

SHIPPING TIPS

The U.S. Postal Service offers a free Priority Mail Flat Rate Box for sending packages to military personnel serving overseas. The box measures 12x12x5½ inches, and postage is only \$12.95, (\$2 discount) when used to send to APO/FPO addresses. USPS also offers free package pickup from your home or office. To schedule pickup or for other pickup options, visit usps.com.

PACKAGING

There are things to keep in mind when sending packages overseas:

- ◆ **Temperatures in the desert** often exceed 100 degrees.
- ◆ **The box** should be strong.
- ◆ **Cushion contents** with plastic foam or bubble wrap to keep items from shifting. Fragile items should be double-boxed, with cushioning inside and between the boxes to absorb shock.
- ◆ **Battery-powered items** can get switched on during shipping.
- ◆ **Remove batteries** and wrap them separately.
- ◆ **To seal** the box, tape the

opening and reinforce all seams with 2-inch-wide tape, using clear or brown packaging tape, reinforced packing tape or paper tape. Do not use cord, string or twine.

ADDRESSING

- ◆ **Print on** one side only with the recipient's address in the lower right portion.
- ◆ **Use the** soldier's full name.
- ◆ **The Department** of Defense canceled the "Any Service Member" program, so mail must be addressed to someone specific.
- ◆ **Be sure** to include a return address.
- ◆ **Cover the** address with clear tape to protect against moisture.

SEND BY

- ◆ **To ensure** delivery of your cards, letters and packages by Dec. 25 to military APO/FPO/addresses overseas, the USPS recommends the following deadlines for mailing:

◆ **APO/FPO AE Zip Codes 090- 092 and 094-098; AA 340; and AP 962-966:** Express Mail by Dec. 17. First-Class Mail (cards and letters) and Priority Mail by Dec. 10. Parcel Airlift Mail (PAL) by Dec. 3. Space Available Mail (SAM) by Nov. 26. Parcel Post by Nov. 13.

◆ **APO/FPO AE Zip Code 093:** Express Mail not available. First-Class Mail (cards and letters) and Priority Mail by Dec. 3. Parcel Airlift Mail (PAL) by Nov. 30. Space Available Mail (SAM) by Nov. 26. The deadline for all parcel post packages is Nov. 13.

REMEMBER

◆ **Every country** has customs regulations regarding incoming mail. Before sending a letter or package to one of our troops overseas, visit www.usps.com/supportingourtroops/mailingrestrictions.htm, contact your local post office or phone the Military Postal Service Agency at 800-810-6098.