Reference terms:

1. **MBL**: MBL stands for Master Bill of Lading. MBL is a receipt that can cover multiple shipments that are consolidated into a larger cargo load. The MBL is issued by the carrier to the shipper or freight forwarder, and it represents the contract of carriage between the carrier and the shipper.
2. **HBL**: HBL stands for House Bill of Lading. Its a receipt for a single shipment that acts as a contract between the shipper and the freight forwarder or Non-Vessel Operating Common Carrier (NVOCC). The HBL is usually issued by the freight forwarder or NVOCC to the seller of the goods.
3. **MBL Number**: A Master Bill of Lading (MBL) number is a unique reference number that is assigned to a shipment by a carrier or freight forwarder. The format of an MBL number varies by carrier line, but most shipping lines use a format of SCAC + master bill of lading number. If a bill of lading number does not follow this format, it may be a House Bill of Lading (HB/L) number.

**Bill of lading number formatting (MBL No.):**Below, you can find generic examples of each supported carrier's known master bill of lading format as of January 2024 based on what is acceptable via that carrier's own tracking webpage. This may not be the source of truth indefinitely, but these are the trends that we have observed based on the month and year previously mentioned.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Carrier | Carrier Code | MBL Formatting | Example |
| Australia National Line | ANNU | 3 letters + 7 numbers | ABC1234567 |
| APL | APLU | 3 letters + 7 numbers | ABC1234567 |
| CMA CGM | CMDU | 3 letters + 7 numbers | ABC1234567 |
| ONE Line | ONEY | 12 characters (3 letters + 9 numbers, or 4 letters + 8 numbers) | ABC123456789, or ABCD12345678 |

1. HBL Number (**HBL No.**): A House Bill of Lading (HBL) number is a number that identifies a bill of lading issued by a freight forwarder or non-vessel operating common carrier (NVOCC) to a shipper. The HBL is a crucial document in shipping, as it serves as a receipt for goods being shipped and a contractual agreement between the shipper and the freight forwarder or NVOCC.  
    Typically it’s a 10 alpha-numeric characters. For example, an AWS B/L number might look like AWSL123456.
2. Booking Number (Booking No.) : A booking number is a unique reference number that's assigned to a space reservation by a carrier or their agent. It's usually included on the bill of lading, or BOL, document. The BOL number is a unique identifier for a shipment, and it's used to track and manage cargo. A sample bill of lading booking number may look like BCO12345678, where "BCO" could be the shipping line's initials and "12345678" is the unique alphanumeric sequence for that booking.