



UPS Personal Vehicle Driver (PVD) Guide – Seasonal Onboarding Manual

1. Introduction & Eligibility

Overview of the PVD Role: A Personal Vehicle Driver (PVD) is a seasonal UPS employee who uses their own vehicle to deliver packages during peak periods (typically the holiday season) ¹ ². In this fast-paced, physical job, you perform the same duties as a UPS package delivery driver – picking up packages from a UPS location, driving a set route, and delivering to customers – but you do it in your personal car ³. PVDs help UPS handle the surge in deliveries between roughly October and December, and the role ends after the seasonal rush (though high-performing PVDs may be invited back or even transition into permanent roles) ² ⁴.

Basic Eligibility Requirements: UPS has specific criteria you must meet to be hired as a PVD. These include:

- **Age & Licensing:** You must be at least **21 years old** and hold a **valid driver's license** in the state where you will work ⁵. A clean driving record is essential (generally **no moving violations in the past 12 months** and **no at-fault accidents in the last 3 years**) ⁶.
- **Background & Screening:** All applicants undergo a background check. You should have no serious criminal convictions or felonies on record ⁷. UPS may also require a drug screening during the hiring process (this can vary by location).
- **Physical Ability:** The job is **physically demanding**. You must be able to lift, lower, and carry packages up to **70 pounds** safely on a regular basis ⁶. This means you should be in good physical condition and prepared for long periods of walking, carrying, and climbing stairs with packages.
- **Employment Status:** As a PVD, you are **hired as a UPS employee (seasonal)**, not an independent contractor ⁸. You will be on UPS's payroll, follow UPS policies, and be part of the UPS team during your tenure. (Many PVDs are **re-hired annually** for the holiday season, and UPS notes that about **35% of seasonal hires** eventually earn permanent positions ⁴, so this role can be a foot in the door for a UPS career.)
- **Availability:** Because this role exists to meet **peak-season demand**, you need to have a flexible schedule during the holidays. PVDs typically work **full-time hours during November-December**, and UPS expects you to commit through the end of the peak period. Being available on **short notice** and willing to work long days or six-day weeks in December is often necessary as package volume climbs.

Tip: If you meet these requirements and are interested, the application process is straightforward. You can apply online via the UPS jobs portal by searching for "Seasonal Personal Vehicle Driver" in your area ⁹. UPS will have you complete an online application, watch a few orientation videos, and submit required paperwork (like your driver's license, proof of insurance, and vehicle info) ¹⁰. If hired, you'll receive training (discussed later) before hitting the road.

Illustration: A UPS Personal Vehicle Driver loading packages into his own car for deliveries ¹¹ .

2. Vehicle & Equipment Requirements

Being a PVD means you'll use **your personal vehicle** as a delivery van, so it's crucial that your car meets UPS's requirements and that you have the proper equipment for the job. Below is what UPS expects:

Personal Vehicle Requirements:

- **Reliable, Registered & Insured:** Your vehicle must be **registered in your name (or authorized for your use)** and properly insured with at least the **state-required auto insurance coverage** ¹² . UPS will ask for proof of registration and insurance during onboarding. *Importantly, check with your auto insurance provider that using your car for deliveries is allowed under your policy.* (UPS provides supplemental insurance while you're on the job, but your personal policy must permit commercial/delivery use for that coverage to apply ¹³ .)
- **Vehicle Type:** Almost any **reliable passenger vehicle** can qualify – common choices are sedans, SUVs, wagons, or minivans – as long as it meets UPS standards. The vehicle **must have a closed top or covered cargo area**. If you drive a pickup truck, it needs a secure cover on the bed (open convertibles or motorcycles are not permitted) ¹⁴ . Your car should be in **good working condition** (no significant mechanical issues) and **free of major visible damage** that would make UPS look bad or hinder safe driving ¹² ¹⁵ . UPS also specifies the vehicle should weigh under 10,000 lbs and **not have extreme modifications** (for example, no oversized lift kits or racing-style low suspension) ¹⁵ – essentially, a standard, safe vehicle.
- **No External Advertising:** UPS **prohibits any other company logos, markings, or bumper stickers** on your car while you're working ¹⁴ . Your vehicle should be unbranded (aside from normal manufacturer logos) to avoid confusion. UPS does *not* typically provide magnetic signs or decals for PVDs, so your car will remain unmarked as a UPS vehicle – your **uniform/vest will identify you** instead.

Required Equipment and Gear:

- **Smartphone & Apps:** In many locations, PVDs are expected to use a **smartphone** with the UPS delivery app for scanning packages and navigating routes ¹⁶ . UPS will provide the app login and training on how to use it. Ensure you have a **reliable phone with a data plan** – it's a crucial tool for this job. *(Note: In some areas, UPS may issue a handheld device or even a phone to you. Other times, you'll use your own phone and UPS will pay a phone stipend on your paycheck to offset data usage ¹⁷ .)*
- **Uniform & Appearance:** UPS will supply you with a **uniform** – typically this might be the iconic brown UPS shirt and pants, or at minimum a **UPS-branded reflective vest** to wear over your own clothes ¹⁸ . **You are required to wear the UPS uniform/vest** whenever on duty, along with any required ID badge. Adhere to UPS appearance guidelines: keep a neat, professional appearance (UPS has relaxed some old rules on hair and tattoos, but you should still look well-groomed and approachable). The provided vest or uniform makes you easily identifiable to customers.
- **Footwear:** You must provide your own **work shoes or boots**. UPS policy requires **comfortable, closed-toe shoes** with a **sturdy upper** (for support) and **non-slip soles** ¹⁸ . You'll be doing a lot of walking and stepping in and out of your vehicle, possibly on wet or icy surfaces, so invest in quality slip-resistant footwear. Breaking in your shoes before peak season is a good idea to avoid blisters.
- **Safety Gear:** UPS will include any necessary safety gear in your uniform kit (the reflective vest is standard). It's wise to also keep a **flashlight** (for after-dark deliveries), a pair of **work gloves** (for handling dozens of packages, especially in cold weather), and perhaps a **rain jacket** or umbrella handy. These aren't official requirements, but they'll help you do the job comfortably and safely in all conditions.

- **Vehicle Prep:** Before peak season starts, prepare your car for the job. Remove clutter from your trunk and back seat so you have maximum cargo space. It's often helpful to lay down a blanket or tarp in the cargo area to protect your car's interior from dirt or to slide heavy boxes. You might also consider investing in **cargo bins or boxes** to help organize packages in your vehicle (organization tips are covered in the next section). Ensure your car's maintenance is up-to-date (oil change, tire check, etc.) because you'll be putting extra miles on it.

Maintenance & Fuel: UPS covers the cost of fuel for your deliveries (more on fuel reimbursement in the Pay section), but **you are responsible for your vehicle's maintenance and general wear-and-tear** ¹⁹. Keep an eye on your gas tank (start each day with a full tank if possible), and maintain your car (fluids, brakes, tires) so you don't risk a breakdown mid-route. Remember, if your personal car breaks down, there is no UPS spare vehicle for you – it's on you to have reliable transportation throughout the season.

3. Delivery Operations & Procedures

This section walks you through a typical day and the standard procedures for PVDs – from picking up packages to delivering them safely and efficiently. As a PVD, you will be trained on UPS's methods, but here's an overview of **step-by-step operations** and best practices:

1. Start of Day – Check-In and Package Pickup: Arrive at the designated UPS facility **on time (or a few minutes early)** for your scheduled shift. You'll typically start your day at a UPS hub, warehouse, or meeting point where packages are staged for your route. Check in with the supervisor or dispatcher for PVDs. They will direct you to your packages – often, your deliveries will be **segregated in a cart or area** by route or in tote bags. Verify you have the correct set of packages (each will be labeled for the addresses on your route). Before loading, **scan each package** using the UPS mobile app or device to “check out” those parcels under your name (this links them to you in the system for tracking) ²⁰. Load your vehicle **thoughtfully**: place heavier packages on the bottom and lighter ones on top to avoid crushing. **Organize packages in your car by stop order** if possible – for example, you might arrange them in your backseat or trunk from last delivery to first, so you can work your way through the pile logically ²¹. If packages are labeled with route numbers or sequence numbers, use those to help order them. Taking a few extra minutes to sort your cargo at the start saves a lot of time on the road. *(Many new PVDs wish they'd learned more about vehicle organization – unlike a UPS truck with shelves, your car is an open space, so consider using bins or even marking packages with the stop number in marker for quick identification)* ²¹. Once loaded, make sure you have your **scanner/phone, InfoNotices** (UPS delivery attempt notices), **your UPS ID**, and any other supplies before you depart.

2. Navigating Your Delivery Route: UPS will provide you with a list of delivery addresses – often through the mobile app or a printed manifest. In some cases, PVDs can have input on their route (especially if you know the local area well), but generally your route is predetermined by UPS logistics. As a PVD, you typically handle a **smaller, more concentrated route** than a regular UPS truck would ²². Use a **GPS navigation system** (your phone's map app or the UPS app's navigation feature) to chart an efficient path connecting all your delivery stops. You are expected to **stick to the assigned addresses and complete all deliveries** in your manifest ²³. UPS's standard delivery window is roughly **9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.**, and all your stops should fall in that timeframe ²⁴. Plan your driving route carefully to avoid unnecessary backtracking – grouping stops by neighborhood or plotting a loop can be effective. While driving, **obey all traffic laws** and drive defensively (UPS puts a huge emphasis on safe driving, which we'll cover in the Safety section). Avoid distractions: do not text or fiddle with the app while driving. **Pull over in a safe place** if you need to re-

check addresses or the sequence of stops. Remember that as a PVD you generally have the freedom to rearrange the order of your stops if it makes sense for efficiency, as long as all packages are delivered by the end of day and within any time commitments (e.g., some Next Day Air or time-definite packages might need to go first). Monitor the time and try to maintain a steady pace – UPS might inform you of expected delivery rates (e.g., a certain number of stops per hour), but quality and safety are more important than rushing unsafely. If you foresee not finishing on time (e.g., due to traffic or an unexpected delay), communicate that to your supervisor.

3. Parking & Approaching the Delivery Location: For each stop, find a **safe place to park** your vehicle. If you're in a residential area, you can usually pull into the customer's driveway or park along the curb in front of the house. Turn on your hazard lights if you're stopping on a roadside. Avoid blocking driveways or mailboxes unnecessarily, and never block fire hydrants. Once parked, **grab the package (or packages) for that address** – double-check the label to be sure you have the right box for the right house. It's easy to mix up house numbers, so develop a habit of verifying the address label against your delivery address before walking to the door. **Do not leave your vehicle running unattended**; turn it off and lock it if you'll be more than a few steps away (UPS's policy is the driver should take the keys – safety first). As you approach the home or business, **be mindful of your footing** (watch for icy patches, wet leaves, or trip hazards in yards). If there's a walkway, use it rather than cutting through landscaping.

4. Delivery to the Customer: Whenever possible, **deliver packages directly to the recipient's door** or a secure location near it. UPS's service is typically **doorstep delivery**, not mailbox delivery (and in fact, placing packages inside U.S. mailboxes is not allowed) ²⁵. Knock on the door or ring the doorbell to alert the customer that a delivery has arrived. If the customer comes to the door, **greet them with a smile** and confirm the name on the package if necessary. You can say something like, "Hello, UPS delivery for [Name]." If a signature is **required** (this will be indicated in your scanner app for that stop), politely ask them to sign on your device (or during COVID times, UPS adjusted this so you might just confirm their name and sign on their behalf in the app) ²⁶. Always be courteous – remember you are a representative of UPS, even if you're not in a big brown truck. If **no one is home** and the package **does NOT require a signature**, you are generally allowed to **leave the package in a safe place** by the door. "Safe place" typically means somewhere sheltered from weather and not easily visible from the street (to avoid theft). For example, tuck the package behind a pillar, inside a screen door, or under a bench if available. After leaving it, **knock or ring once more** as you depart, so if someone is home but didn't hear you initially, they'll know a delivery arrived. **Never throw or drop packages** – always set them down with care, even if you're in a hurry. All deliveries should be scanned as "Delivered" via the app or scanner **at the point of delivery** (the timestamp and GPS will serve as proof). The app may prompt you to enter information like "Left at front door" or "Left with receptionist" for business deliveries; fill these out accurately. If a package **does require a signature** and the recipient is not home, **do not leave the package**. UPS policy in that case is to leave a **UPS InfoNotice** (a paper notice) at the door, indicating that you attempted delivery and will reattempt or that the package will be held ²⁷. As a PVD, your specific instructions might be to bring such packages back to the facility at the end of your shift for a reattempt on another day. Fill out the InfoNotice with the date and time and mark the appropriate checkboxes (your supervisor will show you how). This alerts the customer that their package is safe but could not be delivered without a signature ²⁷.

5. During Your Route – Scanning and Issues: Throughout your route, you'll use the UPS app or device to **manage stops and scanning**. Typically, you'll scan each package **twice**: first when you load it (pickup scan) and again when you deliver it (delivery scan) ²⁰. The device will capture GPS coordinates and time, and for some deliveries you might need to take a photo (for example, some areas have implemented photo on

delivery for no-signature packages). Follow the prompts on your device. If you encounter any **delivery issues** on route – such as an address you **cannot find** or an apartment building you **can't access** – use your training: For address confusion, double-check the address label vs. GPS. You can also call your supervisor or the center for guidance (they might have additional directions on file). For gated apartments or communities, see if there's a call box to request entry; if not, that delivery might need to be attempted when access can be arranged (mark it in your device as unable to deliver, per training). **Keep your supervisor informed** of any significant problems or delays. They might be able to contact the customer or provide help. Also, if you realize you made a mistake (delivered to the wrong address or left a package you now feel is unsafe), notify management immediately – they can often retrieve or remedy the situation quickly. It's better to report issues promptly rather than let them escalate.

6. End of Day – Return and Check-Out: Your day isn't done until all your packages are accounted for. After you have finished all deliveries (or if your shift time is ending), **head back to the UPS facility** or meet point as instructed. Any packages that you were **unable to deliver** (e.g., missed signatures, address issues, or packages refused by customer) must be returned to the facility. *Never take any UPS packages home.* Upon return, a supervisor will check in those undelivered items and arrange them for the next delivery attempt. Make sure to **sign out or inform the supervisor that you're done** for the day, and turn in your device if required. If you were using a UPS-provided phone/scanner, you might dock it or leave it charging at the facility. Verify that your **timecard or hours are logged** (depending on UPS's system, you may need to clock out on a kiosk or the supervisor might log your out time). This ensures you get paid for all the hours you worked. **Report any incidents or issues** from the day (for example, if a package was damaged, a dog bite incident, a citation, etc.) as there are procedures to follow for each. Once everything is settled, you're free to head home and rest – you've earned it!

Additional Operational Tips:

- **Efficiency:** Seasoned drivers recommend methods like carrying a **package tote or large bag** to consolidate multiple small packages on a single trip to a house (especially useful in apartment complexes). Also, organizing your vehicle at the start (as mentioned) can significantly boost your delivery speed.
- **Housekeeping:** Bring a **trash bag** in your car for things like shrink wrap or tape peels from packages, empty water bottles, etc. Keeping your car tidy prevents confusion (you don't want yesterday's undelivered InfoNotice papers mixed with today's).
- **Customer Preferences:** Occasionally customers leave notes (e.g., "UPS: please leave packages at side door" or "don't ring bell, baby sleeping"). Be observant for any such instructions on the UPS label (there's sometimes a note field) or at the residence. Accommodate them when safe and feasible. Good customer service can set you apart.
- **Speed vs. Safety:** During peak season, you might feel pressure to go faster. Remember, **safety is the top priority at UPS**. It's better to complete your route a bit late but safely and accurately, than to cut corners. UPS management understands how demanding the job is and will appreciate a clean delivery record over reckless speed. As one UPS motto says, *"Always safe, always improving."*

4. Pay & Scheduling

Understanding how you'll be scheduled and compensated as a PVD is important for managing your expectations (and your wallet!). This section covers your hourly pay, how scheduling works, work hours, and related topics like mileage reimbursement and peak season workload.

Hourly Pay Rate: UPS PVDs earn a competitive hourly wage. The exact pay rate can vary by region and year, but as of recent seasons UPS has advertised a starting pay of around **\$21 per hour** for seasonal support drivers ²⁸. In some higher-cost markets or during critical volume surges, the rate may be higher (some PVDs report rates in the mid-\$20s per hour, up to around \$30 in rare cases) ²⁹. UPS may also offer **peak season incentives or bonuses** in certain years to attract PVDs, so keep an eye out for any announcements on that. All pay is *hourly* – you get paid for your time on the clock, so if you end up working overtime (more than 40 hours in a week), you should receive overtime pay accordingly. As a seasonal employee, you typically **do not receive regular benefits** like health insurance or paid time off, but you are covered by workers' compensation and unemployment insurance like any other UPS employee.

Paycheck & Taxes: UPS pays weekly during the peak season. You will receive a paycheck (or direct deposit) **each week**, usually with a one-week delay. For example, your hours worked in Week 1 will be paid at the end of Week 2. UPS states that seasonal drivers are paid weekly on the same schedule as other employees ³⁰. In practice, many PVDs see their direct deposit hit on **Thursdays** for the prior week's work ³¹. UPS will deduct taxes (federal, state, FICA) from your paycheck just like a normal job – you are not an independent contractor, so you don't have to worry about self-employment tax filings ¹⁹. This can be a positive compared to gig delivery jobs, as UPS handles the withholdings for you. At the end of the year, UPS will provide a W-2 form for your earnings. *(If your seasonal work spans into January, those weeks would be on the next year's W-2.)*

Mileage & Expense Reimbursement: One major perk of the PVD program is that UPS will compensate you for the use of your personal vehicle through **mileage reimbursement**. This is meant to cover gasoline and a portion of wear-and-tear. UPS typically reimburses mileage at the **IRS standard rate** (for example, around \$0.655 per mile in 2023, though this rate can change yearly) ³². Each day or week, you'll report the miles you drove for deliveries (often your center will calculate this based on addresses or you log your odometer). That mileage pay will be added to your regular pay. It's effectively like extra pay that is often **not taxed** (reimbursements for expenses are usually non-taxable). For instance, if you worked a 6-hour day and drove 50 miles total for deliveries, you'd get 6 hours of pay at \$21/hr = \$126, **plus** 50 miles * \$0.655 = \$32.75 for mileage, totaling about \$158.75. Mileage reimbursement means you shouldn't have to pay out-of-pocket for fuel. **Tip:** Track your mileage and verify it against what UPS records, to ensure you're fully reimbursed. Additionally, some locations offer a small **phone/data stipend** if you use your own smartphone for deliveries ¹⁷. This might be a set amount per day or week (e.g., a few dollars per shift) to cover the data usage of the UPS app. Check with your HR or supervisor if such a stipend applies; if so, it will usually appear on your pay stub as a reimbursement or allowance.

Scheduling & Hours: Scheduling for PVDs can be somewhat flexible but is driven by package volume. Generally, when you're hired, UPS will ask for your availability (which days of the week and what hours you can work). During the **busy holiday weeks, expect to work 5 days a week** (sometimes 6, especially the weeks before Christmas) unless you've arranged otherwise. The **standard delivery operating hours are 9:00 AM to 8:00 PM** for residential deliveries ²⁴, so your shifts will fall in that window. A typical PVD shift might start around late morning (10 or 11 AM) after the regular drivers have picked up their loads – then you take additional packages for afternoon and evening deliveries. Many PVDs work **8-hour days**, but shift lengths can vary. Some days might be shorter (~4-5 hours) if volume is lighter or if you finish early, while other days could extend to 10+ hours if there's a huge volume that needs to be delivered that day. UPS will **pay for all hours you work**, and if you go over 40 hours in a week, overtime pay (time-and-a-half) should kick in according to labor laws. However, UPS often manages schedules to avoid excessive overtime for seasonals.

Flexibility and Notification: Depending on your UPS location, scheduling might be done weekly or even day-to-day. You may have a set schedule (e.g., “plan to work Monday–Friday starting at noon each day”) or you might be on a call-in basis where they’ll confirm your shift the day before. **Be proactive** – check in with the supervisor to know if you’re needed the next day if they haven’t told you. During the core of peak season (early December to Christmas), assume you’re working close to full-time. In early January, as volume drops, your schedule might reduce quickly. Communication is key: ensure UPS has your current phone number and that you respond promptly to any calls or messages about work. Many PVDs report that they had fairly **consistent hours on a day-to-day basis (often 6–8 hour shifts)** ³³, but the start and end times could shift based on when packages are ready for you. Also, you may get some **weekend work**; UPS delivers on Saturdays in many areas and even Sundays in December. If weekend availability is expected, it should be mentioned in your interview or orientation.

Peak Season Expectations: Peak season at UPS is intense. The volume of packages can be double or triple the rest of the year. As a PVD, you are brought on specifically to handle this spike. Expect some long days and a fast work pace. It’s not unusual for a PVD to deliver **100 or more packages per day** in mid-December ³⁴. You’ll get very familiar with the neighborhoods you service! UPS managers may occasionally ask if you can **extend** your hours or take on an extra route if you finish early – if you’re willing and able, this can mean more pay. (They’ll reimburse additional mileage as well.) Keep in mind the job is temporary: typically **ending around Christmas or New Year’s**. Some PVDs are kept a bit longer into January if there are backlogs or returns to handle, but per UPS’s needs, most will be done by the second week of January at the latest ³⁵. So, maximize your earnings while you can in those 6-8 weeks. UPS will let you know your end date (sometimes at short notice, like “after Friday we won’t need you anymore”). That’s normal for seasonal employment. Make sure to return any UPS property (like company vest, ID, devices) as instructed at the end of your tenure.

Time Tracking: In most cases, your **time is tracked via the DIAD app or by supervisors**. You may not physically punch a clock; instead, your shift start/end might be recorded when you log into the delivery app or when you radio in “all clear.” Follow whatever method your manager explains for timekeeping. If you notice any discrepancy on your pay stub (e.g., missing hours or mileage), report it promptly – UPS will correct verified errors and compensate you.

Work-Life Balance: During these weeks, plan for limited free time, especially if you’re working full-time elsewhere or taking classes. PVD work can be tiring, and you’ll likely want to rest on days off. However, UPS does value safety, so they shouldn’t force you beyond legal hour limits (e.g., more than 60 hours/week for drivers). If you ever feel overloaded or have a conflict, communicate with your supervisor. They often can adjust routes or find someone else; it’s better to speak up than to no-call/no-show (which would terminate your employment).

Summary of Compensation: To recap, as a UPS PVD you earn an hourly wage (paid weekly), **plus** additional pay for mileage (and possibly phone use). You won’t have long-term benefits since it’s seasonal, but the hourly pay is significantly higher than many other delivery gigs, and you have the reassurance of being an employee. The money can be great for a short-term gig – many return year after year for this reason. Just remember to budget for the fact that the job ends after the holidays (it’s wise to not immediately spend all those paychecks, in case it takes a bit to line up your next gig or if you’re using this to supplement holiday expenses).

5. Safety & Customer Interactions

UPS has a saying: *"Safety is our highest priority."* This is not just lip service – the company invests heavily in training its drivers to operate safely and interact professionally with customers ³⁶ ³⁷. As a PVD, you might not go through the full multi-week UPS driver training, but you are still expected to uphold UPS's safety standards and provide excellent customer service. This section covers the key safety practices and tips for positive customer interactions, including pandemic-related hygiene protocols.

Driving Safety Rules: When you're on the road as a PVD, you should drive as cautiously and attentively as if you were driving a UPS truck. UPS drivers are known for their **defensive driving techniques** – you'll learn some of these in training. Key points include:

- **Stay Alert & Avoid Distractions:** Keep your eyes moving, constantly scanning for potential hazards (pedestrians, aggressive drivers, pets, etc.) ³⁸. UPS famously teaches drivers to **verbally narrate hazards** ("dog on left," "child near curb," etc.) to keep focus ³⁸ – you can practice this in your own car to stay sharp. Absolutely no texting or app fiddling while driving; if you need to update something on the UPS app, **pull over safely** to do it.
- **Obey All Traffic Laws:** This sounds basic, but it's critical. Observe speed limits (UPS does not want speeders – a ticket on your record can jeopardize your job). Come to complete stops at stop signs. Use turn signals for every turn or lane change. And of course, always wear your **seat belt**. UPS's culture is so strict on seat belts that drivers buckle up even just moving trucks around the parking lot. You should do the same in your car – it sets a good example and protects you.
- **Safe Following Distance:** Maintain a cushion of space between you and the vehicle ahead. UPS trains its drivers to never tailgate; this gives you time to react if the car in front brakes suddenly. In residential neighborhoods, be prepared for sudden stops – children chasing a ball, bikes swerving, etc. By keeping your distance and driving at a safe speed, you greatly reduce risk.
- **Minimize Backing Up:** If possible, plan your stops so you can **avoid backing your car**. Backing is a common cause of accidents. If you must back out of a driveway, do it slowly and check all mirrors and your backup camera (if you have one). At UPS facilities, you'll notice drivers back their trucks into parking spots or always position to pull forward out of a space – emulate this strategy with your car to the extent feasible.
- **Use Your Lights:** Since you might deliver into the evening hours, ensure your headlights are on as dusk approaches. Use hazard flashers when stopped roadside for a delivery. If you're walking on a street at night, wear your reflective vest (over your brown jacket, if you have one) so you're visible to traffic.
- **Vehicle Condition:** Do a quick **pre-trip check** each day: test your brakes, lights, wipers, etc. If something critical fails (like headlights go out or tire blows), stop operations and inform your supervisor – driving an unsafe vehicle is not worth the risk. Keep your windshield and windows clear for visibility. And adjust your mirrors for a clear view around your car.

Package Handling & Personal Safety: Delivering packages isn't just driving – there's physical work at each stop. Practice **proper lifting techniques** to protect your back: when picking up a heavy box (up to 70 lbs), **bend at the knees, not your waist**, keep the package close to your body, and avoid twisting while lifting. If a package is very bulky or at the upper limit of weight, take your time – you can even break the move into two steps (lift from ground to knee, then knee to chest). If you have a personal handcart or dolly and a really heavy item, use it. UPS teaches methods for safe lifting and moving because driver injuries often come from improper technique ³⁷. Wear your gloves for grip on slick or heavy boxes.

Be mindful of **weather conditions**: in rain, surfaces get slippery – take shorter steps and use railings. In winter, icy patches are a hazard; some PVDs carry a small bag of salt or sand to sprinkle on an icy porch (an extra step, but it can prevent a fall). Stay hydrated and take care of yourself physically – the job is a workout, and it's easy to overstrain if you don't rest or if you try to haul too many packages at once. Don't hesitate to make an extra trip to the car if needed; five lighter trips are better than one overloaded injury-causing trip.

Customer Interaction & Service: As a seasonal UPS driver, you are the face of UPS to each customer you meet. Good customer service can leave a lasting positive impression (and makes your day more pleasant too). Here are some guidelines for interactions:

- **Professional Appearance & Demeanor:** Always wear your UPS uniform or vest during deliveries, and keep it visible. Many customers are initially cautious seeing someone in an ordinary car delivering packages; your uniform and friendly attitude will reassure them. Introduce yourself if needed: e.g., "Hi there, I'm with UPS delivering your package." Be polite and upbeat, even if you're tired – a smile or a friendly wave goes a long way.
- **Respect Customer Property:** When walking to someone's door, stick to the driveway or walkway. Don't cut across lawns or gardens. Close any gates behind you if you opened them. If an item requires special handling (like leaving a heavy box in a garage), only do so if prior instructions allow – otherwise leave it at the door. Never throw packages or drop them loudly; set them down gently. Customers often have **security cameras (e.g., Ring doorbells)**, so assume you are being observed at each doorstep ³⁹. Acting professionally is not just right – it's also being recorded in many cases.
- **Handling Signatures and IDs:** If a delivery needs a signature or ID check (such as age verification for alcohol shipments), follow UPS protocol exactly. For adult signature required, you *must* see a valid ID (21+ years old) and have them sign. If the customer refuses or is not present, you cannot leave the package. Explain courteously that you'll attempt redelivery or that they can arrange pickup. UPS drivers during COVID often just asked for the person's name and signed "COVID-19" in lieu of physical signature ²⁶; check if this policy (contact-free signature) is in effect or if normal signing has resumed.
- **Difficult Situations:** Most deliveries are routine, but occasionally you'll encounter challenging scenarios. Perhaps a customer is upset (maybe a previous package was late or damaged). Stay calm, listen to their concern, and apologize for any inconvenience – even if it wasn't your fault. You can say, "I'm sorry about that. I'm just a seasonal driver, but I'll note your concern." If the issue is something you can't address (like a missing package from last week), advise them to contact UPS customer service or the local center for help. **Never argue or become confrontational** with a customer. In the rare event someone refuses a delivery or tries to hand you a return package spontaneously – follow UPS rules (generally, do not take a package back with you unless it's a formal pickup you are assigned). If they refuse delivery, take the package back and note it. If someone is hostile or you feel unsafe, leave the area and call your supervisor immediately. Your safety comes first.
- **Animals and Pets:** Dog encounters are common. Many households have dogs that may be loose in yards or answer the door with the owner. Treat all unknown dogs as potentially unfriendly: if a dog is growling or blocking your path, do not approach the house. You can honk your car horn or call the customer phone number (if provided) to have them secure the pet. UPS drivers carry dog biscuits sometimes, but use caution – if you choose to carry treats, ensure the owner is okay with it before giving one. Never do something that might provoke a dog (like running or turning your back quickly). It's perfectly acceptable to skip a delivery due to an aggressive dog and mark it for reattempt; just document it and inform the supervisor.

- **COVID-19 and Hygiene Protocols:** In the wake of COVID-19, UPS implemented many safety measures to protect employees and customers. As a PVD, you should adhere to any current guidelines. This may include **wearing a face mask** when interacting with customers at a close distance (especially if local or company policy requires it or if a customer seems uncomfortable). Always carry a mask with you just in case. Practice **good hygiene**: use hand sanitizer periodically, especially after handling a lot of packages or touching doorbells, gate keypads, etc. (Keep a small bottle of sanitizer in your car.) You might also choose to wear disposable gloves, though note that gloves can give a false sense of security – handwashing or sanitizing is still needed. Try to maintain a **respectful distance** when handing over a package – you can set it down, step back and let the customer pick it up to minimize contact. If you need to collect a signature on the phone, consider having the customer use their own pen/stylus if applicable, or sanitize the screen/stylus before and after use. UPS also provided guidance that if an employee is **exposed to or tests positive for COVID**, they should report it and quarantine; obviously, do not come to work if you are ill. This is as much for others' safety as yours. During the height of the pandemic, UPS temporarily suspended requiring customer signatures on most deliveries – instead, drivers would log the name of the receiver ²⁶. By 2025, this may or may not still be in effect depending on conditions, but be aware of such policy changes.

Emergencies and Accidents: If, despite all precautions, you are involved in a **vehicle accident** or have an **injury** while on the job, follow UPS emergency protocols. First, ensure your own safety and the safety of others. Call 911 if needed for any injuries or significant accidents. Then, as soon as possible, **contact your UPS supervisor or the PVD coordinator** for your area (you should have this phone number in your contacts or on the emergency card given in training) ⁴⁰. UPS has specific accident reporting procedures – you will likely need to fill out an incident report. Remember, UPS's Liberty Mutual insurance policy covers PVDs for liability while you are working ¹³, so do not admit fault or worry about insurance on the spot – just exchange information with any other party as required by law and let UPS handle it through their channels. For minor fender-benders with no other cars involved (e.g., you scrape a fence), still inform UPS management right away – honesty is the best policy. If you get a **traffic ticket** during your shift (speeding, etc.), notify management too. It may or may not affect your continued employment depending on severity, but failing to report it definitely will if they find out later.

Protecting Packages and Vehicle: While rare, package theft (from your vehicle) or vehicle break-ins can happen, especially since during peak season thieves know cars might be full of goods. Always **lock your car** when you're away from it, even for a minute. It's easy to think "I'll only be at this door 30 seconds" but that's enough time for someone to grab a package from an open trunk. If you have an alarm, use it. Keep packages out of sight (use your trunk or cover them with a blanket) to avoid tempting anyone when you're parked on the street. If you ever feel you're being followed or someone is suspicious around you, do not confront them – call your supervisor or, if needed, the authorities. Your safety and the security of the packages are paramount. UPS may have plainclothes security doing "follow checks" in some areas due to high theft – they usually identify themselves if they approach you. In general, stay aware of your surroundings. Peak season means it gets dark early; a **headlamp** or flashlight helps you see house numbers and walkways, but it also can deter would-be thieves since you are more aware.

UPS Safety Culture: Know that UPS has a robust safety culture – over the decades they've developed comprehensive methods to keep drivers safe ³⁷. As a seasonal driver, embrace this. Attend the safety tailgate meetings if they have them, listen to the experienced drivers' tips, and when in doubt, **choose the safer course of action**. Management would much rather you miss a delivery or be a bit slow than have an accident or injury. Some UPS safety methods you might hear about include the "Five Seeing Habits" or the

“Ten Point Commentary” for driving – these are essentially common-sense driving rules that you can adopt quickly. For example: “Get the big picture” (look at the whole traffic scene, not just the car ahead), “Leave yourself an out” (always have an escape path in traffic), “Know what’s happening 15 seconds ahead on the road,” etc. You might not memorize them all in a short stint, but internalize the spirit: **anticipate hazards** and **drive in a way that gives you time to react**. This will serve you well not just at UPS but anytime you’re on the road.

Summary: Prioritize safety every moment – from how you lift packages to how you drive, to how you interact with customers during a pandemic. By following UPS’s safety rules and using common sense, you’ll protect yourself, the public, and the valuable cargo entrusted to you. And by treating every customer with courtesy and professionalism, you uphold UPS’s reputation for service. Many customers will appreciate your effort – some might even leave out cookies, snacks, or thank-you notes (it happens during the holidays!). Enjoy those moments; they are a highlight of being on the front line of deliveries. And at the end of the day, you can take pride in having delivered smiles and holiday cheer along with those packages.

6. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: What kind of schedule can I expect as a PVD? Will I be working every day or just when needed?

A: PVD schedules are driven by holiday package volume. In general, you should be prepared to work **5 days a week, potentially 6 days during the busiest weeks of December**. Many PVDs work Monday through Friday, often in the afternoons into evening (e.g., 11 AM – 7 PM), but schedules can vary ³³. UPS’s delivery window is roughly 9 AM to 8 PM, so your shifts will fall in that range ²⁴. Some locations might give you a set schedule up front; others may schedule you day-by-day depending on volume. It’s a good idea to assume you’ll be working nearly **full-time from Thanksgiving to Christmas**, unless told otherwise. After Christmas, the hours typically drop off sharply. If you need a particular day off, communicate early – UPS can sometimes accommodate if they know in advance, but during peak season every driver counts. Flexibility is key; the more open your availability, the more work (and pay) you’ll get. On the flip side, if volume is unexpectedly low on a given day, UPS might cancel a shift – but that is less common in December since there’s usually plenty to deliver.

Q: Do I have to use my own car, or will UPS ever provide a vehicle?

A: The “**Personal Vehicle**” in PVD means yes, you will be using your own car 100% of the time for this role. UPS will not provide a UPS truck or van to PVDs. If you would prefer to drive a UPS-owned vehicle, you’d need to pursue a different position (such as a regular package delivery driver or a driver helper role where you ride in a UPS truck). The whole idea of the PVD program is for UPS to expand delivery capacity without adding more brown trucks, by using people’s personal vehicles. In some cases, if your car is out of service (e.g., in the shop) and you have a **secondary vehicle** that meets the requirements, you could use that – just update your supervisor with the insurance and registration info. But you cannot swap and drive a UPS truck; those are for the permanent drivers with commercial driver training.

Q: How does UPS pay for my gas and vehicle use? Is there a separate gas allowance?

A: UPS will compensate you through **mileage reimbursement** for each mile you drive on the job. This is calculated at a cents-per-mile rate (often the IRS standard mileage rate – around \$0.65 per mile in recent times) ³². Practically, this means your mileage pay is added to your paycheck. You won’t get a separate gas card or be reimbursed for actual fuel receipts; instead, it’s a flat rate per mile that is meant to cover fuel and some wear-and-tear. Many PVDs find that the mileage pay more than covers gas, especially if you drive a fuel-efficient car. For example, if you get 25 mpg and gas costs \$3/gallon, 65 cents per mile is effectively

paying you about \$16.25 per gallon – so it covers gas and leaves a bit toward maintenance. Keep track of the miles you drive for deliveries (note your odometer at the start and end of the day) to ensure the reported mileage is accurate. Besides mileage, UPS in some areas offers a **phone stipend** if you use your personal smartphone/data for deliveries ¹⁷ – it might be a small fixed amount. Ask your manager if this applies; it will usually be included automatically if so. Other expenses like car maintenance, insurance, etc., are on you (though remember UPS's insurance covers accidents while you're on the clock as long as your personal insurance is valid for deliveries ¹³). Also, you're an employee, so you won't be writing off mileage on your taxes (since UPS is effectively covering it). In short: your **weekly paycheck will include your hourly wages plus a mileage reimbursement line**. There's no need to pay for gas out-of-pocket beyond that – just fill up your tank and go, the mileage checks will compensate you in your pay.

Q: What should I wear while working? Do I get a UPS uniform?

A: UPS will provide you with the necessary uniform items. Seasonal PVDs typically receive either a **brown UPS driver shirt or jacket**, or a **high-visibility UPS vest** (or both) ¹⁸ . You are expected to wear either the full uniform or the vest **over your own clothes** at minimum, so that you are clearly identified as UPS while making deliveries. As for pants, UPS might provide brown uniform pants, but often PVDs can wear their own sturdy work pants (like jeans or khakis) – check your location's guidance. The key is to look professional: no shorts (if local climate allows and UPS says it's okay, maybe, but generally drivers wear long pants for safety), no open-toe shoes, no offensive graphics on any clothing under the vest, etc. You **must wear** closed-toe, non-slip **shoes or boots** that you provide ¹⁸ . Comfortable work boots or sneakers with good traction are recommended because you'll be walking a lot. UPS has appearance guidelines too – for example, maintain a neat appearance, and in the past, rules prohibited long hair or facial hair, but those have been relaxed recently (UPS now allows beards and longer hair as long as it's neat). If you do have long hair, probably tie it back for safety. You will also likely be issued a **UPS ID badge**; carry it with you or wear it if required. After the season, typically **you can keep the uniform pieces** (especially if you might return next year), but if they specifically request them back, be sure to return them. One more note: dress for the weather. If it's cold in your area, layer up (wear that UPS jacket or vest over a sweatshirt, for example). If it's raining, you might not get a UPS raincoat, so have your own rain jacket (perhaps wear it under the UPS vest to keep the branding visible). In hot weather, UPS brown t-shirts may be allowed. Always clarify with your supervisor if you're unsure – they'll tell you what's acceptable.

Q: How many packages will I have to deliver in a day? Is it as heavy a workload as regular UPS drivers?

A: The number of packages can vary quite a bit by location and day. Generally, PVDs handle fewer packages than a full-time UPS driver (who might do 150-200 stops in a day). As a PVD you might deliver anywhere from around **50 to 100+ packages per day** during the peak weeks ³⁴ . For example, one PVD reported doing about 80-140 packages in a 6-9 hour shift during the Christmas rush ³⁴ . In less dense areas or earlier in the season, your count might be on the lower end (30-60 packages). It's definitely a **busy workload**, but UPS tries to keep it within reason since they know you have a smaller vehicle capacity and you're new. They also often give PVDs packages that are close together geographically (for efficiency). Expect to be active all day – you'll rarely be sitting still because once you finish one delivery, you move to the next. If you're fast and finish early, UPS may either let you finish for the day or occasionally ask if you can take additional stops that another driver couldn't get to. Conversely, if you're running behind, they might send help (another driver) to take some stops off you – that's okay too. Don't be discouraged by the numbers; as you get the hang of it, you'll develop a rhythm. Also remember, not every day is the max – Mondays can be lighter, whereas Cyber Week (after Thanksgiving) and the week before Christmas will be *heavy*. In terms of **physical demands**, delivering 100 packages is a workout, but you will have dolly-able

items only if you bring one; otherwise you're lifting and carrying by hand each time. Take care of your body (see safety section). One nice thing: many customers are aware it's peak season and appreciate your hard work, which can be motivating when you have a mountain of boxes to deliver!

Q: What kind of training will I get? I've never done this before – how will I learn the systems and scanner?

A: UPS provides **paid training** before you start delivering on your own. The training for PVDs is condensed but covers the essentials. You can expect a day of orientation which may include watching training videos or computer-based lessons (covering topics like delivery methods, driver safety, using the handheld device/app, and company policies) ⁴¹. This orientation is often around 4-5 hours of material. UPS has even incorporated some modern tech like virtual reality in parts of its driver training ³⁶, so don't be surprised if you see some interesting training modules. In addition to the in-person (or classroom/virtual) training, there may be a few hours of **online training** you complete on your own time (UPS will pay you for the time spent) ⁴¹. These might be quizzes or tutorials on their training portal. After the initial training, when you start, UPS will usually have you do a **ride-along or supervised day**: either you ride with an experienced driver to see how it's done, or a supervisor rides with you in your car for a few deliveries to mentor you ⁴². This first-day ride-along is your chance to ask questions and get comfortable. They'll show you how to operate the scanner app (scan package, mark as delivered, what the codes mean, etc.), how to organize packages, and the proper delivery procedures. Don't worry – they know you're new. After that, you'll be sent out on your own route. But even then, you're not totally alone – you'll have contact numbers for help and other drivers around. Many PVDs report that other UPS drivers and managers were very helpful if they ran into a problem on route. So, the training is "short but intense." Pay close attention, take notes if you need, and don't hesitate to speak up during training if something isn't clear. It's much better to clarify doubts at the beginning than to be confused out in the field. By your third or fourth day of actual delivering, you'll likely feel much more confident as things click into place.

Q: Are there opportunities to stay on with UPS after the seasonal job?

A: Possibly, yes. While the PVD role is designed as a **seasonal position**, UPS frequently needs new permanent employees, and they often look at their pool of seasonal workers to fill those roles. In fact, UPS has historically hired a significant number of seasonals into permanent positions – roughly **35% of seasonal hires have been offered permanent jobs in recent years** ⁴. The types of permanent jobs could be as a **package handler** (working inside the hub sorting packages), a **driver helper** (if you wanted a part-time gig riding along with drivers at other times of year), or even eventually a **full-time delivery driver** if openings exist and you meet the criteria. Your seasonal gig is almost like a tryout – if you have good attendance, perform well, and show a great attitude, definitely let your supervisor know you'd be interested in staying on or coming back. UPS also allows seasonal employees to reapply each year; many PVDs return every holiday season as a way to earn extra money. Some even transition to permanent by doing this repeatedly until a spot opens. Additionally, UPS has hub jobs (unloading, sorting) that might be offered to you after peak if you want to keep working. So, if you love the work and UPS as a company, make it known! At the very least, you'll get a good reference for future jobs by doing well as a PVD. But it's not unheard of for someone to go from Christmas helper to a regular UPS driver eventually – it takes dedication (and sometimes patience), but the door is open. Keep an eye on the UPS careers site and those job alerts. And network with folks in the center; sometimes they'll tip you off about opportunities.

Q: What if I can't deliver a package (can't find address, customer not home for signature, etc.)?

A: UPS has clear methods for these scenarios. If you **cannot find an address**, first double-check GPS and address label details (sometimes labels have helpful info like "House at end of long driveway" in the fine

print). If still lost, you can call your dispatch or supervisor – they might have a clue (or even a phone number for the customer). If you absolutely cannot locate it, that package would be brought back and marked for address correction; don't just guess and leave it somewhere. For **customer not home and signature required**, as mentioned earlier, you should **not leave the package**. You will leave a UPS InfoNotice on the door and typically mark in your app "receiver not available" ²⁷. Depending on the service level, UPS usually makes up to three delivery attempts on different days. As a PVD, you might be attempting it the first time and a regular driver might do the subsequent attempts, or vice versa. Just make sure the notice is left and the package is secured back with you. If a customer is not home and **no signature is needed**, you can leave the package in a safe spot by the door. That's standard practice – in fact, most residential deliveries nowadays are "driver release" (no signature) so you'll be doing that a lot. If you encounter a situation where you're uncomfortable leaving a package (say it's a high-value item in a sketchy area and could be stolen), you can opt not to leave it and instead bring it back as well – note on the InfoNotice "left with UPS for pickup" or "delivery rescheduled" or the reason (e.g., "security concern"). Use your judgment, but generally UPS prefers we attempt delivery. For **apartments** where you can't get in, if there's a leasing office, you might leave packages there (get a name of who accepted it). If not, treat it like not home – notice and reattempt. If a customer **refuses** a delivery (rare, but if a package is unexpected or unwanted), take it back – write "Refused" on the parcel if possible or let the center know so they can return it to sender. Always **communicate** undelivered packages to your supervisor when you return – there's usually a log or they'll scan them as "Returned to building." Finally, if you have any **doubt or confusion** at a stop, it's better to skip and ask than to leave a package incorrectly. UPS would rather a package come back for redelivery than be misdelivered or lost.

Q: Is the job dangerous or what are the biggest challenges I should be aware of?

A: "Dangerous" is a strong word – UPS has many thousands of drivers on the road every day who come home safe. By following the safety training and using common sense, you greatly mitigate risks. That said, the **biggest challenges** and hazards include: **Traffic accidents** (hence the heavy focus on safe driving – you'll be driving a lot, so statistically that's your highest risk activity; drive defensively and you'll be fine), **slips, trips, and falls** (lots of getting in/out of the car and walking to doors – watch your step, especially in bad weather), **dog bites** or animal encounters (carry dog spray if provided, or just be cautious – most pets are friendly but a few are not), and **fatigue**. Fatigue is real – long days of physical work can tire you out, which can in turn affect your alertness. Get good sleep, stay hydrated and fed (keep snacks/water in the car), and take a breather if you need during the day (a 5-minute break to stretch can help). As for **challenges**: time management is one. You'll likely feel pressure to go quickly – the challenge is maintaining **accuracy and safety under time pressure**. Delivering the wrong package to the wrong address is a common mistake if you rush, so always double-check labels despite the hustle. Another challenge is the **learning curve** in the first week – it might feel overwhelming learning the scanner, route, processes, etc. But hang in there; it gets much smoother after a few days. And lastly, **weather** can be challenging – rain, snow, cold, darkness – all can make deliveries tougher. Equip yourself for conditions and allocate a bit more time to move carefully in bad weather. Overall, thousands of seasonal PVDs succeed each year – if it were overly dangerous, UPS wouldn't do it. So equip yourself with knowledge (which you're doing by reading this!), follow the training, and you'll handle the challenges.

Good luck and welcome to UPS's peak season team! Being a Personal Vehicle Driver is hard work, but it can also be rewarding. You'll be a critical part of making the holidays happen for countless people. Drive safe, deliver with care, and don't hesitate to ask for help or guidance from UPS management or fellow drivers. By

following this guide and UPS's training, you'll be well-prepared to thrive as a PVD. **Thank you for helping UPS deliver holiday cheer – and a job well done!**

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