



Common, Costly LTL Shipping Mistakes!

How to avoid them.

You'd think shipping is common logic, but common logic it seems, doesn't always work in the world of freight. We've created an eBook that walks through some of the most common LTL freight shipping mistakes along with a brief description of how to avoid them.



Mistake #1.

Guesstimating the shipment's weight.

While it may seem logical to take your best guess at your cargo's weight, that's a decision that can come back to bite you in the wallet. Carriers are precise. They weigh the completely packaged cargo digitally. Your guesstimate could be right on the nose, or it could be way off. The further off it is, the more it will affect the cost of shipping your cargo.

Wouldn't this be nice??

What if there was a Magic Freight Weight 8-Ball! Just like the popular magic 8-Ball you may have played with as a kid, the Magic Freight Weight 8-Ball would tell you how much your shipment weighed, just by standing next to the packaged shipment and turning over the 8-Ball. Poof – the EXACT weight, it's magic!

Unfortunately, it doesn't work that way. Perhaps the issue with weight is really two issues combined:

1. How we have learned to think about weight.
2. Freight shipping numbers don't always mean exactly what you think they should mean.



Changing our Thinking on Shipping Weight.

Most of us know [parcel shipping](#) through the post office before we ever shipped anything freight. That's where we learned the more a shipment weighs, the higher the cost.

But freight's different. [LTL \(Less than Truckload\)](#) freight trucks rely on weight for stability. Density is based on space and weight and is a significant element in determining a shipment's freight class. The higher the density, the lower the freight class and vice-versa. And the lower the freight class, the lower the shipping costs.

Here are some real-world freight classes:

1. One 500 lb cast iron wood-burning stove
Freight class = 85 (inexpensive)
2. Unassembled couch
Freight class = 250
3. 500 lbs of ping-pong ball boxes
Freight class = 500 (the highest there is)



Seems crazy, doesn't it? The moral of this story is you have to think differently about weight when you think freight. Carriers will bill you for wrongly estimated freight weight every time.

So how do you determine your shipment's accurate weight?

If your business ships on a regular or semi-regular basis, buying a good digital freight scale online will pay for itself. Occasional or one-time shippers can find a public scale in their area on Google. Call first to make sure you have access.



Mistake #2.

Approximating dimensions.



Carriers use lasers to precisely measure the height, width and depth of every single shipment. And precision matters. Let's say you're using a pallet that you purchased thinking it measured 48" x 40," but it actually measures 50" x 41." Not a big difference, right? But once the depth is added to the calculation, that slight difference in measurement could be enough to put it in a different freight class.

How to avoid approximating dimensions

Measure every shipment yourself. Don't trust quoted dimensions on the pallet, crate or other device you use to contain your shipment. Crated shipments are pretty straightforward. Simply measure the height, length and width. If your shipment is palletized, measure AFTER it's been packaged. That's how the carrier will measure it. Include the outer edges of the pallet, not just the space taken up on it by the cargo. Round up to the nearest whole inch when measuring anything.

Mistake #3.

Ignoring add-ons (accessorials) and optional services.

From its origins, freight shipping has been a commercial service intended to pick up and deliver freight at a loading dock. Everything else is extra. Is the item heavy and you don't have a loading dock? You need a lift gate, it's extra. Not located in a commercially zoned area? That's extra, too. And this is just the beginning.



How to avoid billing adjustments for accessorials and optional services

The online quote system on FreightCenter.com has check boxes for most add-on and optional services. Add them before getting a quote. To ensure accuracy, your National Account Manager will be happy to review your order with you and discuss any options you might need or want.

Mistake #4. Entering wrong freight class.

Getting the freight class correct can be tricky. Getting it wrong can be expensive. Thousands of items have been assigned a freight class by the National Motor Freight Traffic Association. New items are added all the time. But some items are covered by obscure sub-classes and others are not classified at all. Unless the class of your cargo is crystal clear, it's better to leave freight class to the experts.

How to avoid entering the wrong freight class

If there is no class for an item, it is known as Not Otherwise Indicated (NOI). For NOI items, freight class is determined by the cargo's density. The caveat here is that both the weight and dimensions must be correct, or the computed freight class will be wrong. In most cases it's best to consult a shipping expert, such as one of FreightCenter's National Account Managers, for the correct freight class.



Mistake #5.

Packaging cargo improperly.

Improperly packaged LTL shipments can lead to damage of yours or another shipper's cargo. In some cases, the packaging might be so bad that the carrier refuses pickup. Proper packaging is vital in the protection of your cargo and your wallet.

How to avoid packaging cargo improperly

From choosing the right type of container to selecting the appropriate way to secure the shipment, packaging is a big subject. We encourage you to send a photograph of your packed shipment to your FreightCenter National Account Manager to get their thumbs up before completing the booking process.





We've got you.

Have something to ship? Give us a call at 800.716.7608
or visit FreightCenter.com
- we'll take care of you every step of the way.

