



Royal Mail and Parcelforce

Worldwide prohibited and restricted items – advice for business customers

Effective from 11 August 2025



A guide to what our business customers can and cannot send with Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide.

If you're not a business customer, please visit royalmail.com/prohibitedgoods for information on what you can and cannot send in the mail.

Sending items from Great Britain to Northern Ireland

Under [Government guidance](#), customers are not required to make any changes to the way they send mail via Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide from Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) to Northern Ireland from 1 January 2021.

There are two exceptions to this that will impact some business customers only. According to the Government guidance:

- If you are a Northern Ireland based business receiving goods valued at £135 or more you will need to make a declaration. Businesses will be able to use the Government's free [Trader Support Service](#) to do so.
- There are new requirements on businesses sending the prohibited and restricted goods listed in the guidance.

Until any further changes are announced, Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide will continue to collect and deliver items from Great Britain to Northern Ireland as usual.

Are you posting safely?



To comply with national and international regulations governing the carriage of mail and ensure that mail in transport does not present a danger to the public, we restrict or prohibit certain items from our network.

Prohibited items must never be sent in the post.

Restricted items may be sent in the post, but restrictions will apply. Items can be restricted due to packaging, volume, quantity, labelling or the product that can be used. These conditions must be met when posting both within the UK and Internationally.

We want to ensure the mail is safe for everyone. Many everyday items, such as aerosols, nail varnish and perfumes, are considered dangerous goods under transport legislation.

If you're posting items overseas, other postal administrations may have different prohibitions; see our Royal Mail [Country guides](#) and Parcelforce [Country guides](#). When using our International Business Tracked Priority and europriority services, additional prohibitions and restrictions will apply alongside those listed on this page. Please see [here](#) for further information.

In addition, a number of countries and international organisations, including the United Kingdom and the European Union, [impose certain restrictions, also known as sanctions](#), on what you can send to certain individuals, organisations or countries.

It is your responsibility to check the list of prohibited and restricted items and any applicable packaging, volume, quantity, labelling and product restrictions that apply prior to posting any item.

In order to comply with aviation security regulations, items destined for air transport will go through certain aviation security controls. There may be instances where we are unable to clear certain items, and these will be returned to the sender where it is safe to do so. Please note consequential loss cover is not available when posting any restricted items.

Failure to comply with Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide prohibitions and restrictions may affect your ability to claim compensation.

Posting prohibited goods or restricted goods (where you do not comply with the relevant terms and conditions) could result in prosecution.

If you send prohibited goods or restricted goods (and you do not comply with the relevant terms and conditions), we may deal with the goods as we see fit, including, but not limited to, disposing of the parcels concerned (in whole or in part).

The comprehensive A-Z list below gives you detailed information about the things you cannot post with us, or where restrictions are in place, and covers all our UK mail and International mail services. This list of prohibited and restricted items reflects our general terms and conditions.

If you are not sure about the item you wish to post, please contact us.

Items classified as dangerous goods

Unless specifically permitted (as shown in the A-Z list) dangerous goods are forbidden in mail.

European regulations require a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) to be provided for many products, either before or at the time of first delivery. Section 14 of the EU format SDS indicates that a product is classified as dangerous goods by the presence of a four digit 'UN' number.

Consumer warning markings

Some everyday household items bear consumer warning markings which may or may not indicate they are classified as dangerous goods.

Products bearing the following consumer warning markings ARE classified as dangerous goods:



Note: A product bearing only the corrosive marking (depicted bottom centre above) is NOT classified as dangerous goods if the signal word and hazard statement 'Danger – causes serious eye damage' applies. Unless specifically permitted (as shown in the A-Z list) dangerous goods are forbidden

Please be aware there are changes to the Offensive Weapons Act. To find out more please visit:

[**The Offensive Weapons Act 2019
\(Commencement No. 2 and Saving Provision\)
Regulations 2022 \(legislation.gov.uk\)**](#)

and

[**The Sentencing Act 2020 \(Commencement No. 1\)
\(England and Wales\) Regulations 2022 \(legislation.gov.uk\)**](#)

Aerosols

Aerosols for toiletry or medicinal purposes (including deodorants, body sprays, hair sprays, shaving and hair removal creams and medicinal aerosols for prevention or cure such as flea sprays).

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Valves must be protected by a cap or other suitable means to prevent inadvertent release of the contents during transport.
 - > Volume per item must not exceed 500ml.
 - > No more than two items in any one parcel.
 - > Asthma inhalers are exempt under ICAO TI Special Provision A98.
 - » Where the volume per inhaler is 50ml or less no quantity restrictions apply.
 - > Aerosols must be tightly packed in strong outer packaging and must be secured or cushioned to prevent any damage.
 - > An ID8000 label must be applied (see an example of an [ID8000 label](#)).
 - > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
 - > These items may only be sent using our 1st Class or 2nd Class products paid for via franking or on account (VAT-exempt 1st and 2nd Class Account Mail), Special Delivery® paid for via franking or on account, Royal Mail Tracked® and Royal Mail Sameday®. Please note Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Business Response, Freepost®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and all variants of Royal Mail 24 and Royal Mail 48 are excluded. Also note items cannot be returned by the Parcel Collect service.

All other aerosols (including spray paints, lacquers, solvents, air fresheners, oven cleaners, etc)

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Alcohol

Alcoholic beverages and liquids containing more than 70% alcohol by volume (ABV)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Alcoholic beverages and liquids containing more than 24% but not more than 70% alcohol by volume (ABV) (including whisky, vodka and most spirits and liqueurs)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Volume must not exceed 2 litres per parcel.
 - > Volume per item must not exceed 1 litre.
 - > No more than four items in any one parcel.
 - > The items must be securely closed and placed in a leakproof liner, such as a sealed polythene bag. Surround with absorbent material and sufficient cushioning material to protect each item from breakage.
 - > Mark as 'FRAGILE' when sending glass bottles.
 - > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
 - > These items may only be sent using our 1st Class or 2nd Class products paid for via franking or on account (VAT exempt 1st and 2nd Class Account Mail) Special Delivery® paid for via franking or on account, Royal Mail Tracked® and Royal Mail Sameday®.
 - > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Alcoholic beverages and liquids containing 24% alcohol by volume (ABV) or less (including beer, ale, cider, wine, fortified wine, champagne).

- UK & International – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below: (Note: there are different allowances for UK and International destinations)
 - > Wrap in polythene and seal with tape
 - > Surround with absorbent material such as newspaper and sufficient cushioning material to protect each item from breakage
 - > Mark as 'FRAGILE' when sending glass bottles
 - > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging

UK Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- Volume should not exceed 5 litres per parcel
- No more than eight items in any one parcel
- These items may only be sent using Special Delivery® paid for on account, Royal Mail Tracked® on account and Royal Mail Sameday®
- Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Royal Mail International

- Volume should not exceed 1 litre per item
- No more than two items in any one parcel
- Wrap in polythene and seal with tape
- Surround with absorbent material such as newspaper and sufficient cushioning material to protect each item from breakage
- Mark as 'FRAGILE' when sending glass bottles
- The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging
- Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns® and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded

Parcelforce Worldwide International

- Volume should not exceed 1 litre per item
- No more than four items in any one parcel
- Total alcohol volume should not exceed 2 litres
- Greater volume may be permitted with concurrence approval

Ammunition

(excluding lead pellets and other airgun and airsoft projectiles)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Asbestos

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail (except when sent as a sample excluded from Parcelforce worldwide services)

- > Samples of asbestos may be posted provided the sample is fixed within an inert material such as a glue or resin. Surround with cushioning material e.g. bubble wrap.
- > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
- > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns® and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Balance Boards

(including Hoverboards, electric scooters, electric bicycles and all battery powered vehicles and equipment (UN3171))

Royal Mail

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – It may be possible for contract customers to send balance boards, at the absolute discretion of Parcelforce Worldwide, and is subject to Parcelforce Worldwide providing prior written agreement in advance. Where Parcelforce Worldwide provide concurrence to sending balance boards, it is subject to a number of conditions.

Balloons filled with non-flammable gases

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Must be clearly marked on the outer packaging with the words 'BALLOONS FILLED WITH NON-FLAMMABLE GAS'.
 - > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Batteries

(including those sent with/without or connected to an electronic device)

Batteries not connected to, not installed or not posted with the equipment/device it is intended to power. Batteries that are classified as dangerous goods by the latest edition of the Technical Instructions for Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air published by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) including wet spillable lead acid/lead alkaline batteries (such as car batteries), lithium batteries when not sent with or contained in equipment, used alkaline metal, nickel metal hydride (NiMH), nickel cadmium (NiCd) and zinc-air batteries, and damaged batteries of any type. Please note this includes power banks.

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Alkaline metal, nickel metal hydride (NiMH), nickel cadmium (NiCd), zinc-air and zinc chloride batteries sent without equipment/devices

(Including D, C, 9V, AA, AAA and AAAA alkaline batteries)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

International & UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:

- Must be new and sent unopened in their original retail packaging, surrounded with cushioning material e.g. bubble wrap
- The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
- Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Batteries – new wet, non-spillable (for example sealed lead acid batteries, absorbed glass mat and gel cell batteries)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Batteries must comply with Special Provision 238 of the UN Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, Model Regulations (please check with the manufacturer or distributor).
 - > Maximum weight 1.5kg.
 - > No more than one battery in any one parcel

- > Item must be protected against short circuit (by insulation of exposed terminals) and securely packaged.
- > Package must be marked. "NOT RESTRICTED" and "SPA67/SP238".
- > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
- > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Lithium ion/polymer batteries or cells – sent with equipment/devices

(for example, rechargeable batteries/cells found in portable electronics such as laptops, mobile phones, iPads, camcorders, cordless power tools etc. Includes mains-powered battery chargers but excludes battery packs)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Damaged or recalled batteries or cells are not allowed.
 - > The number of batteries or cells allowed in each package must not exceed the appropriate number to power the equipment plus 2 spares.
 - > The maximum net quantity of cells or batteries is 5kg per package. Note: this relates to batteries only and excludes the weight of the equipment /device.
 - > Watt-hour rating must not exceed 20Wh per cell or 100Wh per battery.
 - > Each cell and battery must be of a type proven to meet the requirements of each test in the UN Manual of Tests and Criteria, Part III, section 38.3.
 - > Batteries are subject to these tests irrespective of whether the cells of which they are composed have been so tested.
 - > Cells and batteries must be manufactured under a quality management programme as specified in the ICAO Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air.
 - > Any person preparing or offering cells or batteries with or in equipment for transport must receive adequate instruction on the requirements commensurate with their responsibilities.
 - > The consignment must be accompanied by a document with an indication that the package contains lithium ion cells or batteries; that the package must be handled with care and that a flammability hazard exists if the package is damaged; that special procedures must be followed in the event the package is damaged, to include inspection and repacking if necessary; and also a telephone number for additional information.

- > Cells and batteries must be packed in inner packaging that completely encloses the cell or battery.
- > Cells and batteries must be protected against short circuit, including protection against contact with conductive materials within the same packaging that could lead to a short circuit.
- > The equipment sent with cells or batteries must be packed in strong rigid packaging and must be secured against movement within the outer packaging and packed to prevent accidental activation.
- > [Lithium Battery Mark](#) must be applied.
- > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.

These items may only be sent using our 1st Class or 2nd Class products paid for via franking or on account (VAT exempt 1st and 2nd Class Account Mail), Special Delivery® paid for via franking or on account, Royal Mail Tracked®, Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, All UK Parcelforce Worldwide services, Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns® and Royal Mail Sameday®.

Please note Business Response, Freepost® and all variants of Royal Mail 24 and Royal Mail 48 are excluded. Also note items cannot be returned by the Parcel Collect service.

Lithium ion polymer batteries – contained in/connected to equipment/devices (for example rechargeable batteries/cells found in portable electronics such as laptops, mobile phones, iPads, camcorders, cordless power tools etc.)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

International & UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:

- Damaged or recalled batteries or cells are not allowed.
- Each package must contain no more than four cells or two batteries installed in or connected to equipment/devices.
- The maximum net quantity of cells or batteries is 5kg per package.
- Watt-hour rating must not exceed 20Wh per cell or 100Wh per battery.
- Each cell and battery must be of a type proven to meet the requirements of each test in the UN Manual of Tests and Criteria, Part III, section 38.3.
- Batteries are subject to these tests irrespective of whether the cells of which they are composed have been so tested.
- Cells and batteries must be manufactured under a quality management programme as specified in the ICAO Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air.
- Any person preparing or offering cells or batteries with or in equipment for transport must receive adequate instruction on the requirements commensurate with their responsibilities.
- Cells and batteries must be protected against short circuit.
- The equipment containing cells or batteries must be packed in strong rigid packaging and must be secured against movement within the outer packaging and packed to prevent accidental activation.
- The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.

These items may only be sent using our 1st Class or 2nd Class products paid for via franking or on account (VAT exempt 1st and 2nd Class Account Mail), Special Delivery® paid for via franking or on account, Royal Mail Tracked®, All UK Parcelforce Worldwide services, Royal Mail Sameday®, Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns® and Royal Mail Tracked Returns®.

Please note Business Response, Freepost® and all variants of Royal Mail 24 and Royal Mail 48 are excluded.

Lithium metal/alloy batteries or cells – sent with equipment/devices (for example non-rechargeable batteries commonly used in electronic equipment/ devices such as cameras, smoke detectors etc.)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines
 - > Damaged or recalled batteries or cells are not allowed.
 - > The number of batteries or cells allowed in each package must not exceed the appropriate number to power the equipment plus 2 spares.
 - > The maximum net quantity of cells or batteries is 5kg per package.
 - > The lithium content must not be more than 1g per cell or 2g per battery.
 - > Each cell and battery must be of a type proven to meet the requirements of each test in the UN Manual of Tests and Criteria, Part III, section 38.3.
 - > Batteries are subject to these tests irrespective of whether the cells of which they are composed have been so tested.
 - > Cells and batteries must be manufactured under a quality management programme as specified in the ICAO Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air.

- > Any person preparing or offering cells or batteries with or in equipment for transport must receive adequate instruction on the requirements commensurate with their responsibilities.
- > The consignment must be accompanied with a document with an indication that the package contains lithium metal cells or batteries; that the package must be handled with care and that a flammability hazard exists if the package is damaged; that special procedures must be followed in the event the package is damaged, to include inspection and repacking if necessary; and also a telephone number for additional information.
- > Cells and batteries must be packed in inner packaging that completely encloses the cell or battery.
- > Cells and batteries must be protected against short circuit, including protection against contact with conductive materials within the same packaging that could lead to a short circuit.
- > The equipment sent with cells or batteries must be packed in strong rigid packaging and must be secured against movement within the outer packaging and packed to prevent accidental activation.
- > [Lithium Battery Mark](#) must be applied.
- > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
- > The maximum net quantity of cells or batteries is 5kg per package.
- > The lithium content must not be more than 1g per cell or 2g per battery.
- > Each cell and battery must be of a type proven to meet the requirements of each test in the UN Manual of Tests and Criteria, Part III, section 38.3.
- > Batteries are subject to these tests irrespective of whether the cells of which they are composed have been so tested.
- > Cells and batteries must be manufactured under a quality management programme as specified in the ICAO Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air.
- > Any person preparing or offering cells or batteries with or in equipment for transport must receive adequate instruction on the requirements commensurate with their responsibilities.
- > Cells and batteries must be protected against short circuit.
- > The equipment containing cells or batteries must be packed in strong rigid packaging and must be secured against movement within the outer packaging and packed to prevent accidental activation.
- > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.

These items may only be sent using our 1st Class or 2nd Class products paid for via franking or on account (VAT exempt 1st and 2nd Class Account Mail) Special Delivery® paid for via franking or on account, Royal Mail Tracked®, All UK Parcelforce Worldwide services, and Royal Mail Sameday®.

Please note Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns services, Business Response, Freepost® and all variants of Royal Mail 24 and Royal Mail 48 are excluded. Also note items cannot be returned by the Parcel Collect service.

Lithium metal/alloy batteries or cells – contained in/connected to equipment/devices (for example non-rechargeable batteries commonly used in electronic equipment/devices such as cameras, smoke detectors etc.)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International & UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Damaged or recalled batteries or cells are not allowed.
 - > Each package must contain no more than four cells or two batteries installed in or connected to equipment/devices.

These items may only be sent using our 1st Class or 2nd Class products paid for via franking or on account (VAT exempt 1st and 2nd Class Account Mail) Special Delivery® paid for via franking or on account, Royal Mail Tracked®, All UK Parcelforce Worldwide services, and Royal Mail Sameday®.

Please note Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide Returns, Business Response, Freepost® and all variants of Royal Mail 24 and Royal Mail 48 are excluded.

Sodium ion batteries (including those sent with/without or connected to an electronic device)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Biological substances

(Category B) (diagnostic specimens including urine, faeces, livestock and equine semen collection and animal remains. Excludes blood spot and hair samples)

UN3373 Biological Substances Category B as detailed in the latest edition of the Technical Instructions for Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air published by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > May only be sent by, or at the specific request of, a qualified medical practitioner, registered dental practitioner, veterinary surgeon, registered nurse or a recognised laboratory or institution.
 - > The total sample volume/mass in any parcel must not exceed 50ml/50g.
 - > All biological substances must be posted in packaging that complies with [Packaging Instruction 650](#).
 - > The packaging must consist of three components:
 - (a) a primary receptacle(s);
 - (b) a secondary packaging; and
 - (c) a rigid outer packaging
 - > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
 - > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns services and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.
 - > Please note for the return of Covid-19 antigen tests, all variants of the Special Delivery Guaranteed service and all variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Bladed items

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

UK & International – see prohibitions, restrictions, and packaging guidelines below.

- UK destinations

Prohibited bladed items

Hunting/combat/survival type knives, daggers, movie knives that promote violence (such as Rambo or Crocodile-Dundee-style knives), replica fighting knives, throwing knives, machetes, swords, fantasy knives, knives with images or words that suggest use for violence, stiletto knives, battleaxes, open razors/folding razors and any similar items are prohibited and cannot be sent. Also see Weapons

The following are not prohibited and will instead be treated as Restricted Bladed Items, provided the only intended use is one of the permitted uses listed below:

Bladed items that are commonly used for sporting activities; commonly used for religious or ceremonial purposes (must be blunted); sgian dubhs (must be blunted and for ornamental purposes); being sent to a recognised museum; commonly used

in historical reenactment (must be blunted); commonly used in theatrical productions (must be blunted); and antiques. Note: in order to avoid your item being treated as prohibited, in the event of any checks it would be helpful to include supporting documentation to enable us to verify the relevant permitted use listed above.

Important: Items intended by the person sending or receiving them to cause injury to a person are always prohibited and will be treated/handled as such regardless of whether or not they fall into one of the permitted uses above. In addition, see Weapons, which are also prohibited regardless of whether or not they fall into one of the permitted uses above.

Restricted bladed items

Prohibited bladed items cannot be sent. However, other knives or blades as defined by s141A Criminal Justice Act 1988 or 'bladed products' as defined by s41 of the Offensive Weapons Act 2019 can be sent, provided certain conditions are met. These include but are not limited to any knife or knife blade, including cutlery knives, bread knives, knives that can be used for hobbies and trades (for instance, utility knives and snap-off cutters, gardening, camping, lock knives, bushcraft and farming tools with a blade or any other trade tool that could commonly be described as a knife), butcher knives (including meat cleavers), felling axes and razor blades.

- Items may only be sent using the Age Verification service. This service is only available to customers shipping domestically within the UK.
- Items must be packaged appropriately so items present no risk to employees, other postal items or recipients.
- Wrap heavy cardboard around sharp edges and points, strong enough to ensure that the contents do not pierce the outer packaging.
- Wrap each item with cushioning material and place in a suitable outer container such as a padded envelope.
- The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
- The outer packaging must be clearly marked to indicate a bladed item is enclosed and that it must not be handed to someone aged under 18.
- Returns for bladed items that can be carried by Royal Mail can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. Bladed items must not be sent using any variant of Business Response and Freepost.

Note: this excludes folding pocketknives where the cutting edge of its blade does not exceed 3 inches (7.62cm) or razor blades permanently enclosed in a cartridge or housing where less than 2mm is exposed, which can be sent without using Age Verification service.

- International destinations only

'Knives' or 'blades' defined by s141A Criminal Justice Act 1988 or 'bladed products' as defined by s41 of Offensive Weapons Act 2019 may be sent. Such items include, but are not limited to, any knife or knife blade, including cutlery knives, bread knives, knives that can be used for hobbies and trades (for instance, utility knives and snap-off cutters, gardening, camping, bushcraft and farming tools with a blade or any other trade tool that could commonly be described as a knife), butcher knives (including meat cleavers), felling axes, razor blades.

- Package appropriately so items present no risk to employees, other postal items or recipients.
- Wrap heavy cardboard around sharp edges and points, strong enough to ensure that the contents do not pierce the outer packaging
- Wrap each item with cushioning material and place in a suitable outer container such as a padded envelope.
- The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging
- Marked to clearly indicate a bladed item is enclosed.

Please note: It is the sender's responsibility to ensure compliance with the law.

The following links to the legislation and guidance may assist, but Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide prohibitions and restrictions regarding the sending of bladed items must also be followed:

[Criminal Justice Act 1988](#)

[Offensive Weapons Act 2019](#)

[Statutory guidance: Offensive Weapons Act 2019](#)

Bowel Cancer Screening

(National screening programmes for faecal occult blood screening samples)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > May only be sent at the specific request of an NHS-recognised laboratory or institution.
 - > Clear instructions should be provided to patients on how to prepare the sample and assemble the packaging for posting.
 - > Sample returns should only be made in the sample kits provided.
 - > The total sample volume/mass in any parcel must not exceed 10g/10ml.
 - > The outer packaging should be of adequate strength for its capacity, mass and intended use.
 - > Testing of packaging may be required.
 - > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Additional guidelines for:

- Faecal immunochemical test kits (known as a FIT kits):
 - > Kits should have dimensions greater than 100mm x 100mm and also be greater than 8mm in thickness.
 - > Any leakage from the sample receptacle should be contained within the outer packaging.
- Faecal occult blood test kits (known as a FOB kits):
 - > Kits should have dimensions greater than 100mm x 100mm.
 - > Any leakage from the sample receptacle should be contained within the outer packaging.

Car Parts

Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Car parts, panels, doors, bumpers and bonnets are prohibited. Other car parts are acceptable as long as packaging guidelines are followed.
 - > Items must always be boxed before shipping, packaged in a strong double-walled corrugated cardboard box, ensuring the box is strong enough to withstand the weight
 - > Small precision-made engine parts such as gears, valves, pistons, piston rings, fly wheels require sufficient internal packaging. Any sharp edges must be covered to ensure they cannot pierce the outer shipping container. Use folded layers of bubble wrap, thick cardboard or polystyrene chips as internal packaging

CBD (cannabidiol) Products

CBD products containing more than 0.2% of THC (Tetrahydrocannabinol)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

CBD products containing 0.2% or less of THC (Tetrahydrocannabinol), including oils, liquids, sprays, capsules)

- UK & International – Allowed in the mail. Packaging guidelines apply
 - > Items must be securely closed and placed in a leakproof inner liner, such as a sealed polythene bag and in a leakproof outer.
 - > If sending more than one item, surround with absorbent material such as newspaper and sufficient cushioning material to protect each item from damage.
 - > Mark as "FRAGILE" when sending glass bottles.
 - > The sender's name and address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
 - > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns® Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Christmas crackers

(see Explosives for cracker snaps when not part of a made-up cracker)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

International & UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:

- Can only be sent in their made-up form and in their original retail packaging.
- Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns® Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Clinical and medical waste

(e.g. contaminated dressings, bandages and needles)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Controlled drugs and narcotics

(such as cannabis, cocaine, heroin, LSD, opium, nitrous oxide and amyl nitrate and all non-prescription controlled drugs)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Corrosives

(including dyes, acids, corrosive paint and rust removers, caustic soda, mercury and gallium metal)

Substances which can cause severe damage to living tissue, other freight or transport by its chemical action including aluminium chloride, caustic soda, corrosive cleaning fluid, dyes, acids, corrosive paint and rust removers, mercury and gallium metal.

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Note: certain hair dyes and associated products may be accepted provided they are not classed as dangerous goods.

Counterfeit currency, bank notes and postage stamps

Including any false instrument, or copy of a false instrument within the meaning of section 5 of the Forgery and Counterfeiting Act 1981)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Only copies of old denominations, which are now obsolete and worthless except for collectable value and cannot be passed as tender, are allowed.

Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

DNA samples

(limited to saliva swabs and samples. Excludes blood spot and hair samples)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- UK & International – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Follow instructions on sample preparation and packing.
 - > Can only be returned in supplier provided packaging.
 - > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Dry ice and liquid nitrogen

(For example, dry ice and liquid nitrogen UN1845 when used as a coolant for UN3373 or for other perishable items.)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Electronic cigarettes

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- UK & International – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Each package must contain no more than two assembled e-cigarettes and should be securely packed to prevent movement in the outer packaging.

- > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

- For Parcelforce contract customers sending more than two assembled e-cigarettes this is subject to providing prior written agreement in advance. Where Parcelforce Worldwide provides concurrence to sending e-cigarettes, it is subject to a number of conditions.

Electronic devices sent with or containing batteries

(including mobile phones, digital cameras) – see Batteries

Environmental waste

(including used batteries and used engine oil)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Environmentally hazardous substances

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, see restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Samples must not exceed 5litres/5kgs.
 - > Pack in a leakproof or sift proof inner and protect by cushioning material in rigid outer packaging.
 - > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Explosives

(including fireworks, flares, blasting caps, Christmas cracker snaps and party poppers)

Any chemical compound, mixture or device capable of producing an explosive or pyrotechnic effect with substantial instantaneous release of heat and gas is prohibited e.g. ammunition, blasting caps, fireworks, flares, fuses, igniters and nitro-glycerine.

Items that appear to be prohibited explosive ordnance may be subject to additional checks and delays.

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Financial documents

Banker's drafts, current bank notes, currency notes or coins, postal orders, cheques or dividend warrants; bearer securities including share warrants, scrips, or subscription certificates, bonds or revenue coupons, unfranked postage stamps, or revenue stamps, (except a revenue stamp embossed or impressed on an instrument which has been executed); coupons, vouchers, tokens, lottery tickets, scratch cards or similar items which can be exchanged themselves or with any other item for money, goods or services; national insurance stamps; all tickets, including travel and events. Out-of-circulation coins (not made of silver or gold) are classed as Collectables.

Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, these items are excluded from enhanced compensation.

Firearms

Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:

A service for Section 1 and 2 firearms and low-powered airguns (as defined by the Firearms Act 1968, as amended), imitation firearms, deactivated guns, antique firearms, paintball guns and inert projectiles (not prohibited by s5 of the Firearms Act 1968 as amended) is available to contract customers only, at the absolute discretion of Parcelforce Worldwide, and is subject to Parcelforce Worldwide providing prior written agreement in advance. Where Parcelforce Worldwide provide concurrence to sending firearms, it is subject to a number of conditions which include:

- Collections and deliveries of section 1 and 2 firearms will only be accepted where it can be shown to Parcelforce Worldwide's satisfaction that both the sender and the recipient are Registered Firearms Dealers.
- Section 1 and Section 2 firearms, low-powered airguns, imitation firearms, antique firearms, and paintball guns may be permitted for zone 1 to 1 on express secure 10, AM, 48 services; deliveries to zones 2 and 3 must be on an express48 service and include 'do not air uplift' sticker on the parcel.
- Inert projectiles (not prohibited by s5 of the Firearms Act 1968 as amended) may be permitted on express48 service only.
- Customers may only despatch low-powered air weapons for the purpose of repair in accordance with UK law.
- Imitation firearms, deactivated firearms, antique firearms and paintball guns can be sent to a home address, subject to compliance with UK law.
- Parcelforce Worldwide reserves the right that if any item is sent on the incorrect service, or does not include the correct labelling, or is a prohibited/restricted item then a charge of £20 will be levied in addition to the carriage charge and the item will be returned to the sending customer.
- All firearms must be clearly labelled 'Strictly addressee only' and 'Do not leave with a neighbour'.

Flammable liquids

(including petroleum, lighter fluid, certain adhesives, solvent-based paints, wood varnish, enamels, acetone and all nail varnish removers; also see [Alcoholic beverages](#), [Perfumes and aftershaves](#) and [Nail varnish](#))

This includes mixtures of liquids or liquids containing solids in solution or suspension which give off a flammable vapour. Any liquid with a closed cup flash point below 60.5° C is prohibited e.g. acetone, benzene, cleaning compounds, gasoline, lighter fuel, paint thinners and removers, petroleum and solvents certain [alcoholic beverages](#), [perfumes and aftershaves](#), varnishes and enamels including [nail varnish](#)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Flammable solids

(including magnesium, phosphorous, potassium, sodium, zinc powder and fire lighters)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

Solid materials which are liable to cause fire by friction, absorption of water, spontaneous chemical changes or retained heat from manufacturing or processing, or which can be readily ignited and burn vigorously e.g. adhesives, calcium carbide, cellulose nitrate products, fire lighters, matches, metallic magnesium, nitro-cellulose-based film, phosphorous, potassium, sodium, sodium hydride, zinc powder, zirconium hydride.

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Frozen water

(including packs of ice)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Gases

including flammable, non-flammable, toxic and compressed gases (new, used and empty gas cylinders, ethane, butane, refills for lighters, fire extinguishers and scuba tanks, life jackets, nitrogen dioxide and carbon dioxide canisters (culinary foaming devices & soda stream) also see [Aerosols](#) and [Lighters](#))

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

Gases that are compressed, liquefied or dissolved under pressure, permanent gases which cannot be liquefied at ambient temperatures, liquefied gases which become liquid under pressure at ambient temperatures, dissolved gases which are dissolved under pressure in a solvent.

1. All flammable compressed gases are prohibited e.g. blowlamps; butane; lighters and refills containing flammable liquid or gas; ethane; gas cylinders for camping stoves; hydrogen; methane and propane.
 2. All toxic compressed gases are prohibited e.g. chlorine; fluorine etc.
 3. All non-flammable compressed gases are prohibited e.g. air bags; scuba tanks, carbon dioxide; fire extinguishers; neon and nitrogen.
 4. Empty cylinders that are sealed so that residual gas is under pressure are prohibited; only those cylinders which are open to the atmosphere for inspection are permitted.
- International – Not allowed in the mail
 - UK – Not allowed in the mail

Goods made in foreign prisons

(except those imported for a non-commercial purpose, of a kind not manufactured in the UK, or those in transit)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Guns for sporting use

Royal Mail

Including Section 1 and Section 2 firearms, low-powered air weapons and their component parts – may be sent in compliance with UK law subject to any applicable controls on the possession or export of firearms

Firearms must not be loaded. Only air weapons with an integral gas cylinder that are depressurised can be accepted. Air weapons with gas cylinders that are pressurised are prohibited. Air weapons with a pressurised removable gas cylinder which is still attached are prohibited

Items that appear to be prohibited weapons may be subject to additional checks and delays.

International & UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:

- Must be packed in rigid outer packaging suitable for the gun size and weight, for example a fibreboard box, with sufficient inner packaging to prevent movement during transport.
- Use 1st Class as the minimum service.
- The sender's name and address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
- Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns® and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Antiques, deactivated and imitation firearms are also permitted.

- When sending deactivated firearms include proof of deactivation.
- Must be packed in rigid outer packaging suitable for the gun size and weight, for example a fibreboard box, with sufficient inner packaging to prevent movement during transport.
- Use 1st Class as the minimum service.
- The sender's name and address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
- Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns® and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Human or animal ashes

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International & UK (prohibited on Parcelforce Worldwide services) – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Volume per item must not exceed 50g.
 - > Ashes must be placed in a sift-proof container and securely closed. Items must be tightly packed in strong outer packaging and must be secured or cushioned to prevent any damage.
 - > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
 - > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns® and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Human remains

(excluding ashes)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- UK – not allowed in the mail
- International – not allowed in the mail

Infectious substances and pathogens

(UN2814 or UN2900)

As classified in the latest edition of the Technical Instructions for Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air published by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) e.g. Ebola, Anthrax, Foot and Mouth disease. Technical Instructions.

For more information, please see the [IATA Guidance Document on Infectious Substances](#).

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Lighters or refills containing flammable liquid or gas

(including used butane, petrol cigar and cigarette lighters; also see Aerosols, Flammable liquids and gases)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Lighters

(new and unused empty lighters)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International & UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Must be new, empty and sent unopened in their original retail packaging.
 - > A sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
 - > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide return, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.
- Lighters considered to contain residual fuel may be disposed of.

Liquids not classified as dangerous goods

(please note, some liquids, such as alcohol or paints, have their own additional restrictions)

Liquids 1 litre and over

- Royal Mail International – not allowed in the mail
- Parcelforce Worldwide International:
 - > Maximum 5 litres per container and 10 litres per box for the europriority and irelandexpress services. This is subject to country restrictions.

UK Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- UK – allowed in the mail, see restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Items must be securely closed and placed in a leakproof liner, such as a sealed polythene bag, so that any inadvertent leakage is contained within the outer packaging
 - > Surround with absorbent material such as newspaper and sufficient cushioning material to protect each item from damage.
 - > Mark as "FRAGILE" when sending glass bottles.
 - > The sender's name and address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
 - > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.
 - > Note: If you're posting liquids 1 litre and over to and from geographic locations within the UK where we use air transport, which is generally for some next-day services where we need to cross the sea or reach distant locations, extended delivery times may apply.

Liquids under 1 litre

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- UK & Royal Mail International – Allowed in the mail, see restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Items must be securely closed and placed in a leakproof inner liner, such as a sealed polythene bag and in a leakproof outer
 - > Mark as "FRAGILE" when sending glass bottles.
 - > The sender's name and address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
 - > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Parcelforce Worldwide International

- > Maximum 1 litre per container and maximum 10 litre per box for globalpriority Europe, globalpriority ROW and globalexpress services. This is subject to airline and country restrictions.

Live animals and reptiles

(including snakes, mice and rodents)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Live creatures, insects and invertebrates

Including bees, caterpillars, cockroaches, crickets, destroyers of noxious pests, earthworms, leeches and other parasites, lugworms, maggots, mealworms, pupae and chrysalides, ragworms, silkworms, spiders and stick insects. Dead insects, sent as collectables, are allowed.

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide UK & International destinations

Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:

- Inner packaging
 - > Any internal packaging materials must be based on the requirements of the live creatures, insects and invertebrates, taking into consideration the necessary humane care they require while in transportation
- Outer packaging
 - > Must be constructed to protect, keep safe and securely contain live creatures, insects and invertebrates.

- > Must be constructed to prevent escape and to preclude the container and its contents from being crushed in normal handling
- > Any outer packaging containing live creatures, insects and invertebrates requiring moisture during transportation must be constructed of water-resistant material.
- Security and ventilation
 - > Containers must be constructed to prevent the escape of the live creatures, insects and invertebrates and must always provide adequate ventilation.
- Posting and markings
 - > 1st Class must be used as the minimum service.
 - > Items must be clearly marked 'URGENT – LIVING CREATURES – HANDLE WITH CARE'.
 - > The sender's name and address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
 - > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns® and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.
 - > For Parcelforce Worldwide Contract Customers this is subject to Parcelforce Worldwide providing prior written agreement in advance. Where Parcelforce Worldwide provides concurrence to sending these items it is subject to a number of conditions.

Creatures or insects classified as dangerous within the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976

(including certain venomous spiders).

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Lottery tickets

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, see restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Foreign lottery tickets are prohibited
 - > UK lottery tickets are allowed in the domestic post.

Magnetised material

With a magnetic field strength of 0.418A/metre or more at a distance of 4.6 metres from the outside of the package (including certain Public Address systems)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Other than those that are prohibited as specified above (including loudspeakers)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International & UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Wrap soft packing material at least 2cm thick around each item.
 - > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
 - > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Matches

(including safety matches and windproof matches)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Nail varnish, polish or gel

(solvent and water-based)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Volume per item must not exceed 30ml.
 - > No more than eight bottles of nail varnish can be sent in any one parcel.
 - > Bottles of nail varnish must be placed in strong outer packaging and be packed, secured or cushioned in such a way that they cannot break, be punctured or leak their contents into the outer packaging.
 - > An ID8000 label must be applied (see an example of an [ID8000 label](#)).
 - > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.

- > These items may only be sent using our 1st Class or 2nd Class products paid for via franking or on account (VAT exempt 1st and 2nd Class Account Mail), Special Delivery® paid for via franking or on account, Royal Mail Tracked® and Royal Mail Sameday®. These items can be sent on all UK Parcelforce Worldwide services. Please note Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, Business Response, Freepost® and all variants of Royal Mail 24 and Royal Mail 48 are excluded. Also note items cannot be returned by the Parcel Collect service.

Nicotine solution

(for use in e-cigarettes only)

Solutions containing a nicotine concentration of more than 2%.

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Solutions containing a nicotine concentration of 2% or less

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- UK & International – Allowed in the mail. Must be sent in accordance with [The Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016](#). Packaging guidelines apply.
 - > Items must be securely closed and placed in a leakproof inner liner, such as a sealed polythene bag and in a leakproof outer packaging
 - > If sending more than one item, surround with absorbent material such as newspaper and sufficient cushioning material to protect each item from damage
 - > Mark as "FRAGILE" when sending glass bottles.
 - > The sender's name and address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
 - > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Obscene publications and unlawful indecent images

Including obscene or extreme pornography as detailed in Part 5 of the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 and indecent photographs or pseudo-photographs of a child as detailed in section 160 and 161 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Oxidising materials or organic peroxides

(including disinfectants, nitrates and hair dyes or colourants containing peroxide)

These are substances such as disinfectants that may cause or contribute to combustion of other substances. They may also be liable to explosive decomposition, react dangerously with other substances and injure health e.g. bromides, chlorates, components of fibreglass repair kits, disinfectants, nitrates, perchlorates, permanganates and peroxides, including hair dyes and colourants containing peroxide.

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail
- Note: Certain hair dyes and associated products may be accepted provided they are not classed as dangerous goods. Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Paints, wood varnishes, wood treatments and enamels

Solvent-based paints, wood varnishes, wood treatments and enamels, including gloss paint.
Also see [Nail varnish, polish](#)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Water-based paints, wood varnishes, wood treatments and enamels

- International & UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Volume per item for all international destinations and the Channel Islands and Isle of Man should not exceed 150ml.
 - > Volume per item for UK destinations should not exceed 500ml. Excludes Channel Islands and Isle of Man.
 - > All items must be new and unopened with the seals intact.
 - > All tins of paint, wood varnishes and enamels must be sealed tightly, using paint tin clips or reinforced parcel tape or duct tape, applied in two directions, to securely hold the lid in place.
 - > All items (tins, tubes and bottles) must be wrapped with bubble wrap and secured with parcel tape.
 - > All items (tins, tubes and bottles) must be placed into in a leakproof liner, such as polythene bag with a cable tie to secure it closed or a Ziplock bag. This is to ensure any inadvertent leakages will stay inside the bag.
 - > All items must be placed in a double-wall cardboard box. Empty spaces must be filled with cushioning material (to keep the items from moving around) and the box must be sealed securely with parcel tape.
 - > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
 - > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns® and must be packaged in the same way. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.
 - > Note: If you're posting water-based paints, wood varnishes or enamels over 150ml to and from geographic locations within the UK where we use air transport, which is generally for some next-day services where we need to cross the sea or reach distant locations, extended delivery times may apply.

Patient specimens

(including blood or urine tests to monitor cholesterol levels, blood glucose levels, hormone levels, or prostate specific antibodies (PSA); tests required to monitor organ function such as heart, liver or kidney function for humans or animals with non-infectious diseases, or therapeutic drug monitoring; tests conducted for insurance or employment purposes and intended to determine the presence of drugs or alcohol; pregnancy tests; biopsies to detect cancer; and antibody detection in humans or animals in the absence of any concern for infection (e.g. evaluation of vaccine induced immunity, diagnosis of autoimmune disease, etc. Excludes blood spot and hair samples)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:

May only be sent at the specific request of a medical professional, a recognised laboratory or institution. Clear instructions should be provided to patients on how to take and assemble the packaging for posting. Sample returns should only be made in the sample kits provided. The total sample volume/mass in any parcel must not exceed 250g/250ml and:

- a) The specimen must be transported in a packaging which will prevent any leakage and which must be marked with the words "Exempt human specimen" or "Exempt animal specimen", as appropriate;
- b) The packaging must consist of three components:
 - i) a leakproof primary receptacle(s);
 - ii) a leakproof secondary packaging; and a
 - iii) an outer packaging of adequate strength for its capacity, mass and intended use, and with at least one surface having minimum dimensions of 100 mm × 100 mm and also be greater than 10mm in thickness. Any leakage from the sample receptacle should be contained within the outer packaging.
- c) For liquids, absorbent material in sufficient quantity to absorb the entire contents must be placed between the primary receptacle(s) and the secondary packaging so that, during transport, any release or leak of a liquid substance will not reach the outer packaging and will not compromise the integrity of the cushioning material;
- d) When multiple fragile primary receptacles are placed in a single secondary packaging, they must be either individually wrapped or separated to prevent contact between them.
- e) Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Perfumes and aftershaves

(Including eau de parfum and eau de toilette, reed diffusers, non-aerosol body sprays, non-aerosol room sprays, essential oils. Excludes non-flammable perfumed creams, gels, oils or lotions)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Volume per item must not exceed 150ml.
 - > No more than eight perfumes or aftershaves can be sent in any one parcel.
 - > The perfume or aftershave must be within its original retail packaging and then placed in strong outer packaging.
 - > The inner packaging must be packed, secured or cushioned to prevent breakage or leakage of their contents into the outer packaging.
 - > An ID8000 label must be applied (see an example of an [ID8000 label](#)).
 - > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
 - > These items may only be sent using our 1st Class or 2nd Class products paid for via franking or on account (VAT exempt 1st and 2nd Class Account Mail), Special Delivery® paid for via franking or on account, Royal Mail Tracked® and Royal Mail Sameday®. Please note Royal Mail Tracked Returns, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, Business Response, Freepost® and all variants of Royal Mail 24 and Royal Mail 48 are excluded. Also note items cannot be returned by the Parcel Collect service. For Parcelforce Worldwide, express48 is the only service that can be used when sending to Northern Ireland.

Perishable items

(including flowers, fresh fruit, vegetables and frozen or chilled foodstuffs)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Should be able to withstand a journey of up to 48 hours. Please note frozen water and dry ice are prohibited.
 - > Use 1st Class as the minimum service.
 - > Must be suitably sealed to prevent leakage or tainting of other items such as in sealed vacuum packs.
 - > Must be packed in a strong corrugated board box or purpose-designed polystyrene pack.

- > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
- > Parcelforce Worldwide Services: Shipments sent on Friday must be sent on a weekend delivery service but are not available for a Friday despatch where there is an extended delivery time. Always check our extended delivery times to ensure perishables are only sent to postcodes with transit times of no more than the next day.
- > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Certain international destinations prohibit the import of perishable articles, including perishable and non-perishable foodstuffs. Please check individual country restrictions before sending consignments containing perishable foodstuffs or articles (including plants, flowers, medicines, seeds and other vegetable products intended for further processing) using our international services. In addition to country-specific restrictions, perishable articles cannot be sent using the global **express** or global **priority** services. Any foodstuffs, whether perishable or not, cannot be exported using the euro **priority** services. For more information about service availability, or for country-specific prohibitions, exclusions or licence requirements, please refer to [parcelforce.com](https://www.parcelforce.com). For further information on exporting perishable foodstuffs and articles, please contact Defra on 08459 735 577.

Pesticides

(including weedkiller and any chemical used to kill pests and insects, such as fly sprays)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Poisons, toxic liquids, solids and gases

Including substances that are liable to cause death or injury if swallowed or inhaled or by skin contact, such as arsenic, beryllium, cyanide, fluorine, rat poison

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Prescription medicines and drugs sent for scientific or medical purposes

(excluding controlled drugs)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

Non-toxic and non-flammable

- UK and International destinations – allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > May only be sent by, or at the specific request of, a recognised professional registered clinician/practitioner who is permitted to practise within the UK in accordance with the relevant UK regulations. For example (but not limited to) a qualified medical practitioner, registered dental practitioner, veterinary surgeon, registered nurse or a recognised laboratory or institution.
 - > The medicines must be securely closed and placed in a leakproof container such as a sealed polythene bag (for liquids) or a sift-proof container (for solids).
 - > Must be tightly packed in strong outer packaging and must be secured or cushioned to prevent any damage.
 - > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
 - > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.
 - > For Parcelforce Worldwide International services, this is subject to country restrictions

Toxic, flammable or toxic and flammable

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > May only be sent by, or at the specific request of, a recognised professional registered clinician/practitioner who is permitted to practise within the UK in accordance with the relevant UK regulations. For example (but not limited to) a qualified medical practitioner, registered dental practitioner, veterinary surgeon, registered nurse or a recognised laboratory or institution.
 - > Volume/mass per item must not exceed 50ml/50g.
 - > No more than eight items can be sent in any one parcel.

- > The medicines must be securely closed and placed in a leakproof container such as a sealed polythene bag (for liquids) or a sift-proof container (for solids).
- > Must be tightly packed in strong outer packaging and must be secured or cushioned to prevent any damage.
- > An ID8000 label must be applied (see an example of an [ID8000 label](#)).
- > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
- > Please note Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, Business Response, Freepost® and all variants of Royal Mail 24 and Royal Mail 48 are excluded.

Prescription medicines and drugs sent for scientific or medical purposes

(controlled drugs)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

Controlled drugs prescriptions: Schedule 1

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in Mail

Controlled drugs prescriptions: Schedule 2-5

Non-toxic and non-flammable

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > May only be sent by, or at the specific request of, a recognised professional registered clinician/ practitioner who is permitted to practise within the UK in accordance with the relevant UK regulations. For example (but not limited to) a qualified medical practitioner, registered dental practitioner, veterinary surgeon, registered nurse or a recognised laboratory or institution.
 - > The medicines must be securely closed and placed in a leakproof container such as a sealed polythene bag (for liquids) or a sift-proof container (for solids).
 - > Must be tightly packed in strong outer packaging and must be secured or cushioned to prevent any damage.
 - > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
 - > Registered controlled drugs prescriptions may only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked 24/48 with Signature or Special Delivery Guaranteed. All UK

Parcelforce Worldwide services can be used to send these items.

- > Non-registered controlled drugs prescriptions may only be sent using a Royal Mail tracked service (excludes Royal Mail Signed For). All UK Parcelforce Worldwide services can be used to send these items.
- > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns® Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Toxic, flammable or toxic and flammable

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > May only be sent by, or at the specific request of, a recognised professional registered clinician/ practitioner who is permitted to practise within the UK in accordance with the relevant UK regulations. For example (but not limited to) a qualified medical practitioner, registered dental practitioner, veterinary surgeon, registered nurse or a recognised laboratory or institution.
 - > Volume/mass per item must not exceed 50ml/50g.
 - > No more than eight items can be sent in any one parcel.
 - > The medicines must be securely closed and placed in a leakproof container such as a sealed polythene bag (for liquids) or a sift-proof container (for solids).
 - > Must be tightly packed in strong outer packaging and must be secured or cushioned to prevent any damage.
 - > An ID8000 label must be applied (see an example of an [ID8000 label](#)).
 - > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
 - > Registered controlled drugs prescriptions may only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked 24/48 with Signature or Special Delivery Guaranteed. All UK Parcelforce Worldwide services can be used to send these items.
 - > Non-registered controlled drugs prescriptions may only be sent using a Royal Mail tracked service (excludes Royal Mail Signed For). All UK Parcelforce Worldwide services can be used to send these items.
 - > Please note Royal Mail Tracked Returns®, Parcelforce Worldwide returns, Business Response, Freepost® and all variants of Royal Mail 24 and Royal Mail 48 are excluded.

Radioactive materials and samples

Not classified as dangerous goods in the latest edition of the Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air published by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) such as samples of granite rock

- International & UK destinations- Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > Surround with cushioning material e.g. bubble wrap.
 - > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
 - > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns® Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Classified as dangerous goods in the latest edition of the Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air published by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) e.g. fissile material (uranium 235, etc), radioactive waste material, thorium or uranium ores and luminous dials from aircraft.

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- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Sharp or pointed items

(formerly sharp objects)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

(excludes: (i) knives prohibited under UK law – see Weapons – and (ii) bladed items. Including, but not limited to, scissors, mini chopper blades, food processor blades, sewing kits, knitting needles, syringes, chisels, piercing awls, saws, nails, pins, fishing hooks).

- UK & International – Allowed in the mail, with packaging guidelines below:
 - > Package appropriately so items present no risk to employees, other postal items or recipients.
 - > Wrap heavy cardboard around sharp edges and points, strong enough to ensure that the contents do not pierce the outer packaging.
 - > Wrap each item with cushioning material and place in a suitable outer container such as a padded envelope.
 - > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.

- > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns® Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Tickets and related advertisements for illegal lotteries

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Vaccines

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International & UK – Allowed in the mail, with restrictions and packaging guidelines below:
 - > May only be sent by, or at the specific request of, a qualified medical practitioner, registered dental practitioner, veterinary surgeon, registered nurse or a recognised laboratory or institution.
 - > The vaccines must be securely closed and placed in a leakproof liner such as a sealed polythene bag (for liquids) or a sift-proof container (for solids).
 - > Must be tightly packed in strong outer packaging and must be secured or cushioned to prevent any damage.
 - > The sender's name and return address must be clearly visible on the outer packaging.
 - > Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns® Parcelforce Worldwide returns, and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.
 - > For Parcelforce Worldwide International services this is subject to country restrictions.

Waste, dirt, filth or refuse

(including household waste)

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

Soil samples sent for analysis are permitted provided they are packaged so that any leaks and spills are contained in the outer packaging. Returns can only be sent using Royal Mail Tracked Returns® Parcelforce Worldwide returns and Royal Mail Special Delivery Guaranteed Returns®. All variants of Business Response and Freepost are excluded.

Weapons

Includes items made for the sole purpose of causing injury to a person, items adapted for use to cause injury to a person, and any item intended by the person sending or receiving it to cause injury to a person Also including, but not limited to, Section 5 firearms, CS gas, pepper sprays, tasers and stun guns, flick knives, gravity knives, disguised knives, butterfly knives, crossbows, and other items that are banned under laws applicable in the UK or the destination country.

Items that appear to be prohibited weapons may be subject to additional checks and delays.

Royal Mail and Parcelforce Worldwide

- International – Not allowed in the mail
- UK – Not allowed in the mail

We reserve the right to refuse any other item banned by law or that in our opinion may be harmful or dangerous to our customers or employees.

If you send dangerous goods and do not comply with the applicable terms and conditions and legal requirements, then we may deal with the goods as we see fit, including destroying or disposing of the relevant goods.

For more information visit **parcelforce.com** or call **03448 00 44 66***



*Calls may be monitored and recorded for training purposes. Local and mobile call rates apply. Call costs may vary depending on your service provider.

Although correct at the date this guide was updated, May 2025, Parcelforce Worldwide prices, compensation, destinations and other conditions are subject to revision from time to time and services may be added or deleted. All prices detailed in this document exclude VAT, which will be added at the appropriate rate and be payable by the customer.



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