Royal Mail’s tracked services

Your guide

This guide answers all your questions on how to use Royal Mail’s tracked services and applies to both Royal Mail Tracked® and Royal Mail Tracked Next Day®.

Use this guide in conjunction with the Royal Mail specific terms for Royal Mail Tracked® and Royal Mail Tracked Next Day® version January 2013. This guide applies for all new customers whose first posting is after 13 September 2010.

Version: January 2013
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Section A

What is Royal Mail Tracked®?

Royal Mail Tracked® is the simple cost-effective way to send your goods, providing you with peace of mind as the shipment is tracked on its journey through our network.

As your parcels are tracked throughout their journey, not only are you using a cost-effective method to reach your customers, but you will always know where your parcels are. This means you can offer your customers a consistently high quality delivery experience and reduce the risk of fraud.
The features of Royal Mail Tracked®

- Available as either a Next Day (24 hour) or 2-3 day service (48 hour)
- Cost-effective delivery for parcels between 0-15kg
- A minimum of 5 tracks which are visible via our Track & Trace website royalmail.com/trackandtrace
- Competitive price based on your individual requirements
- Available for customers sending 5,000 parcels a year (24 hour service) or 2,000 parcels a year (48 hour service)
- Standard suite of management reports
- Additional paid for services available such as email or text notification to your recipients. Proof of delivery (signature) at the doorstep also available
- The ability to apply a Safeplace™ to your item, agreed with your recipient so that if the person is out the parcel is left in a pre-agreed Safeplace™ on your customers premises
- Full UK, Channel Isles and Isle of Man coverage
- Royal Mail Local Collect Business™ alternative delivery option for your customers to collect their parcels at a local Post Office®
- Free re-deliveries if we are unable to deliver – if the recipient is not home
- No extra charge for Saturday deliveries
- Compensation (for loss and damage only) up to the market value of the parcel, or 100 times the price of a first class stamp, whichever is lower

For customers sending over 300,000 parcels per annum on our 48 hour service only, some additional features are available:

- Additional collections can be arranged if required
- Parcels weighing up to 20kgs can be accepted at a higher pre-agreed fee
- Parcels will be accepted loose loaded

What tracking information is available?

To ensure you know the status of your parcel delivery at all key stages, Royal Mail Tracked® provides the following track points:

- **Track 1** is created at the point of despatch when the parcel label is generated on either your own despatch management system or ours
- **Track 2** occurs when your parcel enters the Royal Mail processing Mail Centre
- **Track 3** is triggered when the parcel is processed at the recipient’s local Mail Centre
- **Track 4** is taken when the parcel arrives at the Delivery Office
- **Track 5** occurs at the doorstep of the delivery address when delivery of the parcel is attempted or if it is put in a designated Safeplace™

Additional tracks:

- If a parcel is not successfully delivered it is returned to the Delivery Office, a note is left for the recipient, the parcel is tracked at the Delivery Office and made available for customer collection or redelivery
- In the event of a parcel not being successfully delivered or collected within 18 calendar days, a final track is taken prior to the parcel being returned to you, the sender
What can I send?

In terms of sizes and weights, Royal Mail Tracked® enables you to send parcels within the following weight and size dimensions.

**Weight and dimensions**

*You cannot* send parcels which are:

- Smaller than 15 millimetres on any one side
- Larger than 460 millimetres by 610 millimetres by 460 millimetres. For tubular packages, the length plus twice the diameter must not go over 1,040 millimetres or be more than 900 millimetres long
- Heavier than 15 kilograms

If you do not comply with this we may, at our discretion, return the parcels to you or ask you to collect them. There may be a surcharge for this service as set out in our terms and conditions.

If you are shipping more than **300,000 parcels on our 48 hours service** the following dimensions apply to you. *You cannot* send parcels which:

- Are smaller than 15 millimetres on any one side
- Are larger than 610 millimetres on any one side
- Have a volume greater than 0.129 cubic metres
- Are heavier than 20kgs (items between 15 and 20kgs will be surcharged)

For all shipments the following apply:

- Maximum gross weight for a mail bag presented to Royal Mail is 11kgs
- Maximum gross weight for a York* presented to Royal Mail is 250kgs

**Destinations**

- To anywhere in the UK including Northern Ireland
- To Jersey, Guernsey and Isle of Man (tracking is up to arrival in territory – Track 4)
- To BFPO addresses, tracking will occur up to the acceptance point of the British Forces Post Office® (where applicable)

**What do I need to do to access this service?**

For Royal Mail Tracked Next Day® service the minimum entry volume is 5,000 parcels per annum per site, per account. For the Royal Mail Tracked® service you will need to send at least 2,000 parcels per site, per account, per annum.

You will need a Printed Postage Impression (PPI) account with Royal Mail to enable you to print a Royal Mail Tracked® PPI on the label without using stamps. Unfortunately it is not possible to use stamps or meter impressions with Royal Mail’s tracked services. To set up a PPI account or start posting contact your Royal Mail Account Manager or Customer Services on **08457 950 950**.

* York is a Royal Mail term for a wheeled container.
Section B

How do I use Royal Mail Tracked®?
What despatch management software is required?

You can use your own systems either through a software supplier or even develop your own solution to print barcoded labels, paper collection manifests and electronic pre-advice files to send to Royal Mail. Alternatively you can use Royal Mail’s own despatch management software to do all this for you.

If you wish to use Royal Mail’s despatch management software, your Account Manager or Sales Centre will organise this for you. For more information royalmail.com/despatchexpress or royalmail.com/rmdmo.

We can arrange for a suitable printer to be supplied to you through our partner, The Barcode Warehouse. Contact your Royal Mail Account Manager or call Customer Services on 08457 950 950 if you wish to purchase a printer.

What if I prefer to use my own despatch management system?

In this case, your Royal Mail Account Manager or Customer Services Advisor will arrange for a IT Solutions Consultant to contact you, to discuss systems integration requirements. This is important because it ensures that compatible electronic pre-advice files are sent daily to us, that parcel labels are printed in the required format and suitable customer manifest documents are provided with each posting.
What is the parcel label format?

With Royal Mail's despatch management software the label format is automatically set up in the software. If you use your own despatch management system, the label format, Printed Postage Impression (PPI) and physical size will be provided by our IT Solutions Consultant as part of the set up.

The label must include:

1. Unique parcel number in barcode and text format
2. Royal Mail Tracked® product identifier and Printed Postage Impression (PPI) licence number
3. Destination address and full postcode
4. Return address and full postcode
5. Safeplace™ instructions (if applicable – using up to 30 characters)

For customers posting over 300,000 Royal Mail Tracked® parcels per annum on our 2-3 day service an alphanumeric routing sortcode (e.g. L123) in a text and barcode format is required. It is based on a sort list provided by us initially and with at least yearly updates. We will provide you with samples of label designs and 3 months notice of any sort code changes.

Where we cannot scan the barcode on the label we will return the parcels to you.
What equipment, bags or York labels do I need?

Your local Royal Mail Mail Centre will provide you with suitable mail bags, ties and Yorks as appropriate.

Our Customer Services team will send you an initial supply of appropriate thermal parcel labels (if using our despatch management software), bag labels and York cards. Further stocks of parcel labels (P6557), bag labels (P6644 for Royal Mail Tracked Next Day®, P6647 for Royal Mail Tracked®) and York cards (P6645 for Royal Mail Tracked Next Day®, P6646 for Royal Mail Tracked®) can be ordered free of charge by calling Royal Mail stationery and stores department on 08457 950 950 or visiting our online mail supplies page on www.royalmail.com/mailsupplies.
What paperwork do I need to generate?

For each shipment you need:
- A barcoded label on each item
- A paper collection manifest (on the right)
- OBA order summary report (only required for Despatch Express customers)
- Electronic pre-advice

If you use Royal Mail Despatch Express software it automatically transfers sales order information from Despatch Express to our Online Business Account (OBA) system. This happens when you print off the ‘Collection Manifest’ on Despatch Express.

OBA is a web-based system and you will therefore need an internet-ready PC with Internet Explorer 5.5 or higher and a printer. If you use our Despatch Express the printer is needed to generate the ‘OBA order summary report’ that must accompany each shipment and be given to the collection driver.

If you use your own despatch management system or Royal Mail Despatch Manager Online (RDMO) items are billed automatically based upon parcels we have accepted and scanned so entries are not needed on OBA. In any event, you will need access to Royal Mail’s Sales Ordering System and our Online Billing Account (OBA) to view Royal Mail Tracked® sales orders raised. Our OBA sales ordering system is free and our representative will contact you to explain how to operate the system.
Section C

Requirements when despatching parcels

There are a few basic activities you need to perform for each shipment to use Royal Mail Tracked®:

1. Correctly address the parcels – i.e provide a full postal address and postcode. Your address database must be cleansed and maintained to achieve a minimum of 95% accuracy of the current Postal Address File (PAF).

2. Create suitable parcel labels as detailed previously.

3. Where presenting parcels in bags and or Yorks attach our relevant bag labels with bag ties we provide you with on the mail bags and relevant York cards on the slot in the Yorks.

4. Provide a collection manifest and pre-advice file to Royal Mail prior to the last shipment collection.

5. Present your shipments as detailed overleaf.
How do I present my shipments?

The Royal Mail Tracked® and Royal Mail Tracked Next Day® shipments need to be presented separately from all other mail streams, in the correct agreed equipment (eg bags and sleeved Yorks supplied by us) and appropriate Royal Mail Tracked® or Royal Mail Tracked Next Day® label tied onto the bag or card placed in the slot of the York. This will ensure the correct handling and scanning. It is not permissible to have mixed bags or Yorks of Royal Mail Tracked® or Royal Mail Tracked Next Day® parcels.

The shipment must be accompanied by ‘Collection Manifest’ document from the despatch management system and, if using Despatch Express, an ‘OBA order summary report’ printed from Royal Mail’s OBA system.

If you are using your own despatch management system the required customer manifest format will be provided by our IT Solutions Consultants. The Customer manifest will detail volumes, in that posting, the account name, number and address, and the date and the range of barcodes despatched.

Parcels are either collected by us or can be delivered into our agreed local Mail Centre or regional Distribution Centre. Parcels cannot be delivered into a Delivery Office or Post Office®.

Customers who ship more than 300,000 parcels a year on our 2-3 day service can present their shipments loose loaded on to vehicles (trailers) or in Yorks (not mail bags).

What about shipments not covered by my agreement?

If you are sending larger, heavier, or more than the maximum daily parcels in the initial posting profile you agreed with us, you will need to let your Royal Mail Mail Centre know by 5pm on the day before posting (or by 5pm on a Thursday for a Saturday collection). Likewise, if part of the agreement states that you may post no parcels on some days but you subsequently need to do so on a particular day, you will need to let your Mail Centre know by the same time. If you do not give us the information in line with the above, we will try but do not guarantee to collect or accept (as applicable) your items on the date you request.
Section D

Value added services

- **Safeplace™** – is a Royal Mail delivery option that enables your customers to nominate a safe place for alternative delivery of items

- **Local Collect Business™** – Your customers want to be able to collect their deliveries when it suits them. With Local Collect Business™, they can choose the time they want to pick up their items at a convenient local Post Office®

- **Text or email notification** – For added peace of mind you can offer your customers the option of text or email notification

- **Proof of delivery (signature)**
How do I use Safeplace™ and Local Collect Business™?

So long as you have signed a Safeplace™ licence with Royal Mail, when your customers order from you online or by phone, they will be offered the chance to nominate their Safeplace™ location. They can specify a secure area at their premises, or a ‘near neighbour’ as an alternative delivery point. A Safeplace™ item has instructions shown on the parcels label. The instruction may be up to 30 characters long.

Safeplace™ is not available in conjunction with signature option.

At the time of buying online customers are guided to choose either:

- Somewhere specified safe and weather-proof on their property
- If they don’t have such a place, they can nominate a specified near neighbour

We will then carry out the Safeplace™ instructions:

- Firstly we need to try and deliver the parcel in the normal way, if the customer is in or it can fit through the letter box, it’s a normal delivery
- If no one is home, or the item cannot fit through the letter box, we use the alternative delivery point instruction, as far as possible we will follow the customer’s instruction. We will also leave a ‘Sorry you were out’ delivery card detailing where we left your parcel

However, in a minority of cases we won’t be able to follow the instruction. These could include:

- If it would be dangerous for us to access the nominated point
- If the nominated point is clearly insecure, such as an easily viewed doorstep
- If the parcel would be exposed to bad weather

In these cases we will leave a ‘Sorry you were out’ delivery card. This means you are kept fully informed, and the parcel is returned to our nearest local office for safekeeping and to await your instructions.

For more information visit www.royalmail.com/safeplace.

Can my customers pick up their parcels from their local Post Office® branch?

Local Collect Business™ allows customer to have their parcels delivered directly to a Post Office® rather than their home address if this suits them. With 14,000 Post Office® branches nationwide, the fact is 96% of people live within a mile of a branch.

Local Collect Business™ is not just convenient for your customers, it also reassures them you’ve made their schedule and their needs your priority. We will also inform you when the parcel has arrived at the Post Office®, so you can let your customer know. Passing on this information – by text message for instance – really helps generate positive perceptions of your brand, and consolidates your relationship with the customer.

All the customer needs to do is collect their parcel from the selected Post Office® branch with an acceptable form of ID. And of course they won’t be charged for the collection. The Post Office® will hold on to the package for up to 18 days. Royal Mail will also make it as easy as possible for you to set up and manage Local Collect Business™. We will provide you with a full database of participating Post Office® branches for your customers to choose from.

For your business, all it takes is to call your Royal Mail Account Manager or Customer Services on 08457 950 950 to set up the Local Collect Business™ service. Customers are charged per Local Collect Business™ label, in addition to the Royal Mail Tracked® charge.
How do I use Safeplace™ and Local Collect Business™?

We provide you with the following:

- An address list of participating Post Office® branches that accept Local Collect Business™, including opening and closing times
- Local Collect Business™ branded labels
- A daily electronic file that contains transaction data

All you have to do is take the order as normal from your customer, but with the addition of handy delivery options - their home address or a Local Collect Business™ location that they specify.

When your customer selects the Local Collect Business™ option and indicates which Post Office® branch they want the parcel delivered to, you need to:

- Put the Post Office® branch address on the parcel together with the name of the customer
- Apply a Local Collect Business™ label
- Despatch the Local Collect Business™ parcels with your other Royal Mail Tracked® parcels. They then travel through the normal Royal Mail network, and the Local Collect Business™ parcels are delivered to the Post Office® branch as addressed on the parcel

The Local Collect Business™ label (LC004) on the right, should be used when you have the systems capability to use the Local Collect Business™ Post Office® address, rather than your customers’ address on the Royal Mail Tracked® label.

If you don’t have this capability, add the Local Collect Business™ Post Office® address to the Local Collect Business™ label (LC001).

You will receive a data file (.txt) to integrate with your systems, enabling you to view which Post Office® branches participate with the Local Collect Business™ service. An updated file will be sent to you electronically by group email on a weekly basis. For more information visit www.royalmail.com/localcollect.

NB: An individual will be required to show a form of ID at the chosen Post Office® in order to collect the item.
How does text and email notification work?

You will need to capture the recipient’s mobile number and or email address and include this on the advice posting manifest that you provide to us. When the parcel is scanned within Royal Mail’s pipeline, this triggers the sending of the message.

The first message is sent when the parcel is scanned at the Delivery Office to inform the recipient that Royal Mail will deliver the parcel that day.

A second message is sent when delivery is attempted to inform the recipient that we’ve successfully delivered the parcel. If we were unable to deliver the message will advise the recipient to see the ‘Sorry you were out’ card to arrange collection or re-delivery.

If the parcel remains uncollected, a further message is sent to remind customer that we are holding it. If after this time, it’s still not collected another message is sent to say that we’ve returned the parcel to the sender.

Text and email notification cannot be used with Despatch Express.

Text message

1 ‘We will deliver today’
Royal Mail received your item (No: XXXXXXXXXXXXX) from (name of sending customer). We will attempt to deliver it today. Automated message do not reply.

2 ‘Successfully delivered’
Royal Mail has today delivered your item (No: XXXXXXXXXXXXX) from (name of sending customer). Automated message do not reply.

3 ‘Successfully delivered to your Safeplace™’
Royal Mail has delivered your parcel (No: XXXXXXXXXXXXX) from (name of sending customer) to your nominated Safeplace™. Automated message do not reply.

4 ‘Successfully delivered to Local Collect Business™’
Royal Mail has delivered your item (No: XXXXXXXXXXXXX) from (name of sending customer) to your nominated Post Office®. Automated message do not reply.

5 ‘We were unable to deliver and are holding your item’
Royal Mail was unable to deliver your item (No: XXXXXXXXXXXXX) from (name of sending customer) today. See card left for details. Automated message do not reply.

6 ‘We are still waiting your instructions’
Royal Mail still hold your item (No: XXXXXXXXXXXXX) from (name of sending customer). Visit royalmail.com to arrange re-delivery. Automated message do not reply.

7 ‘We have returned the item to the sender’
Royal Mail was unable to deliver your item (No. XXXXXXXXXXXXX) from (name of sending customer). It has been returned to the sender. Automated message do not reply.
Examples of email messages

Email messages

1. ‘Royal Mail: Item ready for delivery’
   Dear Customer,
   Royal Mail has received your item from XXXX
   (No: XXXXXXXXXXXXX) at XXX Delivery Office. Your
   item is now ready for delivery and we will attempt to
   deliver it today subject to any alternative instructions
   that you have previously agreed with us.
   Regards, Royal Mail
   For queries please visit www.royalmail.com or call
   08457 740 740. Please do not reply to this message.
   This email was sent from a notification-only address
   that cannot accept incoming email.

2. ‘Royal Mail: Item delivered’
   Dear Customer,
   Your item from XXXX (No: XXXXXXXXXXXXX)
   has now been delivered by Royal Mail.
   Regards, Royal Mail
   For queries please visit www.royalmail.com or call
   08457 740 740. Please do not reply to this message.
   This email was sent from a notification-only address
   that cannot accept incoming email.

3. ‘Royal Mail: Item delivered to your Safeplace™’
   Dear Customer,
   Royal Mail has delivered your item from XXXX
   (No: XXXXXXXXXXXXX) to your nominated Safeplace™.
   Regards, Royal Mail
   For queries please visit www.royalmail.com or call
   08457 740 740. Please do not reply to this message.
   This email was sent from a notification-only address
   that cannot accept incoming email.

4. ‘Royal Mail: Item delivered to nominated Post Office®’
   Dear Customer,
   Royal Mail has delivered your item from XXXX
   (No: XXXXXXXXXXXXX) to your nominated Post Office®
   and is now ready for you to collect.
   Regards, Royal Mail
   For queries please visit www.royalmail.com or call
   08457 740 740. Please do not reply to this message.
   This email was sent from a notification-only address
   that cannot accept incoming email.

5. ‘Royal Mail: Unable to deliver your item’
   Dear Customer,
   Royal Mail was unable to deliver your item from
   XXXX (No: XXXXXXXXXXXXX) today. You can arrange
   a re-delivery or collection of the item by going to
   www.royalmail.com/redelivery or by calling
   0845 740 740. If collecting the item from the
   Delivery Office, please bring the ‘Sorry you were
   out’ card and identification on with you.
   Regards, Royal Mail
   For queries please visit www.royalmail.com or call
   08457 740 740. Please do not reply to this message.
   This email was sent from a notification-only address
   that cannot accept incoming email.

6. ‘Royal Mail: Item held in local Delivery Office’
   Dear Customer,
   Royal Mail is still holding your item from XXXX
   (No: XXXXXXXXXXXXX) in your local Delivery Office.
   It is due to be returned to the sender in two
   days, please arrange a collection or re-delivery
   by going to www.royalmail.com/redelivery or
   by calling 0845 740 740.
   Regards, Royal Mail
   For queries please visit www.royalmail.com or call
   08457 740 740. Please do not reply to this message.
   This email was sent from a notification-only address
   that cannot accept incoming email.

7. ‘Royal Mail: Item returned to sender’
   Dear Customer,
   Royal Mail was unable to deliver your item from
   XXXX (No: XXXXXXXXXXXXX) and it has now been
   returned to the sender. Please contact the company
   you placed your order with for further guidance.
   Regards, Royal Mail
   For queries please visit www.royalmail.com or call
   08457 740 740. Please do not reply to this message.
   This email was sent from a notification-only address
   that cannot accept incoming email.
How does proof of delivery (signature) work?

If you would like a proof of delivery (signature) to be taken at the doorstep when Royal Mail delivers your parcel you must generate a label that contains a barcode relating to ‘signature required’. With DMO, this occurs automatically when you select proof of delivery option. **Proof of delivery (signature) cannot be used with Despatch Express.**

The delivery person will be prompted to ask the customer for a signature when they scan the item at the doorstep. This can then be seen on our Track & Trace system. If the item cannot be delivered, it will be returned to the Delivery Office, ready for re-delivery or customer collection.
Section E

How do I track my parcels?
Royal Mail’s Track & Trace

For peace of mind, you are able to check on the progress of individual parcels by entering your 13 digit reference number on our website www.royalmail.com/trackandtrace.

In the unlikely event of our website being unavailable, phone 08456 038 495 between 9:00am and 5:00pm Monday to Friday.
Management reports

There are three types of reports available via the Royal Mail OBA (Online Billing Account) web portal www.royalmail.com/oba. To ensure these reports are secure access only you will need to have an OBA password issued by your OBA System administrator.

1 Customer summary reports
Here you will find reports to help you keep track of your posting both in terms of parcels identified on a manifest as well as those actually received by Royal Mail.

2 Quality of service reports
Here you can keep an eye on how we are doing by viewing reports on delivery time statistics for your parcels, both by volume and percentage.

3 Sales order summary report
Here you will find an overview of a specific order and contract number.

Intro screen
Customer summary report
Quality of service reports
Sales order summary report
Section F

Where can I get more help or advice?

Simply contact your Royal Mail Account Manager, or the Royal Mail Sales Centre on 08457 950 950. Alternatively you can visit www.royalmail.com/tracked.