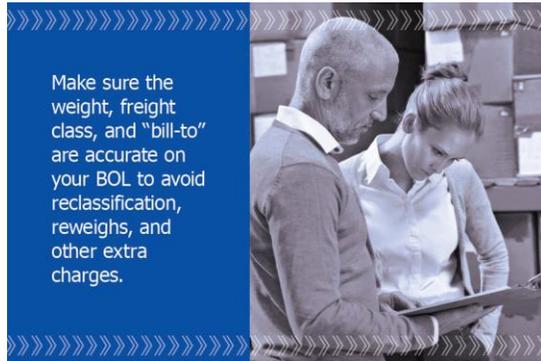


## The 5 Most Common Freight Shipping Mistakes

Freight shipping is complicated. Common (and costly) mistakes happen every day, and even the most experienced shippers can fall victim to them. That's why it's imperative to be aware of these potential mistakes and know how to avoid them.

### Mistake #1: Bill of Lading (BOL) Inaccuracies



Make sure the weight, freight class, and "bill-to" are accurate on your BOL to avoid reclassification, reweighs, and other extra charges.

The BOL is the most important document associated with your freight shipment, and you need to make sure it's 100% accurate. Carriers pay very close attention to this document and may exercise their right to inspect your freight. Guessing or using approximations for your weight or freight class can be an expensive mistake, as you may incur additional reweigh and reclassification charges. Also, be sure to list the correct billing information. If you are using a third party logistics (3PL) partner that has negotiated discounts on your behalf, you will miss out on that pricing if you do not list them as

the "bill-to."

### Mistake #2: Living and Dying by Transit Times

It's important to remember that freight carrier transit times are estimations and can vary due to weather, traffic, and mechanical issues. Schedule your shipments as soon as possible to ensure prompt delivery.

For time-sensitive deliveries such as tradeshow shipments, waiting until the last minute leaves very little margin of error. Plan ahead and keep realistic expectations in mind when scheduling a shipment. Carriers do have guaranteed shipment options that may cost a bit more, but paying a little extra is better than the cost of a late shipment.

### Mistake #3: Incorrectly Packaging your Freight

Incorrect packaging is one of the main causes of shipment damage. Know what you're shipping and pack accordingly – obviously different items will need different levels of packaging (e.g. glassware vs. ball bearings), but here are a few tried and true basic rules. Secure your shipment on a pallet, carton, or in a crate. If you're using a pallet, don't overhang it with packaged products. Instead, column-stack or interlock-stack for increased stability and compression strength. You'll also want to use sufficient cushioning to protect against shock and vibrations that occur during transport. Then secure it tightly using stretchwrap and bands.



Don't overhang your pallet with packaged products. Instead, column stack or interlock stack for better stability.

#### **Mistake #4: Not Following Proper Procedures for Receiving Inbound Freight**

Thoroughly inspect freight you receive before you sign the delivery receipt, to protect yourself in the event you need to file a claim.



Freight that you receive at your location needs to be properly inspected before the driver leaves, in case of any damages or shortages. Take a close look at the outward appearance of each piece before signing the delivery receipt. If you spot any issues, document them in detail on the delivery receipt and take pictures. You should also inspect the contents of your shipment as soon as possible to find any concealed damages. In both cases, it's important that you contact your carrier or 3PL freight partner promptly to file your claim and get a fair resolution.

#### **Mistake #5: Overpaying for Freight**

This last "mistake" may seem a little obvious, but it happens frequently. You may be able to negotiate discounts directly with your carriers but in many cases, working with a 3PL partner can save you the most. A quality 3PL can identify ways to save you money on your freight, audit your freight bills, provide shipping management tools, and deliver personalized service. Start by requesting an analysis from a 3PL to see exactly how much you could save.

Accuracy and attention to detail is a requirement for a healthy freight operation. Avoid these costly mistakes and you'll be able to save your company's bottom line and save yourself from a big headache.

#### **About PartnerShip**

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