Shipping & Freight Cheat Sheet

The terms you meet when you ship freight, vehicles or a motorcycle. Full definitions, examples and data: transportli.com/glossary/

Freight terms: who pays, who is responsible

Freight prepaid The shipper pays the carrier for the freight up front, so the receiver is not billed.

Freight collect The receiver pays the carrier for the freight when the shipment is delivered.

Prepaid and add The shipper pays the carrier first, then adds the freight cost to the invoice sent to the buyer.

Third-party billing A party other than the shipper or receiver, such as a broker or the buyer's parent company, is billed for the freight.

Freight broker A company that arranges transportation between shippers and carriers without owning the trucks.

Carrier The company that actually moves the freight with its own trucks and drivers.

Detention A fee charged when a driver is kept waiting at pickup or delivery beyond the free time allowed.

Drayage Short-distance trucking of freight, most often a container between a port or rail yard and a nearby warehouse.

Lane A specific origin-and-destination route, such as Dallas to Chicago, that freight prices are set for.

Incoterms 2020 at a glance (international sales)

Rule	Mode	Seller	Risk passes to buyer / seller holds
EXW	Any	Makes goods available at its premises	Buyer: from the seller's premises
FCA	Any	Delivers export-cleared goods to buyer's carrier	Buyer: at the handover
FAS	Sea	Delivers alongside the ship at the port	Buyer: alongside the ship
FOB	Sea	Delivers on board the ship at the port	Buyer: once on board
CFR	Sea	Pays freight to the destination port	Buyer: once on board at origin
CIF	Sea	Pays freight + minimum insurance	Buyer: once on board at origin
CPT	Any	Pays carriage to the named destination	Buyer: at first handover
CIP	Any	Pays carriage + all-risks insurance	Buyer: at first handover
DAP	Any	Delivers ready to unload at the place	Seller: until arrival (buyer pays duties)
DPU	Any	Delivers and unloads at the place	Seller: until unloaded (buyer pays duties)
DDP	Any	Delivers cleared for import, duties paid	Seller: until arrival

EXW to FAS: buyer does most. DAP, DPU, DDP: seller does most. Incoterms do not decide who owns the goods or when payment is due.

LTL freight terms

LTL (Less-Than-Truckload) Freight that shares a trailer with other shippers' freight, so you pay only for the space you use.

FTL (Full Truckload) One shipper uses the whole trailer, and the freight goes straight from pickup to delivery.

Volume LTL A service for bigger LTL shipments, often about 6 or more pallets, that some carriers price as a block.

Partial truckload A shipment that fills part of a trailer but is booked as a dedicated or semi-dedicated move.

Terminal A carrier facility where LTL freight is sorted, combined and moved between trucks.

Line haul The long-distance leg of a shipment between two terminals.

Pickup and delivery (P&D) The local legs of an LTL move, where a driver collects freight from the shipper or delivers it to the consignee.

Bill of lading (BOL) The shipping document that serves as the contract, receipt and condition record for the freight.

Pro number A tracking number the carrier assigns to a shipment.

NMFC The system that assigns a freight class to a commodity.

Freight class A number from 50 to 500 that describes how costly freight is to move, based on density, handling, stowability and liability.

Density A shipment's weight divided by its volume, in pounds per cubic foot. It drives freight class for most general freight.

Accessorial charge An extra fee for a service beyond standard dock-to-dock service, such as a liftgate or residential delivery.

Liftgate A hydraulic platform on the back of a truck that lowers freight to the ground when there is no loading dock.

Residential delivery Delivery to a home or a location treated as residential, which usually costs more.

Limited access A pickup or delivery location with restricted access, such as a school, church, storage facility or construction site.

Inside delivery Delivery past the dock or curb into the building, which is an extra service.

Appointment delivery A scheduled delivery window arranged with the consignee, usually for an extra fee.

Fuel surcharge (FSC) A charge that adjusts the rate for the price of diesel, usually shown as a percentage of the base charge.

Reweigh and reclass When a carrier weighs or measures a shipment at a terminal and re-rates it because the weight, size or class differ from the bill of lading.

Minimum charge The lowest price a carrier will charge for any shipment on a lane.

Guaranteed service A premium option that promises delivery by a certain time or date, for an extra charge.

Pallet A flat platform, commonly 48 by 40 inches, that lets freight be moved by forklift or pallet jack.

Typical LTL numbers from our data: median cheapest quote $466 (298 lanes), about $0.44 per mile, 4 days median transit. Liftgate adds about $75 to $108, residential delivery about $99 to $116. Class 100 adds about 26% and class 200 about 106% versus class 70 on a typical quote.

Auto transport terms

Open car transport Shipping a vehicle on an open trailer, the standard and cheapest way to move a car.

Enclosed car transport Shipping a vehicle inside a closed trailer that protects it from weather and road debris, at a higher price.

Door-to-door The carrier picks the car up at or near your address and delivers it to or near the destination address.

Terminal-to-terminal You drop the car at a carrier's storage lot and collect it at another lot near the destination.

Inoperable vehicle (INOP) A car that cannot start, steer, brake or roll under its own power, and needs a winch or a forklift to load.

Pickup window The range of days in which a carrier can pick up your car, because routes and drivers shift.

Condition report The inspection record the driver completes at pickup and delivery, marking any damage on a diagram of the car.

Car hauler The truck and trailer, usually double-decker, that carries cars from one place to another.

Motorcycle and expedited terms

Motorcycle crate A wooden crate or frame built around a bike so it ships as freight on a pallet.

Wheel chock A fixed stand that holds a motorcycle's front wheel upright during transport.

Soft ties Fabric loops that attach a tie-down strap to the handlebars or frame without scratching the bike.

Enclosed motorcycle transport Moving a bike inside a closed trailer, which most of our delivered motorcycle shipments used.

Motorcycle shipping minimum The lowest price a carrier will accept to move a bike, no matter how short the distance.

Expedited freight Freight moved on a dedicated vehicle, usually a van or a truck, directly to the destination, faster than standard service.

Sprinter van A large cargo van that carries about 3 to 4 pallets and around 3,000 lb, used for expedited freight.

Cargo van A smaller van for one or two pallets or boxed freight, used when speed matters and the load is light.

Box truck A truck with a cargo box on the same chassis, typically 16 to 26 feet, for larger or heavier expedited freight.

Hot shot Time-sensitive freight moved on a pickup truck with a flatbed or gooseneck trailer.

Dedicated truck A vehicle booked just for your freight, which goes straight from pickup to delivery.

Same-day delivery Freight picked up and delivered on the same day, usually by a van or box truck dispatched on request.

White glove delivery A premium delivery that includes inside placement, unpacking or setup, not just dropping freight at the dock.

Our data: enclosed car transport about +75% over open; inoperable car about +25%; Sprinter van about 3 to 4 pallets and 3,000 lb, $183 under 50 miles to $2,257 at 2,001 to 2,500 miles; motorcycle about $355 under 300 miles to $1,450 at 2,000+ miles.

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