



*Envelope design by Paula Baker. (Stamp credits—unknown.)*

Managing the highways and byways of the United States Postal Service can be complicated. The *RSM* team has gathered information about mailing requirements for packaging artwork, as well as ways to save money. This information was updated May 1, 2024. A postage increase is anticipated in July 2024. At that time, this information will be updated again. Clearly, this is a “To Be Continued” saga.

### **BASIC INFORMATION**

- One Forever Stamp (currently priced at 68¢) is all that’s needed on an envelope weighing 1 ounce or less.
- For envelopes weighing more than 1 ounce, add 24¢ worth of postage for each additional ounce for a total of 3.5 total ounces. There’s a Forever Stamp you can purchase that covers this extra 24¢.
- Postage for large envelopes (see Size Requirements below) start at \$1.39 for 1 ounce, plus 24¢ for each additional ounce up to 13 ounces.
- Envelopes must maintain a uniform thickness of no more than 1/4”.

### **SIZE REQUIREMENTS**

You can save on postage by using an approved-size, rectangular envelope.

- Smallest 3.5x5-inches.
- Largest 6x11.5-inches.
- Square envelopes are NOT approved. Extra postage will be required.

### **PACKAGE REQUIREMENTS**

Sometimes an envelope will count as a package, rather than as a letter. This is the case if . . .

- The envelope does not meet standard dimensions or thickness (see above).
- The envelope is not uniform in size, i.e. lumpy.
- The envelope is rigid—i.e. does not bend.
- You want to add insurance.

### **WHEN EXTRA POSTAGE IS NEEDED**

Non-Machinable envelopes require extra postage because

they must be hand-cancelled by a postal employee. Additional postage for non-machinable envelopes starts at 44¢. You can purchase a Forever Stamp for this.

**An envelope is non-machinable if:**

- 3D embellishments make the envelope lumpy—even with cardboard.
- You added the request “Do Not Bend” on the envelope.

- Your envelope has extra clasps, brads, buttons, string.
- The envelope is square or over-sized.

### **MAILING SUGGESTIONS**

Follow these guidelines to make sure your mail travels smoothly to its destination:

- Protect artwork with no more than a single layer of bubble wrap or lightweight (non-rigid) cardboard on each side. Cereal boxes are ideal for this purpose.
- If you have several pieces to mail at once, consider sending in a large envelope. Art and cardboard should lie flat and measure no more than 1/4” thick. If the envelope winds up measuring more than 1/4” thick, send cards individually or treat the envelope as a package.

### **SHIPPING OPTIONS**

- The recommended designation for a package is USPS Ground Advantage Select.
- If you want your envelope or package to arrive in two-to-three days, consider Priority Mail.
- Should you need your envelope or package to arrive in one day, consider Express Mail.

### **NOTES**

- *RSM* appreciates receiving SASEs (stamped-self-addressed-envelopes) with stamp art. A different SASE for each theme is requested.
- Should you live outside the USA, an SASE isn’t possible. Either send a check for US funds or send submissions via email to [graphics@rsmadness.com](mailto:graphics@rsmadness.com).
- If you don’t want artwork returned, please mention that and we will pass along what you send to a non-profit organization or to someone we know will appreciate it.
- You can find a A Customer’s Guide to Mailing at [usps.com](https://usps.com). This includes the information shared here—and more!