



# **The Definitive Guide to Shipping Furniture:**

How to Ship Furniture like a Pro

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If you're a business owner who regularly ships furniture, you know shipping big and bulky products can be tricky.

There are many things to consider, from the type of furniture to the size and weight of the shipment. And then there are the shipping companies themselves - how do you choose the right one for your needs?

In this eBook, we will discuss all these topics and more. We'll guide you on shipping furniture like a pro so that your shipments arrive safely and on time.



# What are the different options for shipping furniture?

Determining how you ship furniture will be based on a variety of factors. These include:

- **The type of furniture being shipped**
- **The size and weight of the shipment**
- **Your budget**
- **The time frame for delivery**

There are several different ways to ship furniture, depending on the type of furniture and the size of the shipment, including:

## Parcel shipping

Parcel shipping is the most common type of shipping for small furniture items. This is because it is typically the most cost-effective option for smaller items.

Generally, parcel shipping works best for domestic and local shipping, as it can be expensive to ship internationally via parcel shipping.

There can also be longer delivery times with parcel shipping, as the shipment will likely have to go through multiple hubs before reaching its final destination.



## LTL shipping

LTL shipping, or less-than-truckload shipping, is a type of shipping that is typically used for larger furniture items. When shipping via LTL, the shipper pays for only the space their freight occupies in a standard truck trailer.

This shipping method is ideal for small to medium-sized shipments weighing less than 15,000 pounds.

LTL shipping generally costs less than parcel shipping per pound, making it a more cost-effective shipping solution for larger items. LTL shipping is typically done through a freight company, which will pick up your furniture from your warehouse and deliver it to the customer.



There are a few things to keep in mind when using LTL shipping, such as the size and weight of your furniture and the distance it will travel. Choosing a reliable freight shipping partner with experience and expertise in shipping furniture is essential. Experienced shipping partners greatly minimize the risk of package damage with their careful handling during transit and delivery.

Some LTL shipping companies also offer additional services such as light assembly or package removal, which can be helpful if you're shipping furniture that needs to be assembled on delivery.

The one major drawback to LTL shipping is that not all truck items will go to the same destination, which can sometimes result in slower delivery times as the truck makes multiple stops along its route.

## What determines the cost of shipping furniture

Once you've determined what the best method of shipping furniture is for you, the next step is to calculate the cost of shipping.

There are a few different factors that will affect how much it costs to ship your furniture:

### **The dimensions of the furniture**

One of the major factors determining the cost of shipping furniture is the dimensions of the piece (or pieces) of furniture being shipped. The weight and size will affect how your furniture will need to be packaged for shipping and the mode of transportation used.

For example, a small dresser being shipped locally can be shipped with a parcel shipping service, while a large piece of furniture, like a couch, would need to be shipped via LTL service.

What the furniture is made of will determine its weight. A solid wood dresser will weigh more than a dresser made of plastic.

The dimensions of your furniture will also affect how much it costs to ship.

A couch that is too large to fit in a box will need to be shipped on a pallet, which will cost more than shipping a piece of furniture that can be boxed.

## **Delivery distance**

The delivery distance is also one of the factors that influences the cost of shipping.

The further the distance, the more it will cost to ship. If you are shipping furniture across the country, it will cost more than if you are shipping furniture across town.



## **The type of delivery service chosen**

The delivery service you choose will also play a role in how much it costs to ship your furniture.

LTL service is one of the most cost-effective shipping options for furniture. However, adding extra services like assembly can increase the cost.

White glove shipping is the most expensive option but includes additional services like assembly and delivery to the room of choice.

## **The shipping partner you chose**

Choosing a shipping partner that specializes in furniture shipping is essential to controlling shipping costs and ensuring that your furniture arrives safely. There are many shipping companies to choose from, but not all have experience shipping furniture.

Shipping platforms that are experienced in shipping furniture generally offer a reliable network of carriers with competitive rates. You can choose your carriers based on your product requirements and shipping budget. Additionally, experienced furniture shipping partners offer carriers with experienced package handlers and delivery agents to ensure your furniture arrives safely.

# What are the top concerns your customers have while purchasing furniture?

The best way to give your customers an excellent experience when purchasing furniture is to anticipate their questions and concerns and overcome those pain points.

Some of the top concerns that customers have when purchasing furniture include:

## Delivery cost

The cost of shipping furniture can be a make-or-break factor for many customers. While customers generally want free shipping, this is not always possible or feasible for businesses.

When shipping furniture, it is essential to be upfront about the shipping cost and give the customer a realistic estimate of what they can expect to pay. Many furniture stores will offer free shipping on certain items or during promotional periods.

Partner with a shipping platform that can help you correctly estimate the delivery fee you can charge your customers, if any. Few shipping platforms also offer discounted rates that can help you reduce your shipping costs and offer free delivery services to your customers.

## Delivery time

Another top concern for customers is the delivery time. No one wants to wait weeks or months to receive their new furniture.

When shipping furniture, it is important to give the customer a realistic timeframe for delivery. Most furniture stores list the estimated delivery time on their website or the product page.

## Ease of assembly and moving

Another important consideration for customers is how easy the furniture is to assemble and move.

Some furniture, such as dressers and armoires, can be quite heavy and difficult to move. Other pieces, such as chairs and end tables, are relatively light and easy to transport.

Choose a premium shipping service like White Glove or Threshold if your product is delicate or heavy.





# What are the top areas of shipping loss?

Shipping loss is one of the major areas of concern when it comes to shipping furniture. The good news is that there are some easy ways to prevent it. The most common types of shipping loss include:

## Damages

For furniture manufacturers and sellers, one of the most frustrating shipping experiences is when a customer receives their product damaged. It's important to take measures to prevent this from happening in the first place.

Two common factors that affect how damaged your furniture can be while in transit are packaging and shipping data.

Use a mix of sturdy packaging materials like cardboard, heavy-duty corrugated boxes, and plastic wrap that protects all sides of the furniture without adding too much extra weight. Keep reading to learn more tips on how to package your furniture efficiently!



Utilize product data and carrier performance metrics to ensure you take proactive measures to minimize high damage rates. It is advised to analyze not only the average damage rates of the products but also to take a granular approach and track individual SKUs with high damage rates.

Knowing the damage rates for individual SKUs can help you make informed decisions about how to pack and ship your furniture. Use this data to determine which products are more likely to be damaged in transit and take steps to mitigate that risk.

Staying updated with carrier performance metrics will also help you pick and choose the suitable carrier for your product requirements.

## Claims

To an extent, damages are inevitable but making sure you don't pay out more than you must is crucial for the financial health of your business.

Shipping claims are like court cases. You need as much supporting documentation to prove your case and receive a payout.

We recommend that you record the damage when it occurs so that you or your shipping partner can manage it immediately. When it comes to processing the claims, it is best to take the support and advice of a logistics expert. They can make an enormous difference in processing a claim. Some shipping partners also offer a high decision rate to ensure your claims are processed systematically and on time.



## Unnecessary fees

If you don't want to get hit with hidden fees, it's essential that you do your research before choosing a shipping partner.

Be sure to ask about minimum charges, fuel surcharges, accessorial fees, and other potential costs that might not be immediately apparent. You should also find out if the company offers any discounts to help offset some of these costs.

Several factors can contribute to hidden fees, such as:

- **Pallet weight** - if you are packing loose cartons of pellets, the weight of the pellets themselves can add up quickly and result in higher-than-expected shipping costs.
- **Surcharges** - many shipping companies charge extra for hazardous materials, remote locations, and weekend or holiday delivery.
- **Accessorial fees** - these are fees charged for services that are beyond the scope of shipping, such as inside delivery or liftgate service.
- **Wrong product category** - some products have higher shipping rates than others. Ensuring your shipment is categorized correctly helps keep your shipping costs down.
- **Incorrect location** - there are two general delivery locations: commercial and residential. Commercial deliveries tend to be less expensive than residential as the residential customers often require additional services, such as a lift gate service, to get the shipment off the truck. If you want to keep your shipping costs down, selecting the correct location type will help.
- **Oversize fees** - most carriers have basic shipping limitations for each category, such as length, width, and height. If your shipment exceeds these limitations, you will be charged an oversize fee on top of your base shipping rate.

By keeping tabs on these three areas, you can be proactive about managing your budget and keeping

# How to avoid damage to your furniture while shipping?

## Properly package your shipment.

Avoiding damage to your furniture while shipping is mostly a matter of taking a few extra precautions.

LTL freights are exposed to threats such as shock, vibration, compression, and exposure to the elements while in transit. These risks are all too real, but there are ways you can protect your furniture from damage.



Packing materials such as bubble wrap, packing peanuts, and stretch film can help to cushion your furniture and keep it secure during transport. When in doubt, always err on the side of using more packing materials rather than less.

In addition to using packing materials, you should also properly securing your furniture in the truck or container. This means securing it with straps or ropes to the pallet so it cannot shift during transit.

By taking these simple steps, you can help to ensure that your furniture arrives at its destination in one piece.

## Choose the right carrier and service

Choosing a carrier that specializes in transporting furniture can help to ensure that your items arrive safely at their destination.

In addition, you should choose a shipping service that offers tracking and insurance in case of damage or loss. This will give you peace of mind knowing that your furniture is protected in case something goes wrong during transit.

Picking the right specialty delivery service such as White Glove Delivery or Room-of-Choice Delivery can make a big difference in how your furniture arrives and whether it arrives in one piece.

The right service will ensure that your furniture is properly packaged and protected and arrives in mint condition for your customers.

Choosing a carrier and delivery service that offers these features can help ensure that your furniture arrives safely and in good condition.

## Research carrier damage rates

Each carrier has specific damage rates, which is the percentage of claims filed for damaged or lost items out of the total number of shipments.

Choosing a carrier based on low damage rates can help improve the chances that your furniture will arrive in good condition.

When choosing a carrier, ask about their damage rates and compare them with other carriers.

# How to ship furniture: a step-by-step guide

Now that we've covered the basics of shipping furniture, let's break each step down and look at it in detail.

## Packaging the furniture

All furniture needs to be correctly packaged before it can be shipped. This greatly reduces the risk of damage during transit and helps you deliver to your customers in mint condition.

There are a few different ways to package furniture, depending on the type and size of the piece.

You can use an appropriately sized box for smaller items, such as lamps or vases. Ensure you wrap the items with protective layers such as bubble wrap to avoid chipping or breakage. Use filler materials such as packing peanuts to fill the empty space in the box to prevent the item from moving around in the box.

You will need to use furniture pads for larger items, such as chairs or couches. These are large, padded blankets that can be wrapped around the furniture, especially around the edges of the furniture. Be sure to secure the pads with straps, rope, or heavy-duty tape.

If you are shipping multiple pieces of furniture, it is best to wrap them together using furniture pads. This will prevent them from banging into each other and becoming damaged.

The edges of the furniture are the most vulnerable to damage. To protect them, you can use edge guards or corner protectors. These are made of soft materials that cushion the furniture if it is bumped.

You will need to use a furniture cover to protect your furniture from external elements. These are made of waterproof materials and will keep your furniture dry during transit in unforeseen events such as rain or storm resulting in water seepage inside the box during delivery.



When shipping furniture, it is important to label the box clearly. This will help the delivery agents to know what is inside and how to handle it properly. Incorrect labeling can result in damage to the furniture or delays in delivery.

## Measure and weigh furniture

Once your furniture has been properly packaged, you will need to measure and weigh it. This information is important for calculating shipping costs.

Remember that your measurements will need to consider all the required packaging and any pallets or crates that will be used.

If you are shipping multiple pieces of furniture, you may be able to get a discount on shipping costs by consolidating your shipment. This means that all the pieces of furniture will be shipped together in one container.

## Choose the right carrier

It is recommended that you partner with shipping platforms that specialize in furniture to access the most reliable carriers to ensure your shipment reaches your customers in good condition.

Carriers specializing in shipping furniture will also have the necessary equipment to secure and protect your furniture during transit properly. This includes things like blankets, straps, and shrink wrap.

They can also offer additional service options like white glove delivery, where the carrier will not only deliver the furniture but also assemble it and place it in the customer's home.

Partner with a shipping platform that provides a wide range of reliable carriers so that you can pick and choose carriers that best suit your product requirements and budget.

## Get quotes from multiple carriers

To ensure that you get the best deal in terms of shipping fees, you should always compare rates from multiple carriers.

Lookout for a shipping platform that provides instant quotes from multiple carriers and offers consistently low rates to save on shipping.

When getting quotes, be sure to ask about any hidden fees or surcharges. These can add a significant amount to the total cost of shipping, so you want to be aware of them upfront.



## Choose the right delivery option

Depending on your furniture and budget, you will have different shipping options.

If you're shipping a small item locally, like a chair or end table, you can probably ship it via parcel delivery services.

However, if you're shipping something larger, like a couch or dresser, you'll need to use LTL Shipping.

LTL shipping offers a range of benefits, including lower prices and the ability to ship items too large for parcel shipping.

Be sure to measure your furniture before you get quotes, as shipping companies will base their prices on the size and weight of the items you are shipping.

## Consider Buying Shipping Insurance

Shipping insurance can help you recoup what you lost from a damaged or lost shipment. For both domestic and international shipments, it typically covers the cost of replacement or repair and the cost of returning the products to you.

It's well worth the cost for high-value items such as furniture, so consider insuring your shipments.

Purchasing insurance is a wise decision as it ensures that your operations run smoothly in the event of an unforeseen incident.

## Perfect Your Paperwork

Shipping is a complex process requiring proper paperwork so all parties can collect and process critical information effectively. It is essential that you have all your shipping documents in order. There are several documents you need when transporting anything - especially if you're going international.



Use the following list as a checklist to ensure you have all the required shipping documents.

- **Purchase Order:** This document outlines the details of the purchase agreement and is physical proof of the details and cost of the item being delivered.
- **Bill of Lading:** It is one of the most critical documents for transport. It is a contract between the shipper and the carrier and outlines the shipment details, destination, and any other specific instructions.
- **Commercial Invoice:** A commercial invoice is the official proof of sale and includes all the details. It finalizes the transaction rather than outlining the agreement as in a purchase order.
- **Customs Invoice:** A customs invoice is also required for international shipments. This document declares the value of the goods plus any applicable duties and taxes.
- **Packing List:** The packing list is a detailed list of all the items in your shipment. It outlines the weight, volume, and value of the entire shipment and each box within the shipment.
- **Proof-of-Delivery:** It is a document signed by the recipient upon delivery of the shipment.
- **Freight Claims Form:** A freight claims form is what you'll need to request reimbursement if your goods get lost or damaged. You should always have one on hand, but hopefully, you'll never have to use it!





# Manage furniture shipments and keep an eye on freight analytics

As we mentioned earlier in this book, data is critical to the success of any business. The same is true for furniture shipping.

By keeping an eye on your freight analytics, you can track trends and optimize your shipping process accordingly. This will help you save money and ensure that your customers are happy with their purchases.



There are a few key metrics you should track:

- **Number of shipments** - This will give you an idea of how much furniture you're shipping monthly or yearly.
- **On-time pick up rate** - It is important that your shipments are picked up on time to be delivered on time.
- **Average transit times** - The average transit times give you an idea about the speed and efficiency of a carrier's delivery performance.
- **On-time delivery rate** - This is critical for keeping your customers happy. Make sure to track how often your shipments are delivered on time and take steps to improve if necessary.
- **Average cost per shipment** - Shipping costs can eat into your profits, so it's important to track them closely.
- **Damage rate** - Unfortunately, damage is inevitable in the furniture shipping business. Track this metric to see how often it occurs and take steps to minimize damage.
- **Carrier Performance** - Keep an eye out on the carriers' performance in terms of their transit and delivery times, damage rates, average cost per shipment etc. to take more informed decisions

By tracking these metrics, you'll be able to identify areas where your shipping process can be improved and make changes to your shipping strategy accordingly.

Making sure your furniture shipments are safe, damage-free, and cost-effective is the best way to keep your customers happy and ensure that your business runs smoothly.

# Shipping furniture like a pro



Shipping large items like furniture can be daunting, but with the right preparation and process in place, it can be a breeze. To sum up, here are the key takeaways for shipping furniture like a pro:

- **Choose the right shipping company:** Not all shipping companies are created equal. Some specialize in large items, while others have a more general focus. Do your research to find a reputable company that can handle your furniture shipment.
- **Pack the item properly:** Packing is crucial to preventing damage during shipping. Use the appropriate materials and pack the item(s) securely.
- **Get insurance:** Shipping insurance will protect you in case of damage or loss during transit. This is especially important when shipping valuable or one-of-a-kind items.
- **Track your metrics:** Keep an eye on important metrics like transit time, delivery date, and cost. This will help you gauge the effectiveness of your shipping process and make necessary adjustments.

Shipping is complex but can be simplified by following a few key steps. By following these tips, you can ship furniture like a pro! With some planning and preparation, you can ensure that your furniture arrives safely at its destination.

For your peace of mind, you can also consider partnering with a shipping platform with experience and expertise in furniture shipping and provides end-to-end shipping solutions.

# The Freight Club Advantage

Freight Club is a leading end-to-end shipping platform that helps retailers effortlessly manage everything from booking and tracking to complete claims management and shipping protection with zero subscription fees.

As part of Cymax Group Technologies, a leading eCommerce technology and services provider in the furniture industry since 2004, we offer retailers enterprise rates with no volume restrictions with up to 7 levels of LTL drop shipping services, from back of truck to white glove light assembly, across the U.S.

Our extensive carrier network provides furniture retailers with 40+ pre-vetted carriers to build a customized carrier mix for their specific products and needs. Our intuitive analytics dashboard gives retailers complete visibility of their shipping data, including carrier transit times, damages, and overages, helping them make fast, informed decisions based on real-time data and analytics at no additional cost.

Our team of logistics experts provide personalized support to our retailers, helping them optimize their shipping strategy, manage their claims process and ensuring that our customers have a smooth shipping experience at Freight Club.

Trusted by thousands of retailers, Freight Club has been proudly planting trees across the United States, promoting clean air, clean water, and the prosperity of biodiversity - at no cost to our customers or carriers.



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