

122 Addressing

122.1 Destination Address

International destination addresses must comply with the standards in this section.

Note: In items c, d, and i, the term “full legal name” means the name that corresponds to the addressee’s government-issued identification — i.e., the addressee’s first name, middle initial (if applicable), and last name.

- a. At least the entire right half of the address side of the envelope, package, or card should be reserved for the destination address, postage, labels, and postal notations.
- b. Addresses must appear in ink or be typewritten. Pencil is unacceptable.
- c. The addressee’s full legal name (see Note above) and complete address must appear legibly with roman letters and arabic numerals, all placed lengthwise on one side of the item. For parcels, addresses should also appear on a separate slip enclosed in the parcel.
- d. Addresses in Russian, Greek, Arabic, Hebrew, Cyrillic, Japanese, or Chinese characters must bear an interline translation in English of the addressee’s full legal name (see Note above) and complete address (including country). If the English translation is not known, the foreign language words must appear in roman characters (either printed or script). See [292.41](#) and [293.41](#) for an *optional* addressing procedure that applies *only* to direct country sacks of International Priority Airmail (IPA) or International Surface Air Lift (ISAL) mail, respectively.
- e. Mail may *not* be addressed to a person in one country “in care of” a person in another country.
- f. Mail may *not* be addressed to *Boxholder* or *Householder*.
- g. The following exceptional form of address, in French or a language known in the country of destination, may appear on printed matter: the addressee’s name or *Occupant*.

Example: Mr. Thomas Clark or Occupant

- h. The house number and street address or box number must appear when mail is addressed to towns or cities.
- i. The address of items sent to general delivery must indicate the addressee’s full legal name (see Note above) and the city and country of destination. The use of just initials, simple given names, fictitious names, or figures is not permitted on articles addressed for general delivery.

- j. All lines of the delivery address *should* appear in all capital letters. The city destination *must* appear in capital letters together with the correct post code number or delivery zone number, if any. **The last line of the address must show only the country name, written in full (no abbreviations) and in capital letters. If possible, the address should have no more than five lines. For example:**

MR THOMAS CLARK MS CRISTINA CRUZ
117 RUSSELL DRIVE APARTADO 3068
LONDON WIP 6HQ 46807 PUERTO VALLARTA JALISCO
GREAT BRITAIN MEXICO

Exception: To Canada, there must be two spaces between the province abbreviation and the postal code, as shown below between “ON” and “K1A 0B1”:

MS HELEN SAUNDERS
1010 CLEAR STREET
OTTAWA ON K1A 0B1
CANADA

122.2 Return Address

122.21 General

The return address tells the U.S. Postal Service or foreign post where to return a mailpiece that cannot be delivered. Due to heightened security concerns, the U.S. Postal Service recommends a complete return address on all mailpieces — see [122.23](#) for when a return address is required. A mailpiece may include only one return address, and the mailer must place it so that it does not affect either the clarity of the address of destination or the application of service labels and notations (postmarks, etc.).

122.22 Elements of a Return Address

A complete return address must include the sender's full legal name (see the Note in [122.1](#)) and complete return address in roman letters and arabic numerals — it *may not* include just initials except where they are an adopted trade name.

122.23 Required Use of Return Address

In bulk mailings, all mailpieces must bear a U.S.-origin return address visible on the outside of the mailpiece. For the purpose of this section, a “bulk mailing” is any IPA or ISAL mailing, or any other mailing paid with an advance deposit account and presented to the U.S. Postal Service for acceptance. In addition, a return address is required for mailpieces bearing a customs form under [123.7](#).