesive tape when sending heavy parcels. String should be passed round the parcel in at least two directions and knotted separately each way.

Metal band and wire binding systems, which have been approved by the Post Office, may also be used subject to the following conditions:—

- (a) The outer packing must consist of a single box of wood, metal, fibreboard, or other strong material. The parcel must be so packed to present a rigid and unyielding surface when the metal band or wire is applied.
- (b) The metal band or wire must be placed firmly around the parcel both lengthwise and crosswise, careful attention being given to its application and to the proper sealing of all joints. Metal band joints must be secured with a metal clip or other satisfactory device and any excess overlap of band above or below the joints must be removed. Where wire is used the joints must be properly finished off by twisting the wire ends together tightly.
- (c) The metal band or wire must have no sharp edges or ends, must fit closely to the sides of the box or container and must be attached in such a way that it cannot injure officers of the Post Office handling the parcels.
- (d) Parcels must in other respects be made up in accordance with the general rules governing the packing of Inland Parcels as set out in this leaflet.

3. REGISTERING IS NOT A SAFEGUARD AGAINST DAMAGE

Registered packets are carried in mail bags like other postal packets and must therefore be packed just as carefully. If the contents of a registered packet are damaged in the post, the Post Office must be satisfied that the packet was adequately packed before it can pay compensation.

4. INSPECTION AT TIME OF POSTING

The Post Office clerk who accepts a parcel at the counter will point out any obvious defects in packing but normally he will not know what it contains or whether the internal packing is adequate. There is still less possibility of an effective check on the packing when parcels are collected direct into sorting offices. The Post Office cannot therefore accept responsibility for any failure to notice defects in the packing or fastening at the time of posting. The clerk may refuse to accept a badly packed parcel for registration and may offer to accept it as an unregistered parcel at the sender's risk.

5. COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGE

Important: In all cases of damage in which it is intended to claim compensation, the packing and wrapping should be retained by the addressee as nearly as possible in the state in which it was delivered for inspection by the Post Office.

Registered packets. Compensation for damage is limited by the registration fee paid and is subject to Statutory Regulations, one of which reads as follows:—

Any article contained in the packet must be adequately packed as a protection against damage in course of transmission. In particular an article of a fragile nature must be packed in a container of sufficient strength, and must be surrounded in that container with sufficient and suitable soft material or wadding, to protect the article against the effects of concussion, pressure and knocks to which postal packets are ordinarily exposed in transmission, and the packet must bear the words *FRAGILE WITH CARE* written conspicuously on the face of the cover above the address.

Before compensation for damage is paid, the Post Office must be satisfied that the damage occurred in the post and that it was not due to inadequate packing. If the packet is sent to or from the Irish Republic, the Post Office is not legally liable to pay compensation but normally does so on the same conditions as for inland packets. No compensation is paid however for damage to perishable, exceptionally fragile or brittle articles, or for liquids or semi-liquids, sent to or from the Irish Republic.

Recorded Delivery. Compensation up to £2 is payable for loss of a Recorded Delivery letter or packet, or loss or damage of its contents; except that no compensation is payable for any packet containing Money or other inadmissible contents. Nor is compensation payable for any packet redirected to an address outside the United Kingdom, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands or to one of Her Majesty's Ships outside home waters.

Unregistered parcels. The Post Office is not legally liable for damage to an unregistered parcel, but compensation for damage up to £5 (including those sent to or from the Irish Republic or the Channel Islands) may be paid provided the same conditions as for registered packets are met.

Express postal packets. Compensation up to a maximum £5 is paid for unregistered letter packets, other than those containing money or jewellery, conveyed by messenger throughout their whole course. The question of compensation for registered packets and unregistered parcels is not affected by the use of the express services.

Unregistered letters. No compensation is paid in respect of any other packets sent by the unregistered letter post.

Consequential loss. Compensation can only be paid for loss or damage suffered in the post and cannot be paid in respect of any other losses or expense sustained as a consequence of the loss or damage.

6. ITEMS FOR THE IRISH REPUBLIC

As the importation of hay, straw and peat-moss litter into the Irish Republic is prohibited, these materials must not be used as packing for articles sent to that country.

HOW TO PACK

7. SOFT GOODS, for example a pair of sheets

Use plenty of good quality brown paper and make sure that the parcel is well secured with string, adhesive tape or fibre strapping. It is worth while placing a strip of adhesive tape over the end flaps, as well as tying with string (see paragraph 2).

8. HEAVY GOODS AND SOLIDS

Use a wooden, fibreboard or strong corrugated cardboard box large enough to allow a clearance of at least 1 inch all round the article. Fill this space completely with soft packing such as wadding, wood wool, corrugated fibreboard pads, or crushed paper. Many apparently substantial articles—for example, an electric iron—are breakable if not properly protected. Even if a heavy article is not breakable it should be well packed to avoid damaging other parcels in transit. There should be no apparent movement of the contents in the pack when shaken. *N.B.*—When wood is used as an outer packing it must be smooth enough to avoid causing injury through splinters.

9. PERISHABLE ARTICLES

Make sure that grease, oil or liquid cannot leak out. Mark the cover plainly *PERISHABLE*.

10. FRAGILE ARTICLES

Very special care must be taken in packing a fragile article. Always use a rigid outer box of metal, wood, fibreboard or very strong corrugated cardboard. Plenty of soft packing such as wood wool, straw or crushed paper to prevent movement and to absorb pressure and knocks is essential; a thickness of at least 2 inches round all sides of the article is recommended. In addition a pad of wadding, wood wool or paper should be wrapped round any part of an article which juts out from the main body, for example, the handle of a jug. Articles which are long and thin in shape should be protected by stout strips of wood in the same way as an umbrella should be (see paragraph 11). If two or more articles are put into the same parcel, first wrap each one separately in newspaper or tissue paper. Mark the cover plainly *FRAGILE WITH CARE*.

For the regulations about compensation for damage to fragile parcels see paragraph 5.

11. HOW TO PACK CERTAIN ARTICLES WHICH ARE EASILY BREAKABLE OR LIABLE TO DAMAGE OTHER PARCELS IN THE POST

Butter, Cream, Semi-Liquids, Greases and Strong-smelling Articles. Pack so that the contents will not soil or taint other packets. The lids of tins used for cream, etc. must fit tightly and should be sealed where possible with self-adhesive tape. The tins should be wrapped in greaseproof or corrugated paper and securely tied with string crossing the lid in two directions (see paragraph 2). When sent by letter post, semi-liquids, butter and other greasy substances must have a securely closed inner covering of greaseproof paper, polythene or some substance impervious to moisture and grease, in addition to an outer covering of wood or metal.

Eggs (*transmissible by parcel post only*). Use a wooden or other rigid box with suitable partitions and a well fitting lid, wrap each egg separately in newspaper or other soft material; place the eggs on end each in a separate partition; put a layer of soft packing material in the box above and below the eggs; and fill up the vacant spaces with newspaper or other soft packing. Mark the parcel *EGGS*.

Electrical Equipment: *see Radio.*

Films (Cinematograph and Photographic). *Inflammable films* (i.e. with a nitro-cellulose base). Pack in a tin case and enclose in a strong wooden box or vulcanised fibre container. Provide suitable soft packing material so as to surround the inner container entirely and hold it firmly in position. Put a white label marked *FILMS—INFLAMMABLE*, in plain black letters on the outside of the package.

If a wooden box is used it must be made from material not less than $\frac{3}{8}$ inch in thickness, the sides must be dovetailed together, and the bottom and lid must be firmly screwed to the sides. If any part of the box is composed of more than one piece, the pieces must be jointed together by means of tongues and grooves. A gap must not appear at any joint.

If a vulcanised fibre container is used it must be made from the toughest compressed and vulcanised fibreboard (at least $\frac{7}{16}$ inch in thickness and not less than $3\frac{1}{2}$ oz. per 100 sq. in. in weight) and have three flanges to tuck in after the tin case is inserted; the rivets must be at least $\frac{3}{16}$ inch long with $\frac{1}{16}$ inch heads; the container must be fastened by a gummed strip along the edge of the flap; the gross weight of the whole packet must not exceed 6 lb.

Non-inflammable films (i.e. films which fall outside the Ministries of Transport and Aviation classifications of dangerous goods). No special packing is required but a label marked **SAFETY FILMS** or **FILMS—NON-INFLAMMABLE** in plain black letters must be used.

Fish, Meat, Poultry, Game and Rabbits (*transmissible by parcel post only*). Pack in rush baskets, straw matting, sacking or similar material with sufficient internal waterproof wrapping, such as polythene, or absorbent packing to prevent the contents from damaging or tainting the outer covering and so making the parcels objectionable to handle as well as liable to cause damage to other parcels in the post. If boxes are used they should be rigid, and vacant spaces must be filled up with paper or other packing to keep the contents from moving about.

A duplicate address label must be attached to the contents of wrapped parcels in case the wrappers or boxes become separated from the contents. Mark the parcel **PERISHABLE**.

Poultry, game or rabbits without covering, i.e., with a neck label only, will not be accepted unless they are fresh, clean, dry and not likely to taint or damage other parcels by exuding liquid or in any other way. Address labels must be strong and securely attached.

Flowers. Pack in boxes of wood or metal lined with waterproof material. Place the flowers in layers, separated by tissue paper, with the blooms in each layer at alternate ends of the box.

Fruit, more especially soft fruit, such as strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, gooseberries, fresh currants, grapes, cherries, etc. (*transmissible by parcel post only*). Pack so that the juice cannot exude or serious damage to the mails may result. Use metal boxes with tightly fitting lids and securely tied with string crossing the lid in two directions. (See paragraph 2). No parcel is admissible which contains soft fruit packed in a chip or wicker basket, or a cardboard, or a tin box with a lid that is not both tightly fitting and securely tied. Mark the parcel **FRUIT—WITH CARE**.

Glass, Crockery and China. Pack securely in rigid boxes of wood, metal or stout fibreboard, or (if very small packets) of strong rigid cardboard, using plenty of soft packing such as wadding, wood wool, etc. in between the articles and between the articles and the top, bottom and sides of the boxes; a depth of at least 2 inches of soft packing all round is recommended. Wrap each article separately. Make sure that there is no movement of the contents when the parcel is shaken. (See paragraph 10—**FRAGILE ARTICLES**).

Gramophone Records

Shellac. Enclose the records in their envelopes and sort into sets according to size. Cross-tie each set to form a compact bundle. Embed the bundle or bundles firmly in sufficient soft packing material in a rigid box of wood (or of stout fibreboard, preferably with a lid extending the full depth of the box) of sufficient size to permit at least 1 inch of packing above, below and around the records.

Plastic. Enclose the records in their envelopes and sort into sets according to size. Place each set between corrugated cardboard fillers in a separate rigid box of stout cardboard or fibreboard (preferably with a lid extending the full depth of the box) so that the records cannot move about in the box. If more than one size of record has to be sent in the same box, fill any empty spaces around the edges of the smaller records with soft packing.

Hats, Millinery, and similar articles. Pack in rigid boxes of wood or other material, or in stout leatherboard or fibreboard boxes with lids extending at least two-thirds of the depth of the box, or in strong cardboard boxes protected externally at the top, bottom and sides by light cross-bars of wood made up into two rectangular frames placed at right-angles to one

another and fastened together where they cross at the top and bottom. If a square box is used, the corners should be strengthened by light wooden uprights firmly fastened to the inside of the box. The contents should be surrounded in the box with sufficient crumpled tissue paper or other suitable soft packing to prevent movement. Strawboard boxes are unsuitable.

Liquids. Tins and bottles containing liquid must be securely sealed. Pack tins containing a pint or more in fibreboard or wooden boxes or wicker cases. Wrap each bottle separately, and pay special attention to the packing round the neck and shoulders of the bottle. Pack the bottle or bottles securely in a rigid box of fibreboard, wood or metal (or in case of very small packets, strong corrugated cardboard) with plenty of soft packing such as wadding, wood wool or some similar soft material between the bottles and the top, bottom and sides of the box; a depth of at least 2 inches of soft packing all round is recommended. Liquids sent by letter post must be in firmly sealed bottles, the soft packing must be sawdust or some other absorbent substance in sufficient quantity to absorb all the liquid contents in the case of breakage, and the box used must open at one end only and have a tightly fitting or screw lid. (See below as regards paints, enamels, varnishes and kindred substances).

Maps, Plans, Drawings, etc. These should be enclosed in strong cardboard tubes with rigid support in the form of a wooden rod inside the roll or stout strips of wood on the outside as recommended for umbrellas.

Metal Castings, Tiles, etc. Pack in a rigid wooden or fibreboard box. Use plenty of soft material, such as straw roping, hay roping or wood wool to prevent movement within the box. Tie securely with strong string (see paragraph 2).

Musical Instruments. Pack in stout wooden cases, with sufficient soft packing to prevent movement and damage through jolting. Leather or American cloth cases do not afford adequate protection—especially to stringed instruments. The bridges of stringed instruments should be removed and packed separately.

Nuts, Bolts, Small Machine Parts, etc. Because of their very heavy weight such articles are liable to burst all but the strongest packing. Wrap in hessian, sacking or similar stout material, with sufficient soft packing to prevent movement and tie securely with strong string (see paragraph 2).

Paints, Enamels, Varnishes and kindred substances.

With flashpoints over 150°F. Pack as for liquids.

With flashpoints between 90°F. and 150°F. Not more than one quart may be enclosed in a single packet. Pack the substance in a metal container sealed with a rolled-on cap (Farwig or similar approved method) or, if a lever top tin is used, with the lid fastened down to the body of the tin by solder (wire clips alone will not suffice). The contents must not exceed 92½% of the total capacity of the container. Pack the container in a stout metal or wooden box with sufficient absorbent material all round to prevent movement of the container and to absorb all the liquid contents in the event of leakage.

If the gross weight of the packet does not exceed 8 oz. it may be packed as for liquids. The inner container must be a tin with a rolled-on cap (Farwig or similar approved method) or with the lid secured by soldering, or a hermetically-sealed bottle.

(Note:—Paints, etc. with flashpoints below 90°F must not be sent by post).

Photographic Prints

Unmounted. If not sent in cardboard tubes—see 'Maps, Plans, Drawings, etc.'—these should be enclosed in stout envelopes with at least one stiffener of fibreboard or good quality cardboard; if several prints are being sent they should be enclosed in a rigid box of fibreboard or good quality cardboard with sufficient soft packing to fill the box.

Mounted. These should be wrapped in tissue and firmly fixed between two stiffeners of rigid material such as fibreboard or strong plywood, at least 1 inch larger all round than the mounts. If more than three mounted photographs are to be sent they should be wrapped in tissue and corrugated paper and packed in a rigid box of solid fibreboard, preferably with a wooden frame round the inside of the box.

Pictures in Frames. Protect at the front and back by stout wooden boards, each rather larger than the frame. Place soft packing firmly between the corners of the frame and the boards, but not so as to press on the glass.

Plastics: Articles of Thin Section Moulded from Plastic Materials, etc. Pack articles moulded in thin section from bakelite or other plastic materials in rigid boxes of wood, fibreboard or very strong corrugated cardboard. Use ample soft packing to prevent movement. Take special care to protect adequately any projecting parts in order to avoid damage through jolting or pressure.

Powders and Fine Grains, such as tea, coffee, cocoa and flour, must be so packed that the contents will not soil or taint other packets. Pack in an inner covering which should be securely closed, and a strong outer covering of metal, wood, fibreboard or cardboard. Cardboard boxes are not suitable, however, for quantities exceeding 3 lb. in weight.

Racquets (Badminton, Squash and Tennis). Racquets must be firmly tied to a wooden board or wooden cross slightly larger than the racquet and stout enough to give adequate protection both to the frame and the handle. The strings must be fully protected on both sides by some rigid material.

Radio and Electrical Equipment. Pack in rigid outer boxes of wood, fibreboard or very strong corrugated cardboard. Use ample soft packing to prevent movement. Provide additional support for heavy component parts. Remove valves, etc., and send separately packed in ample cotton wool or similar soft packing and enclose in a rigid box of wood, fibreboard or very strong corrugated cardboard.

Sharp Instruments. Put suitable protective material over the edges or points so as to prevent injury to officers of the Post Office or damage to other packets. The protective material should be fixed in such a way that it cannot be dislodged during transit.

Suit, Attaché, Dressing and similar Cases. Protect by wooden boards covering the sides.

Umbrellas, Walking-sticks, Fishing Rods and similar articles. Protect by two stout strips of wood (each as long as and slightly wider than the article protected) securely tied or fastened one on each side of the article so that it cannot slip out.