

A GUIDE TO PROPER PACKAGING

Why Package Your Freight?

No matter what route your goods take - travelling by road, rail, air or sea may not always be a perfectly smooth ride. All the little bumps and vibrations can shove your freight around with the potential to cause damage. With that being said, the real cost of damages is much higher than one may first think including replacement goods, freight costs, and time lost to arrange replacements and the disposal of damaged freight.

Even more important than damage to your goods is protection against injury. Your team, our workers and your customers can all be at risk from hazards ranging from jagged surfaces to the collapse of unstable loads. But with correct packaging, damage to all stakeholders involved and freight can be minimised.

Types of Packaging

From a simple cardboard box to large wooden crates, packaging comes in many different forms to suit customers' needs such as:

- **Cartons** – make your freight easier to handle by keeping loose items together. They also provide protection to the display packaging of your product and allow the use of other packaging aids such as foam packing.
- **Pallets** – whether you are moving boxes or a heavy piece of machinery - the simple pallet is one of the most commonly used items for packaging. Packing your freight on a pallet provides stability and makes it easier to handle. However, your team will need to ensure that the pallet is in good condition, the weight of the goods is evenly distributed, the goods don't hang over the pallet edges, and the top surface is flat if possible.
- **Shrink Wrapping** – for protection of the outer surface and stability for palletised freight. Prevents rubbing on cartons, reduces the risk of items being separated from the rest of the order and provides a surface for labelling to be affixed.
- **Banding/Strapping** – either made of steel or plastic and is used to stop freight from slipping off the pallet or to bind bundles together
- **Labelling** – make sure your goods communicate everything one needs to know about your freight. Delivery address and any handling instructions, e.g. Fragile, top stow only, this way up, etc.

Things to consider

There are many things that should be taken into consideration when thinking about packaging your goods and getting them ready for transport, such as:

- **Depot Environment** – Freight depots have trucks, fork hoists and even rail units running through their site. Shrink wrapping your freight will protect from diesel dust and fumes.
- **Road Environment** – Pot holes, windy roads etc. are obstacles that our truck drivers will face. Pack your goods with stability in mind to ensure a safe journey.
- **Labelling** – affixing freight labels to your goods will ensure that your goods are handled correctly and delivered to the correct place. Ensure that the labels are easily visible. Do not affix labels directly to the surface of your goods, as this could cause damage when the labels are removed.
- **Square** – freight cost is determined by the volume of your freight as if it were square, i.e. measured to the longest point for all dimensions, so pack well to avoid having parts sticking out and you'll reduce the chance of damage without costing extra.

Take some time to look at your current packaging. Can you make any changes to what you are currently doing? Talk to your freight forwarder or us and see if anyone can suggest other improvements. Correctly packaging your freight will prevent damage, save you money and prevent injury.

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