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Packing List

by Practical Law Commercial Transactions

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A sample packing list, sometimes called a packing slip, which is a shipping document that contains detailed information about the goods and how the goods are packaged and labeled. It is used for a variety of purposes in domestic and import sale of goods transactions. This Standard Document has integrated drafting notes with important explanations and drafting tips.

READ THIS BEFORE USING DOCUMENT

This Standard Document is a sample form of packing list (also called a packing slip), which contains detailed information about the goods and how the goods are packaged and labeled.

Packing lists serve a variety of functions in many phases of a sale of goods transaction. The main function of a packing list is to inform all the parties involved in the shipment of goods, including the buyer, the logistics providers, and in an import or export transaction, the government authorities, about the contents of the shipment.

For example, the freight forwarder uses the information contained in the packing list to:

- Confirm that the carrier is transporting the correct cargo.
- Prepare the bill of lading for the shipment (for a sample non-negotiable bill of lading, see [Standard Document, Bill of Lading Terms and Conditions](#)).

For more information about freight forwarders, see [Practice Note, Logistics: Freight Forwarding](#). For more information on drafting and negotiating freight forwarding agreements, see [Standard Document, Freight Forwarding Agreement](#).

The buyer also verifies the quantity of goods received against the packing list to confirm there are no overages or shortages.

The packing list is also used as evidence:

- In insurance claims if cargo damage or loss occurs.
- In disputes between the carrier and the shipper regarding the weight or dimensions of the cargo.

Packing lists are used in both domestic shipments and international shipments. For example, [US Customs and Border Protection](#) (CBP) may review the packaging, labeling, and other information in the packing list to check the cargo for US customs law compliance. The packing list, however, is not a substitute for the commercial invoice, which is the principal document in an import transaction. CBP reviews the commercial invoice to determine:

- The tariff classification, value, and duty owed on the goods contained in the shipment.
- Whether to clear the cargo for entry into the US, deny entry, inspect the cargo, or request additional information from the importer.

Unlike the commercial invoice, the packing list typically does not include the total amount paid for the goods. Because the packing list does not include information about the cost or value of the shipment, it can be used if the contents of the shipment are to be forwarded to a third party, for example, a consignee that is not the buyer of the goods.

The packing list is also used in US export transactions. For example, the freight forwarder uses the information in the packing list to prepare export clearance documentation, such as the Electronic Export Information to be filed in the Automated Export System (AES). While this Standard Document aims to be suitable for general use, US exporters should consult with their freight forwarders about the type of information that customs authorities in destination countries may require to be set out in the packing list.

The packing list is also, together with the bill of lading, commercial invoice, and other documents, one of the documents typically required for payment under a letter of credit, which is a common form of payment in sale of goods transactions. For a sample form of commercial letter of credit used in a domestic sale of goods transaction, see [Standard Document, Commercial Letter of Credit for Domestic Sale Transactions](#). For a sample form of commercial letter of credit to be used in an international sale of goods transaction, see [Standard Document, Commercial Letter of Credit for International Sale Transactions](#).

Contents of Packing List

The specific layout of a packing list often varies from company to company. This sample form organizes the information in several charts based on the following categories:

- Information about the shipper and the consignee (see [Drafting Note, Shipper and Consignee](#)).
- Information about the overall shipment (see [Drafting Note, Shipment Information](#)).
- Information about the packages in the shipment (see [Drafting Note, Package Information](#)).
- Description of the goods contained in the shipment (see [Drafting Note, Description of Goods](#)).

Assumptions

This Standard Document assumes that the packing list is:

- **Prepared by a logistics provider, such as a freight forwarder, to be used by its customers.** A shipper can adapt the form if it wants to use the form for all its shipments. For example, the shipper can:
 - print the form on its letterhead; and
 - modify the form to suit its needs, for example, by using the terminology "ship to" instead of "consignee" in the section [Drafting Note, Shipper and Consignee](#).
- **Being used in a business-to-business transaction.** This Standard Document should not be used for a consumer contract, which may involve legal and regulatory requirements and practical considerations that are beyond the scope of this resource.
- **Not industry-specific.** This Standard Document does not account for any industry-specific laws, rules, or regulations that may apply to certain transactions.

Bracketed Items

Bracketed items in ALL CAPS should be completed with the facts relevant to the organization. Bracketed items in sentence case are either optional provisions or include alternative language choices to be selected, added, or deleted at the drafter's discretion.

Packing List

Date: [DATE]

Shipper and Consignee

Shipper: [NAME]	Consignee: [NAME]
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Address: [ADDRESS]	Address: [ADDRESS]
Contact Person: [NAME], [TITLE]	Contact Person: [NAME], [TITLE]
[Tax Identification Number: [NUMBER]]	[Tax Identification Number: [NUMBER]]

SHIPPER AND CONSIGNEE

In this Standard Document:

- The shipper (sometimes called the consignor) is the supplier of the goods shipped.
- The consignee is the buyer.

A shipper can revise this section if it wants to adapt this form for its own use for all its shipments, for example, by replacing the references to "shipper" and "consignee," with "ship to" information about the consignee.

Shipment Information

Invoice Number: [NUMBER]
[Purchase Order Number: [NUMBER]]
[Bill of Lading/Airway Bill/Shipment Tracking] Number: [NUMBER]
Type of Shipment: [FCL/LCL]
Primary Method of Dispatch: [Sea/Air/Multimodel]
Port of Loading: [NAME]
Port of Discharge: [NAME]
Date of Departure: [DATE]

SHIPMENT INFORMATION

This section contains basic information about the shipment including the corresponding commercial invoice number. Packing lists sometimes also include other shipment identifying information, such as:

- The buyer's purchase order number.
- The shipment tracking number.

This Standard Document can be adapted for use in different types of shipments, including:

- Full container load (FCL) or less-than-container load (LCL) shipments.
- Sea, air, or multimodal shipments.

For example, FCL shipments typically contain multiple pallets, which in turn hold multiple outer cases of goods. The outer cases sometimes contain multiple inside cases, which contain the individual units of goods. The type of shipment may affect the level of detail to be included in this Packing List, for example, in the sections [Drafting Note, Package Information](#) and [Drafting Note, Description of Goods](#). For example, the export authorities of the country of origin or the customs authorities of the destination country may require detailed information about packaging configuration, including how individual units are packed in the inside cases.

Package Information

Total Number of Packages: [NUMBER] [box(es)/carton[s]/barrel[s]/OTHER UNIT OF MEASURE]

Total Weight of Shipment: [NUMBER] [lbs/kg/OTHER UNIT OF MEASURE]

Total Number of Pallets, if applicable: [NUMBER]

PACKAGE INFORMATION

This section contains basic information about the packages, including:

- The total number of packages.
- The total weight of the shipment.
- The total number of pallets (for palletized shipments).

Description of Goods

[Item/SKU] Number	Description of Goods	Quantity
[NUMBER]	[DESCRIPTION]	[NUMBER] [box(es)/carton[s]/barrel[s]/OTHER UNIT OF MEASURE] [DIMENSIONS] [SPECIAL MARKINGS]
[NUMBER]	[DESCRIPTION]	[NUMBER] [box(es)/carton[s]/barrel[s]/OTHER UNIT OF MEASURE] [DIMENSIONS] [SPECIAL MARKINGS]
[NUMBER]	[DESCRIPTION]	[NUMBER] [box(es)/carton[s]/barrel[s]/OTHER UNIT OF MEASURE] [DIMENSIONS] [SPECIAL MARKINGS]
[NUMBER]	[DESCRIPTION]	[NUMBER] [box(es)/carton[s]/barrel[s]/OTHER UNIT OF MEASURE] [DIMENSIONS] [SPECIAL MARKINGS]

DESCRIPTION OF GOODS

This section sets out detailed information to help all the parties involved in the shipment of goods determine the contents of the shipment. For example, in an import transaction, CBP may review detailed information in this section to check the cargo for US customs law compliance.

If more detail is required, this section can be modified to add information, for example:

- Gross weight per carton.
- Net weight per carton.
- Number of units per carton.

Notes

NOTES

Some packing lists have a space for the shipper to note additional information about the status of the goods. For example, if the shipment does not include all the goods ordered by the customer, the shipper can indicate that the missing goods have been back ordered for later delivery.

This helps all the parties involved in the shipment of the goods to understand the source of any discrepancies between the quantity of goods shipped and the quantity of goods ordered. However, indicating that goods have been back ordered may not relieve the shipper of liability if the underlying sale of goods agreement does not allow back orders.

PRODUCTS

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