

Postal Service

Sending or receiving letters and packages is usually simple and quite fast, even in remote areas. The most widely used postal service in the country is the **Deutsche Post** (German postal service) – www.post.de, which is directly linked to **DHL**, the biggest parcel delivery company in the world.



The price is determined by the weight and size of the envelope or package, as long as the delivery is within Germany.

The **Deutsche Post** website offers several shipping options for domestic and international letters, packages, postcards, books, and even small items. If you want to send a small gift, for example, you can use the **Warensendung** (goods shipping) option, which is valid for items weighing up to 1,000 grams and with maximum dimensions of 35.3 x 25 x 5 cm. This inexpensive shipping option does not include tracking and can take up to four business days or more to be delivered.

For larger packages or international shipments, you can use companies

DHL and **Hermes** are the most commonly used parcel delivery services in Germany. Their prices are similar, but **DHL** generally calculates shipping costs based on the weight of the parcel, while **Hermes** bases its prices more on the size.

such as **DHL**, **Hermes**, **DPD**, **UPS**, or **GLS**.

Sending and receiving letters

The name on your mailbox is just as important as the address. The mail carrier will check that the name of the recipient is exactly the same as the name on the envelope or package. If it is not, the mail may be returned – even if the address is correct.

Therefore, when moving to a new residence, it is essential that you put

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your name correctly on the mailbox. This applies especially to your surname. You can write:

- Your full name: **William Robert Johnson**
- Just your last name: **Johnson**
- Or with an abbreviation: **W.R. Johnson**

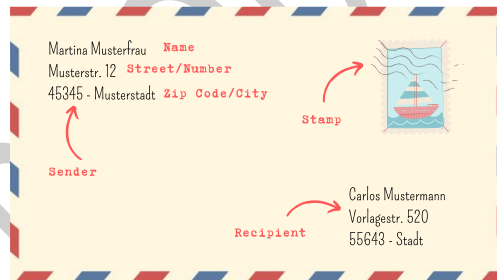
The most important thing is that your last name is clear, legible, and correct, as this is the main criterion used by the delivery service.

The correct way to address

If the envelope does not have a transparent window, you should write the recipient's address in the lower right corner of the front of the envelope (the smooth side without a flap). Write your address on the same side, in the upper left corner.

For envelopes with a window, such as those used by banks and other official institutions, the recipient's and sender's addresses should also appear only on the front of the envelope.

In this case, the sender's address is written on a single line above the recipient's address and is visible through the window. The information should be separated by commas.



For packages where you write the address by hand, you can either write directly on the box as you would on a letter, or go to a post office, request a free shipping label and fill it out manually. If you are using an app, it will generate a printable label or a QR code that can be presented at shipping points with self-service terminals.



Digital stamps

A practical new feature is the **Mobile Briefmarke** (digital stamp). You can purchase stamps online via the **Deutsche Post** website or app. Instead of

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putting a physical stamp on the envelope, you receive a code to write directly in the top right corner of the envelope.

Then, simply drop the letter in one of the yellow **Briefkästen** (mailboxes) that are scattered throughout the city. These boxes have a schedule that indicates the collection times, i.e., when the letters are picked up for delivery. This helps you estimate when your mail will be delivered.



Registered letter

If you want more security when sending a letter, you can opt for an **Einschreiben** (registered letter). This option provides proof of posting and, depending on the type chosen, also proof of delivery:



- **Einschreiben Einwurf** (registered letter with delivery to the mailbox): The mail carrier digitally records the time the letter is placed in the recipient's mailbox.
- **Standard Einschreiben** (standard registered letter): Requires a signature upon delivery. You can track the delivery online.
- **Einschreiben Rückschein** (registered letter with return receipt): In addition to requiring a signature upon delivery, you receive a return receipt with the signature of the person who received the letter. This is useful for contract cancellations, legal notifications, etc.
- **Einschreiben Eigehändig** (registered letter to addressee only): The letter can only be delivered in person to the named recipient and no one else can sign for it.

Depending on the shipping method selected, letters and packages typically arrive at their destination within one to three business days. However, there is also an **Expressversand** (express delivery) service that guarantees next-day delivery within Germany and even same-day delivery in some cities.

Packages

Packages that do not fit in your mailbox are typically delivered in person. If no one is home, the package is commonly left with a neighbor – but this usually only happens if you have given your prior consent. Otherwise, the parcel will be taken to a nearby pickup point, such as a Post Office, a **DHL Paket-shop** (parcel shop), or a **DHL Packstation** (automated parcel locker).

These **Packstationen** are very convenient for those who are unable to receive deliveries at home. To use these services, you need to create a free account on the **DHL** website. Once your package arrives, you will receive a notification via app or by mail informing you of its location and how to pick it up. Pickup works with a code or QR code, and the locker opens automatically.

If your package is trackable, you can follow its entire journey through the app. You can also often indicate where you want the delivery person to leave the order if you are not home. In some cases, you can even reschedule the delivery for another day.

If you need to pick up the package in person at a branch or kiosk, bring a photo ID, such as your passport or driver's license. Packages are usually available for pickup for seven to ten days. After that, they may be returned to the sender.

Other options

In addition to traditional shipping locations, it is now also common to find shipping points in supermarkets, stationery stores, convenience stores or gas stations. These locations usually serve not only **DHL**, but also other companies, such as **Hermes**, **DPD**, **UPS**, or **GLS**.

If you use a provider's app, you can generate a QR code for the package you want to send. Simply show the code to an employee or scan it at a self-service terminal, and the label will be printed on the spot. This makes sending packages much easier, especially for those who do not have a printer at home.

Another practical option, especially for frequent **Amazon** shoppers, is to return products without having to pack anything at home. When you select this option in the **Amazon** app, simply bring the item to the designated location. An employee will pack and label it for you.

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Few people know this, but you can also hand a letter or package directly to a mail carrier who is passing by your street. This is very useful for those who live far from the Post Office. If you already have a stamp or QR code ready, the mail carrier can take your mail and even print the receipt.

If you are waiting for a letter or package that has not arrived, you can file a complaint directly with the Post Office or the company responsible for shipping. This can be done online or at a branch.

Change of address

If you have changed your address, the **Deutsche Post** offers a service called **Nachsendeservice** or **Nachsenderauftrag** (forwarding order). This service ensures that letters, postcards, and **Warensendungen** sent to your old address are forwarded to your new one. You can contract this service for a few months, which is helpful while updating your details with public authorities, banks, and other services.

The **Nachsendeservice** can be requested online or in person at a Post Office. You will need to provide both addresses, the forwarding period and pay a small fee.

But be careful! For data protection reasons, some institutions, such as banks and government agencies, indicate on the envelope that if the recipient has moved, the letter should be returned to the sender. This means that, even with the **Nachsendeservice** active, these letters may not be forwarded. Therefore, it is important to update your address with these institutions directly as soon as possible.

If you don't have a permanent address yet, you can use the **Postlagernd** (mail stored at the branch) service at the **Deutsche Post**. In this case, your letters will be sent to a specific branch where you can pick them up by presenting an ID. This service is useful for frequent movers or those waiting for permanent residency.

International shipping

Sending international letters works similarly to sending domestic mail. However, for larger or heavier parcels sent outside of Germany, logistics companies such as **DHL**, **Hermes**, **DPD**, **UPS**, or **GLS** are responsible, not the **Deutsche Post**. Each company offers different delivery times, tracking options, and insurance. Choose the company that best suits your shipment's needs.