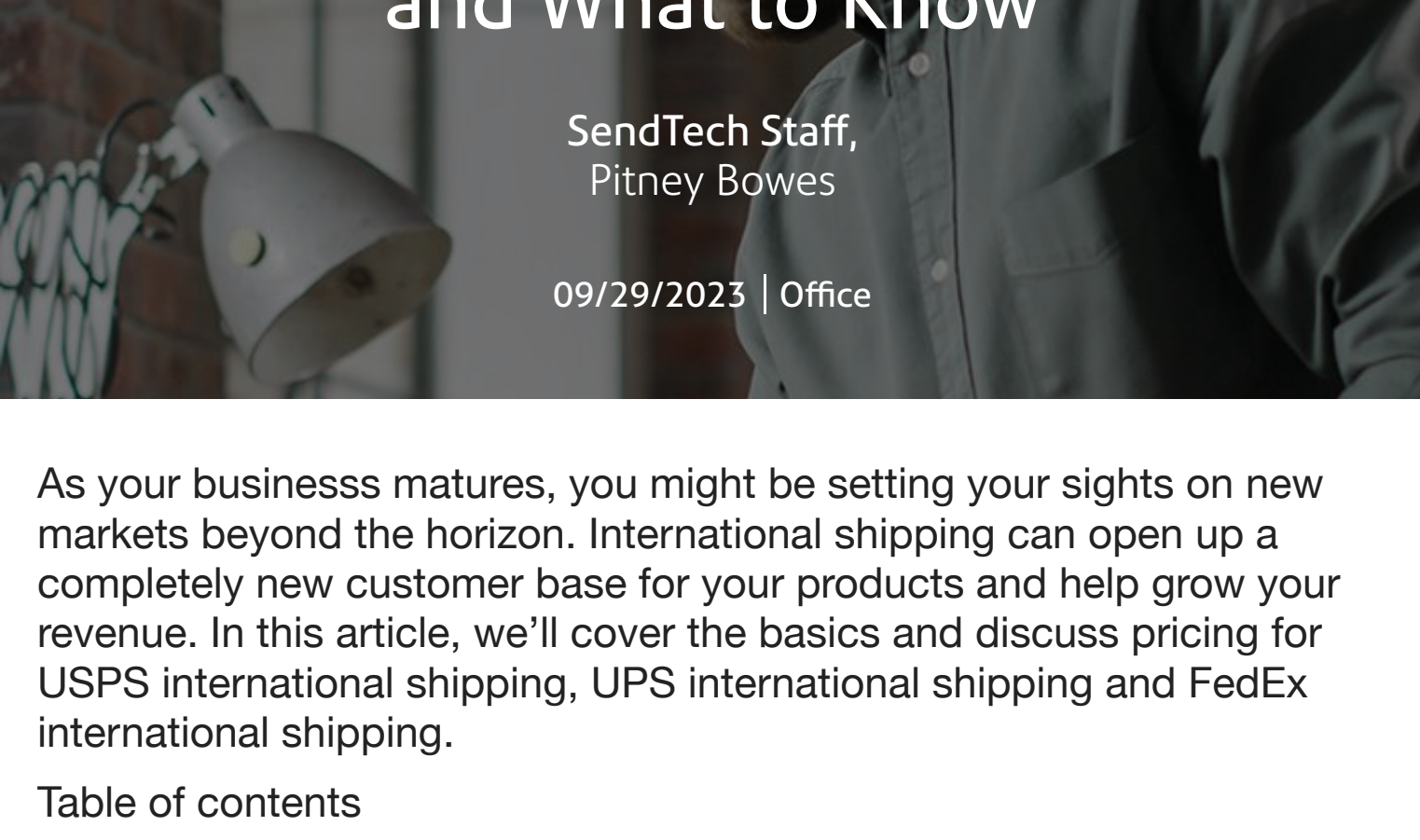


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International Shipping Guide: How-To and What to Know

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As your business matures, you might be setting your sights on new markets beyond the horizon. International shipping can open up a completely new customer base for your products and help grow your revenue. In this article, we'll cover the basics and discuss pricing for USPS international shipping, UPS international shipping and FedEx international shipping.

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What is international shipping?

In the simplest terms, international shipping is importing or exporting goods between countries by air, over the ocean or by road. Naturally, international shipping is more complex than domestic shipping. Laws, policies, tariffs, regulations and shipping rates vary country by country. For example, Russia has strict regulations on receipt of commercial goods while Canada has a program that streamlines the importing process for commercial goods valued at \$2,500 CAD or less.

As you might expect, your shipment is subject to the regulations of the countries of origin and destination. However, in some cases, such as dangerous goods, you must also comply with the regulations for each country of transit.

How much does international shipping cost?

Of course, international shipping generally costs more than domestic shipping. How much more depends on the distance, destination, size and weight, speed and carrier. Insurance, tracking and other optional services can quickly add up. Much of the increased cost can be attributed to fees, duties and taxes.

- Duties** are assessed by the destination country and are often called tariffs or customs charges. The country of origin, what the package contains, its intended use and the value of the items can all be part of the calculation.
- Taxes** such as Value Added Tax (VAT) or General Sales Tax (GST) are often applied in addition to duties.
- Fees** for the customs process may be assessed by governments and carriers.

How long does international shipping take?

For international parcels, don't forget to allow time for customs processing and potential delivery issues such as weather delays. You can generally expect delivery times from 1 to 10 business days. When choosing your delivery speed, you'll want to consider customer expectations and whether your items are perishable or seasonal.

How to prepare items for international shipping

Before you jump in, you'll want to know how to prepare a package for international shipping. Here are a few important to-dos:

- Documents:** Check the customs guidelines for the origin and destination countries to find out if your package requires a proforma invoice, commercial invoice, packing list, certificate of origin (CO), bill of lading (BoL) or hazardous material/dangerous goods forms.
- Item condition:** Examine the condition of each item before you pack it and make a record of the item's condition. An efficient way to do this is by taking photos.
- Photos:** Take photos of your items from several angles before sealing up your parcel.
- Packing:** Use packing materials and appropriately sized boxes or envelopes to protect the goods you're shipping.

How to ship items internationally

Over time, you'll create your own best practices for how to ship internationally, but there are some common steps to the process:

First, you'll need to collect all the information for your shipping provider. Make any necessary adjustments to your order form to ensure you're capturing all the necessary customer information.

Prepare for customs. Check to see if any of your products are listed as dangerous goods. Try to anticipate and mitigate any issues with full documentation.

Once your items have arrived, take note of what went well and what parts of your international shipping process can be improved.

What are USPS rates for international shipping?

USPS offers many international shipping options that vary by delivery speed, maximum package weight, costs and services like tracking and insurance. The table below compares the commonly used USPS international shipping services. If you're shipping printed materials, USPS also offers cost-effective First-Class Mail International® and Airmail M-Bags®

USPS international shipping rates					
	Starting Price	Speed	Maximum Weight	Tracking	Insurance
Global Express Guaranteed® (GXG®)	\$71.10	1-3 business days	70 lbs.	Included	Up to \$100 insurance included. Purchase additional up to \$2,499.
Priority Mail Express International®	\$54.75	3-5 business days	Flat Rate Envelope: 4 lbs. By weight: 70 lbs.	USPS Tracking	Up to \$100 for nonnegotiable documents. Up to \$200 for merchandise. Purchase additional up to \$5,000.
Priority Mail International®	\$30.35	6-10 business days	Flat Rate Envelope: 4 lbs. Flat Rate Box: 20 lbs. Priced by weight: 70 lbs.	USPS Tracking	Up to \$100 for nonnegotiable documents. Up to \$200 for merchandise. Purchase additional up to \$5,000.
First-Class Package International Service®	\$15.75	Varies by destination	Up to 4 lbs.	E-USPS DELCON INTL® service to select destinations only	Not available

How can I get the best prices on UPS international shipping?

UPS offers a range of services for international shipping, so choosing can be complicated. Pitney Bowes can help you compare your options, get the best UPS international shipping rates and save over retail rates. For example, the retail rate to ship a 2 lbs. package from New York to Rome in two days is \$171.92. With Pitney Bowes, you can ship the same package for \$39.21.

How can I get the best prices on FedEx international shipping?

FedEx also has several service options for international shipping. If you're a FedEx account holder, you can bring those FedEx international shipping rates into our PitneyShip® software to rate shop and select the right international delivery service for your package.

See how Pitney Bowes can make international shipping success easier.

Let us help you grow your total addressable market and discover new business opportunities. Put Pitney Bowes international [shipping services](#) to work for your business.

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