

Shipping Made Easy.

How to Ship on eBay:
A Step-by-Step Guide for New Sellers



5 steps for successful shipping

Shipping your item is a key piece of the selling process. This guide is packed with tips and best practices to help you get off on the right foot so you can delight your buyers every time. With these 5 quick steps, you'll find out how much to charge, as well as how to pack and ship. Let's get started!

STEP 1: Get boxes and other supplies

STEP 2: Determine your shipping charges

STEP 3: Select shipping options during the listing process

STEP 4: Pay for postage and print shipping labels

STEP 5: Wrap things up with your buyer

STEP 1

Get boxes and other supplies

The first step in the process is to gather the right supplies for shipping your item. You build trust with buyers by making sure your item arrives in good condition and as described in your listing.

- **Sturdy boxes or envelopes**—It's OK to reuse boxes, as long as they're in good shape. USPS, UPS and FedEx offer shipping supplies online and at retail locations. Not sure what size box you need? Measure the item and select a box or envelope with enough extra room for packing materials.
- **Packing materials**—Make sure your item arrives in good condition by using Bubble Wrap™ or packing peanuts to pad your item. You'll want a snug fit so the item can't move around and get damaged during delivery. Don't forget to get packing tape!
- **Shipping scale**—Weigh your packaged item on a shipping scale with all packing materials included. You can find great deals on shipping scales right on eBay.

TIP: Get *FREE* co-branded eBay and USPS boxes delivered to your door free of charge (go to [ebaysupplies.usps.com/usps](https://www.ebaysupplies.usps.com/usps)), or get free packaging from any *FedEx* location. USPS also offers free pickup for Priority Mail or Express Mail items when you're ready to ship.

Check out the [Quickstart Guide](#) to see how to sell in four easy steps.



STEP 2

Determine your shipping charges

Time for the big question: How much should you charge for shipping? Buyers want fair, low prices but you also don't want to lose money on the sale. Here's how to decide:

Pack and weigh your item (but don't seal the box just yet!)

Pack your item to make sure you're using the right box and packing materials. Everything look ready to go? Measure and weigh your item—box, packaging, and all. But be sure to keep the box open should buyers have questions about the item. Not to mention, you might want to consider adding a simple packing slip or thank-you note before shipping.

Research the competition

Do a quick search on eBay for similar items. What are other sellers charging for shipping? Find a range and use it as your barometer. Or if you're listing an item with the new [Quick Listing tool](#), you can use the built-in tips to get shipping guidance.

Consider your listing format—Auction-style or Fixed Price

If you're considering listing Auction-style, you'll want to show buyers the actual cost to ship, package, and insure (if necessary) your item. For a Fixed Price listing you'll still want to cover your shipping costs, and you might want to consider wrapping those costs into the item price to keep your shipping costs low. eBay research shows that buyers look for (and know how to find) items with free shipping—offering it can give your listing a competitive edge!

STEP 3

Select shipping options during the listing process

While you're setting up your listing, you'll need to make decisions on how you want to ship your item.

Choose your carrier and specify Calculated or Flat rate shipping

Choose your shipping preference when you list your item. On eBay, you'll have two options:

Flat: Specify the same cost to all buyers, or offer free shipping.

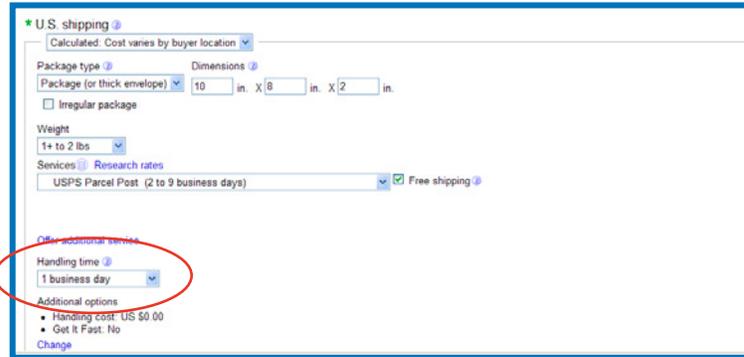
The screenshot shows the 'Give buyers shipping details' section of an eBay listing. It features a dropdown menu for 'U.S. shipping' set to 'Flat: same cost to all buyers'. Below this, there are two service options: 'USPS Priority Mail Medium Flat Rate Box (2 to 3 business days)' with a cost of \$4.95, and 'FedEx Ground or FedEx Home Delivery (1 to 5 business days)' with a cost of \$2.00. A 'Free shipping' checkbox is also present. The interface includes links for 'Services', 'Research rates', and 'Remove service'. There is also a checkbox for 'Add a surcharge for Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico' and a section for 'Handling time' set to '1 business day'. At the bottom, there are sections for 'Exclude shipping locations' (with a 'Create exclusion list' link) and 'Item location' (set to 'Thousand Oaks, California, 91362, United States' with a 'Change location' link).

USPS offers Priority Mail Flat Rate Boxes and envelopes. If you are shipping a heavy item that fits, these may be good solutions for you.

STEP 3

Calculated: Actual shipping costs are determined by the ship-to location and the size and weight of the item for the chosen shipping service. Calculated shipping uses the shipping carrier's published rates, your package dimensions and weight, and the buyer's postal code to determine the actual cost.

Use the free eBay Shipping Calculator to get estimated shipping costs.



The screenshot shows the eBay Shipping Calculator interface. The 'Handling time' dropdown menu is circled in red, indicating it is the focus of the tip. The selected option is '1 business day'. Other visible options include 'USPS Parcel Post (2 to 9 business days)' and 'Free shipping'.

Regardless of whether you go with Flat or Calculated shipping, don't forget to select the handling time for your item—the number of days it will take you to ship the item after receiving payment.

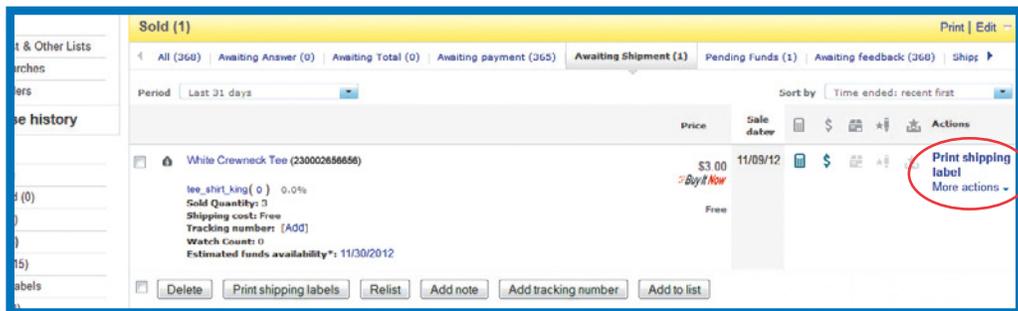
TIP:

Some buyers prefer to pay a little more to get their items quickly, so it's always a good idea to consider offering 2 options—one economical and one fast shipping service.

STEP 4

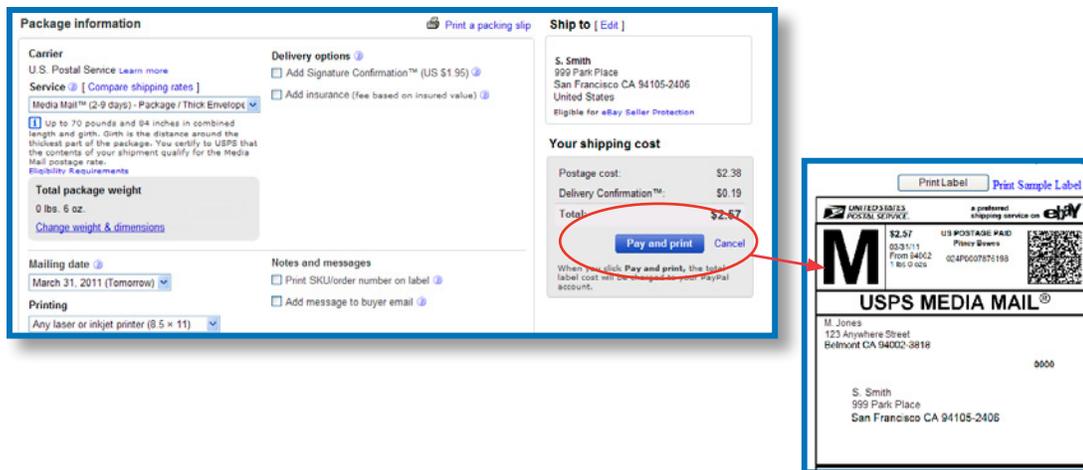
Pay for postage and print shipping labels

Your item sold—congratulations! Once your buyer has paid for the item, go to the **Sold** section of My eBay to pay for postage and print a shipping label from your own printer in a matter of seconds. When you ship using eBay labels, you'll save money and a lot of time. eBay passes their discounts on to you, with savings of up to 37% on FedEx shipping and great savings on USPS too.



Pay for and print labels

Shipping label information is already prefilled, including item price, shipping costs, and the buyer's mailing address.



Get free or low-cost USPS Delivery Confirmation from the United States Postal Service when you print labels on eBay

Give yourself and your buyers the ability to confirm shipment and delivery for free directly from My eBay with USPS. You'll be able to view the date, ZIP Code, and time that your package was delivered, as well as information about any other delivery attempts. This is helpful to the buyer and makes you look good as a seller.

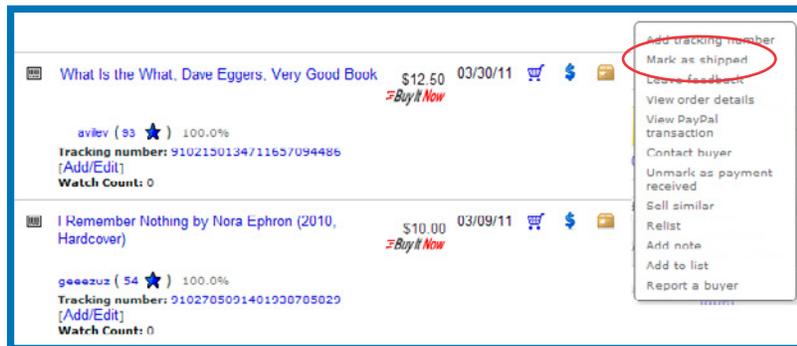
STEP 4

Automatic tracking notification

Buyers always want to know when their item has shipped, and this way they won't have to ask. When you print your label on eBay, items are "Marked as Shipped" in My eBay and tracking information is uploaded there automatically as well. Your buyers also receive an email notifying them that the package is on its way.

Label and ship the package yourself

If you choose not to print shipping labels on eBay, it's a good idea to let the buyer know the item has shipped once you've sent the package. When you have a tracking number, go ahead and enter it in My eBay. If you don't have a tracking number, go to My eBay and select **Mark as shipped** from the drop-down menu to notify the buyer that the item is on its way.



TIP:

Give yourself and your buyer peace of mind by purchasing shipping insurance for fragile or expensive items. Low-cost ShipCover insurance is available for just \$1.23 per \$100 coverage when you pay for USPS shipping and print labels on eBay.



Save time by printing labels on eBay

"I always ship as soon as my item sells. I also print shipping labels on eBay from home. It's really convenient."

Gerry Walker (user ID: [772geraldine](#))

STEP 5

Wrap things up with your buyer

Before you seal the box, make sure to include a simple packing slip with a thank-you note for your buyer (see p.4). At that point, go ahead and seal the box with packing tape and affix the shipping label. Below are a few ways to ensure great feedback from your buyer as you wrap things up.

Ship within your specified handling time

You set certain expectations when you listed your item. Meet them by shipping promptly after payment is made. (One-day handling is ideal.) You can either mail from your favorite local shipping center or by scheduling a free pickup with your carrier.

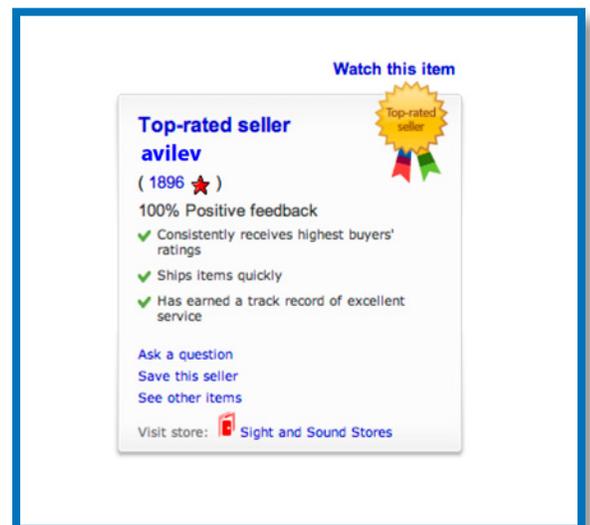
Upload tracking information

If you printed your label on eBay, tracking information was automatically uploaded for you. Otherwise, go to your **Sold** items in My eBay to manually upload tracking information. Uploading tracking information as soon as you have it is a great way to please your buyers. It also protects you should the buyer question the whereabouts of their item.

Leave positive feedback

Once buyers pay for their items, they've held up their end of the bargain. **Always** leave positive feedback once you ship to show your appreciation, and give your buyers one more reason to do the same in return.

Keep in mind that when your buyers leave feedback for you (how sellers build their reputation on eBay), two of the four criteria they rate you on are based on the shipping portion of the transaction.



TIP: *Offering free shipping, shipping the day payment clears, and uploading tracking information are all great ways to receive positive feedback ratings.*

Visit the eBay Shipping Center to learn more at
<http://pages.ebay.com/sellerinformation/shipping/shippingcenter.html>

