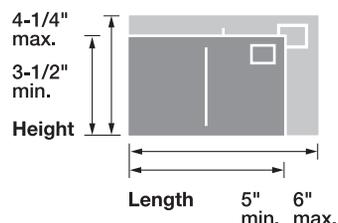


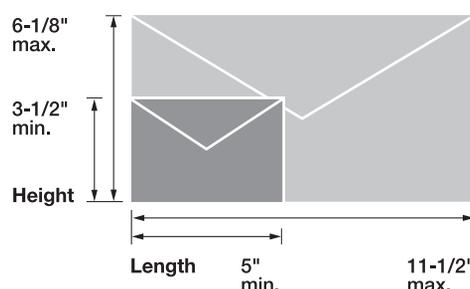
Overview

Card Dimensions



	Minimum	Maximum
Length	5 inches	6 inches
Height	3-1/2 inches	4-1/4 inches
Thickness	0.007 inch	0.016 inch

Letter Dimensions



	Minimum	Maximum
Length	5 inches	11-1/2 inches
Height	3-1/2 inches	6-1/8 inches
Thickness	0.007 inch	1/4 inch

Mailpieces are classified by shape and by the way they are prepared. These classifications are based on how efficiently mailpieces can be processed on Postal Service equipment. The Postal Service classifies letters and cards into one of three categories: machinable, nonmachinable, and automation. For the purposes of determining mailability or machinability, the length is the dimension parallel to the address as read (601.1.4).

Machinable Letters and Cards (201.1.0)

If you prepare your letters and cards so that they have an accurate address and can be processed on Postal Service equipment, your mail is "machinable" and eligible for "presort" prices. Machinable mailpieces must meet specific standards, including size, shape, and weight.

Maximum weight: First-Class Mail, machinable letters and Standard Mail machinable letters: 3.3 ounces, Periodicals letters: 3.5 ounces.

Machinable letters must not meet any of the nonmachinable characteristics (201.2.0).

Dimensions:

- Minimum: 5 inches long, 3-1/2 inches high, and 0.007 inch thick.
- Maximum for First-Class Mail card prices: 6 inches long, 4-1/4 inches high, and 0.016 inch thick.
- Maximum for letters and other cards: 11-1/2 inches long, 6-1/8 inches high, and 1/4 inch thick.
- Rectangular, with four square corners and parallel opposite sides. Letter-size, card-type mailpieces made of cardstock may have finished corners that do not exceed a radius of 1/8 inch.

Nonmachinable Letters (201.2.0)

Maximum weight: First-Class Mail and Periodicals nonmachinable letters 3.5 ounces; Standard Mail nonmachinable letters; 3.3 ounces.

- Presorted First-Class Mail letters are subject to a nonmachinable surcharge if they meet any of the characteristics in 201.2.1. The nonmachinable characteristics do not apply to pieces mailed at card prices.
- Standard Mail letters that weigh 3.3 ounces or less and have one or more of the nonmachinable characteristics in 201.2.1 are subject to the nonmachinable letter prices in 243.1.2.
- Standard Mail letters that weigh more than 3.3 ounces and are prepared as nonmachinable letters are mailable at nonautomation flats prices.

Examples of a nonmachinable letter include:

- It has an aspect ratio (length divided by height) of less than 1.3 or more than 2.5 (a square envelope has an aspect ratio of 1, making it nonmachinable).
- It is more than 4-1/4 inches high or more than 6 inches long and is less than 0.009 inch thick.
- It has clasps, strings, buttons, or similar closure devices.
- It is too rigid.
- It has a delivery address parallel to the shorter side of the mailpiece.
- It contains items such as pens, pencils, or keys that create an uneven thickness.
- Letters with nonpaper surfaces, other than envelope windows or attachments that are allowed under eligibility standards by class of mail.

**Automation
Letters and
Cards
(201.3.0)**

If your letter-size mailpiece is machinable and displays the correct delivery point barcode or Intelligent Mail barcode, you may qualify for lower, “automation” prices. A letter or card meets automation standards and qualifies for automation prices if it meets the specific addressing, barcoding, and design standards.

For additional information, see:

- [Quick Service Guide 201a](#), Designing Letters and Cards for Automated Processing.
- [Quick Service Guide 201b](#), Using Tabs, Wafer Seals, and Glue Strips.

Maximum weight:

- First-Class Mail automation letters: 3.5 ounces.
- Periodicals automation letters: 3.5 ounces.
- Standard Mail automation letters and carrier route letters: 3.5 ounces.
- See [201.3.6](#) for heavy letter mail weighing over 3 ounces.

Shape: rectangular. Aspect ratio (length divided by height): 1.3 to 2.5 ([201.3.4](#)).

Dimensions:

- Minimum: 3-1/2 inches high, 5 inches long, and either 0.007 inch thick if not more than 4-1/4 inches high and 6 inches long; or 0.009 inch thick if more than 4-1/4 inches high or 6 inches long, or both.
 - Maximum for First-Class Mail card prices: 4-1/4 inches high, 6 inches long, and 0.016 inch thick.
 - Maximum for letters and other cards: 6-1/8 inches high, 11-1/2 inches long, and 1/4 inch thick.
- Length is the dimension parallel to the address as read ([601.1.3](#)).

All letter-size reply cards and envelopes (Business Reply Mail, Courtesy Reply Mail, and meter reply mail) provided as enclosures must meet the physical standards for automation letters and cards in [201.3.17](#).

**Quick Service
Guides****First-Class Mail**

See Quick Service Guides:

- [230b Nonmachinable Letters](#)
- [230c Machinable Letters and Cards](#)
- [230d Automation Letters and Cards](#)

Standard Mail

See Quick Service Guides:

- [240a Nonmachinable Letters](#)
- [240b Machinable Letters](#)
- [240c Automation Letters](#)
- [240d Carrier Route Letters](#)

Periodicals

See Quick Service Guides:

- [707d Nonbarcoded Letters](#)
- [707f Barcoded \(Automation\) Letters](#)

Related QSGs [230d, First-Class Mail Automation Letters and Postcards](#)
[240c, Standard Mail Automation Letters](#)
[707f, Periodicals Barcoded \(Automation\) Letters](#)

Overview Letter-size mail and card-size pieces meeting the applicable automation standards are entitled to automation prices. This Quick Service Guide summarizes the standards for mail with 100% delivery point barcodes and mail without barcodes processed on USPS optical character readers (OCRs).

Physical Standards Must meet all physical standards in [201.3.0](#).

(201.3.0,
708.4.0) Aspect ratio from 1.3 to 2.5 ([201.3.7](#)).

Dimensions:

- Minimum: 3-1/2 inches high, 5 inches long, and either 0.007 inch thick if not more than 4-1/4 inches high and 6 inches long; or 0.009 inch thick if more than 4-1/4 inches high or 6 inches long, or both.
- Maximum for cards at card rates: 4-1/4 inches high, 6 inches long, and 0.016 inch thick.
- Maximum for letters and other cards: 6-1/8 inches high, 11-1/2 inches long, 1/4 inch thick.
- Rectangular, with four square corners and parallel opposite sides. Letter-size, card-type mailpieces made of cardstock may have finished corners that do not exceed a radius of 0.125 inch (1/8 inch).

Maximum Weight:

- First-Class Mail Presorted Machinable—3.3 ounces (0.2063 pound).
- First-Class Mail Automation—3.5 ounces (0.2188 pound).¹
- Periodicals Barcoded (Automation)—3.5 ounces (0.2188 pound).¹
- Standard Mail Automation—3.5 ounces (0.2188 pound).¹
- Enhanced Carrier Route—3.5 ounces (0.2188 pound).¹

1. Heavy letters over 3 ounces, if barcoded, must bear an address block delivery point barcode under [201.3.6](#), and be part of a 100% delivery point or Intelligent Mail barcoded mailing. Heavy letters must be prepared in a sealed envelope, and may not contain stiff enclosures or be prepared as a self-mailer or booklet-type mailpiece.

Prohibitions:

- Polywrap, polybag, and shrinkwrap.
- Clasps, strings, staples, buttons, or protrusions that might impede or damage the mail or mail processing equipment ([201.3.5](#)).

Other machinability standards:

- Rigid and odd-shaped items prohibited or restricted ([201.3.10](#)).
- Tapping for self-mailers or booklets (see [201.3.14](#) or [Quick Service Guide 201b](#)).

Pieces with delivery point barcodes or Intelligent Mail barcodes must meet all standards in [708.4.0](#):

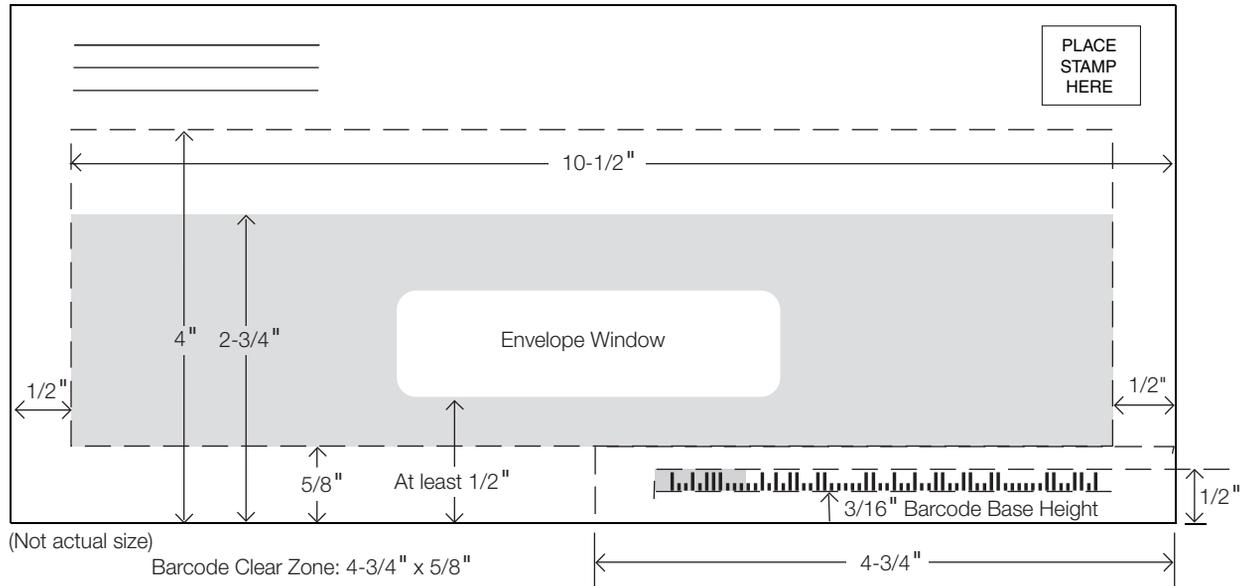
- Format of barcode bars (e.g., dimensions and spacing, [708.4.2](#)).
- Minimum clearance around barcode for barcodes printed on a mailpiece or label: 1/8 inch on left and right sides; 1/25 inch above and below barcode.
- Placement of address block barcode, lower right barcode, or barcode within a window: see page two.
- Reflectance standards for barcode and portion of mailpiece on which barcode is printed ([708.4.4](#)).

**Barcode in
Address Block**
(202.5.0)

When the barcode is included as part of the address block the barcode must be placed in one of these positions:

- Above the address line containing the recipient's name.
- Below the city, state, and ZIP Code line.
- Above or below the keyline information.
- Above or below the optional endorsement line.

Physical Standards for Automation-Compatible Mail (201.3.0)



Barcode Location: delivery point barcode or Intelligent Mail barcode either within address block or within barcode clear zone in lower right corner of mailpiece (202.5.0).

Address Block Barcode: (202.5.0) Within address block (shown by dashed lines) must be:

- Rightmost bar—at least 1/2 inch from right edge of the mailpiece.
- Leftmost bar—less than 10-1/2 inches from right edge, and at least 1/2 inch from the left edge.
- Top of each bar—less than 4 inches from bottom edge of mailpiece.
- Bottom line in address block including barcode—at least 5/8 inch from bottom edge of the mailpiece.

The minimum clearance between the barcode and any information line above or below it within the address block must be at least 0.040 (1/25) inch for POSTNET barcode or 0.028 inch for an Intelligent Mail barcode. The separation between the barcode and the top line or bottom line of the address block must not exceed 0.625 (5/8) inch.

Recommended Address Placement:

On a letter-size piece, the recommended address placement is within the optical character reader (OCR) read area, which is a space on the address side of the mailpiece defined by these boundaries (202.2.1):

- Left: 1/2 inch from the left edge of the piece.
- Right: 1/2 inch from the right edge of the piece.
- Top: 2-3/4 inches from the bottom edge of the piece.
- Bottom: 5/8 inch from the bottom edge of the piece.

Barcode Skew: The combined effects of positional skew (slant or tilt of the entire barcode baseline) and rotational skew (slant or tilt of the individual barcode bars) for a barcode on a card-size or a letter-size piece must be limited to a maximum rotation of the bars of ± 5 degrees from a perpendicular to the bottom edge of the piece. The individual bars of a barcode must not shift (be vertically offset) more than 0.015 inch from the average baseline of the barcode (708.4.4.1).

Envelope Window and Label Placement:

- 0.125 (1/8) inch—minimum clearance between leftmost and rightmost bars and any printing or window edge.
- 0.040 (1/25) inch—minimum clearance between POSTNET barcode and top and bottom edges of window.
- 0.028 inch—minimum clearance between Intelligent Mail barcode and top and bottom edges of window.

For envelope window, a clear space must be maintained when insert is moved to its full limits in each direction within envelope (202.5.0).

Address Label Barcode Placement:

- 0.125 (1/8) inch—minimum clearance between the barcode and the left and right edges of the address label.
- 0.040 (1/25) inch—minimum clearance between POSTNET barcode and top and bottom edges of address label.
- 0.028 inch—minimum clearance between Intelligent Mail barcode and top and bottom edges of address label.

For Barcode in Lower Right Corner Location: Leftmost bar between 4-1/4 inches and 3-1/2 inches from right edge (202.5.0).

Barcode Window: If the barcode is printed on an insert to appear through a window in the lower right corner, see 202.5.8.