

# Package and label non-hazardous materials cargo

## Label your shipment

Follow the tips below to ensure the transportation service provider knows where to deliver your shipment even if it gets separated or misplaced.

When shipping	Do this
individual boxes or pieces	label each box
less than a truckload or less than a container load	label all the individual pallets
a full container	label at least one pallet

## Box your cargo

Optimize your packaging to save money and improve sustainability by making sure:

- Box or container is the correct size for the cargo.
- Packing materials are environmentally friendly.
- Packing materials add as little weight as possible.
- The container is properly sealed.

The FAR requires federal agencies to purchase biobased products for packing materials. From the [USDA BioPreferred® Catalog](#), select Films and Packaging > Product Packaging to see a list of items that satisfy mandatory federal purchasing requirements.

## Palletize your cargo

- Place your boxes or containers on a wooden or plastic pallet.
- Place heavier boxes on the bottom and lighter boxes on top.
- Secure the boxes together by enclosing them in shrink wrap.
- Secure the wrapped boxes to the pallet with straps or shrink wrap.
- Place cardboard on top of the bottom pallet when stacking one pallet on top of another.

## Other things to consider

- The TSP may charge you for the actual weight or the dimensional weight. Check your agreement, contract, tariff, or TOS to see if dimensional weight may apply.
- If improperly packaged cargo causes damage to TSP or other shipper property, your agency could be held responsible for the damage.
- If your cargo contains hazardous materials, check with your TSP to find out if they will accept hazardous materials shipments and, if so, their additional requirements. Check whether it's HAZMAT: <https://www.transportation.gov/check-box/check-box-it-hazmat>