

Shipping lithium batteries

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Shipping all types of batteries is considered risky because they are a potential fire hazard. However, by following the guidance and packaging instructions set out by the regulatory bodies, sending batteries in the post is safe and convenient.

Some batteries are considered to be dangerous goods because in certain conditions they can cause fires or explosions. Although it is rare, when batteries are exposed to high temperatures or damaged in transit, the results can be catastrophic.

Incidents like this prompted the introduction of stricter national and international regulations for shipping batteries. These regulations protect the general public and the people, vehicles and equipment that handle batteries when they are in transit.

Before sending batteries in the post, it is important to check the regulations of the chosen carrier for both the type of battery and the required destination. Things that might need to be considered include:

Lithium batteries are lightweight with a high power output and a long life. Because of these benefits, they continue to grow in popularity and can be found in many portable electronic devices.

In 2013, regulations were introduced by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA) to make shipping lithium batteries safer.

Even though there are restrictions, it is possible to ship lithium batteries as long as the regulatory guidelines are followed. Carriers each have specific guidelines based on current shipping regulations.

Failure to follow the carrier's instructions could result in a parcel being rejected, returned or uninsured during transit. In the worst case scenario, it could lead to prosecution of the sender.

Although shipping lithium batteries is considered dangerous, the regulations and guidelines have been carefully devised to minimise the chance of fire and explosion. These focus on correctly packaging batteries for shipping, which drastically reduces any risk.



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