One reason for the optimisation of our logistics flow is the efficient loading of our vehicles. Correctly packaged goods are essential if we’re to offer the safest and quickest possible transit times. An incorrectly packaged shipment not only risks damage to your own goods, but to the goods of other customers as well. Remember, DHL is not responsible for damage caused by deficient packaging.

Here are some instructions on how to best pack your goods to minimise the risk of damage. For more information regarding permitted dimensions, weights, etc. please see DHL’s product-specific terms and conditions.
PACKING TIPS PARCELS

Our transport system for packaged goods is based on speed and efficiency, and is designed for automatic sorting. Packages must therefore follow our restrictions for transportable goods and be packaged such that they can be sorted by machine.

REQUIREMENTS FOR OUTER PACKAGING

- Goods must be well-packed in rigid, durable, and smooth outer packaging to ensure that the goods are completely enclosed with no protruding parts, and that the package will withstand normal handling, joint loading, automated sorted, and load protection.
- The packaging must not be damaged in any way at the point of pick-up. If not, the contents will not be adequately protected and the goods may injure staff or damage other goods.
- The packaging must be suited to the weight and size of the contents. If undersized, the packaging may break or damage the goods. If oversized, the contents may not be held in place, which can also cause damage.
- Damaged packaging is not compensated by DHL as it is not considered to form part of the product, but is there to protect the contents as part of normal handling during transit.
- The goods must be enclosed in shock-absorbing material inside the package, as they are subject to bumps during automated sorting. If the package contains multiple items, each item must be enclosed in shock-absorbing material.
- Liquids must always be packaged in packaging specially designed for such goods and enclosed in absorbent material to avoid leaks in the event of damage. If a leak occurs, this may damage other customers’ goods and require terminals and equipment to be cleaned.
- The packaging must be large enough to accommodate DHL’s address label. The label must be fully visible, legible, and scannable, which means that it must not be folded or wrinkled.
- The packaging must not be sealed with anything that is not designed for this purpose. Sealing the package using laces or string is not acceptable as these could get caught in the sorting equipment, which could injure staff, damage equipment, and damage your and others’ goods.
- Messages in addition to the address label, such as “This side up” will not work as the goods are sorted by machine and transported in package cages.
- Packages must be stable and not roll or topple over during handling due to a round, uneven, or irregular shape.
- Round or uneven items must be placed in a carton and held in place with filling material.
- Rolls containing items such as drawings or posters must be placed in a stable outer carton. This works best in a triangular carton as shown in the picture.

Important! An additional fee (non-specification package) will be charged for shipments that do not meet our...
PACKAGING FOR PALLET GOODS

Heavier shipments or goods that cannot be sorted by machine must be transported in a stable way to ensure maximum safety during transit. Stability is achieved by loading the goods onto pallets.

What is a pallet?
A pallet must be handled using a forklift truck, pallet truck, or other mechanical loading device. In order for the pallet to be handled mechanically, it must be a low platform, but at least 15 cm tall. The material may be wood, plastic, metal, fibreboard, or combinations of these. The pallet used must also be designed in such a way that it can withstand normal load protection using a strap.

Euro pallet
There is a standard pallet size within Europe - 120 cm long, 80 cm wide, and 15 cm tall. Please refer to the product-specific terms and conditions for the maximum load height for each product.

How do I load cartons onto a pallet?
When loading cartons onto a pallet, you must ensure the highest level of safety and strength possible. This is achieved by placing the cartons directly on top of each other. The brick method can only be used when the cartons are completely solid and completely filled. The goods must also be fixed to the pallet using shrink wrap, for example.

What should I avoid when loading a pallet?
Never stack the goods on a pallet like a pyramid, where the cartons form a peak without any large, flat surface at the top. This complicates joint loading and makes the pallet unstable. If the goods still need to be stacked as a pyramid, a pallet position, or 0.4 loading metres, must be booked. In the case of pyramid packing, the cartons are exposed to an unnecessary risk of damage from other goods packed alongside them, as well as from falling. The most common cause of damage to goods on pallets is protrusion outside of the pallet’s footprint. For this reason, no part of the goods must protrude outside of the pallet’s footprint. DHL will not be liable for any damage caused by protrusion outside of the pallet’s footprint.

How should I pack the cartons?
Cartons that are not completely filled are often compressed by other goods, which results in instability. For this reason, you must fill any voids in the cartons with filling material. This dampens bumps and smooths out imbalances. There are many kinds of materials you can use, such as packing foam or corrugated cardboard. A carton must be able to hold at least four to five times its own weight.

Crates are bigger and more secure.
Crates offer better protection against transport damage than cartons, provided they are made of a durable material with stable corners. Exactly how stable they must be depends on the weight of the goods. A crate should be large enough that it fills the bottom plate of the pallet, which in turn improves the safety of the shipment.
- A non-stackable pallet must be labelled “Do not stack”.
- A pallet that cannot be top loaded must be labelled “Do not top load”.
- A stackable pallet must be able to bear its own weight as a minimum.
PACKING TIPS
Other Goods

CAN I TRANSPORT BARRELS?
Barrels can be transported on pallets if properly secured using steel ties. A separator must be placed between the barrel and the tie so that the barrel does not slip. A corrugated cardboard sheet must be placed between the barrel and the floor of the pallet. No part of the barrel may touch the pallet. This poses a risk of the barrel wearing and being punctured. If two barrels are transported on the same pallet, a separator, preferably made of wood or heavy cardboard, must be placed between them. This is in order to spread the pressure of the tie and avoid steel-on-steel contact. In principle, it is possible to transport several barrels on the same pallet, provided that nothing protrudes outside of the pallet’s footprint. The barrels must first be tied together before they are placed on the pallet. Ensure that the barrels are packed tightly and that their weight is centred.

WHAT DO I DO WITH TUBES?
When transporting tubes, pipes, and exhaust systems, there is a risk that the goods could damage the vehicle and their surroundings. Tubes must be anchored to a wooden pallet and fixed, ideally bundled together. This improves durability and makes loading and unloading easier.

WHERE DO I POSITION THE ADDRESS LABEL?
Below are some examples of where to position DHL’s address label on the packaging.

HOW DO I TRANSPORT SPOOLS AND ROLLS?
Goods that can roll must be loaded as a barrel and secured to a pallet using blocks and supports. Ties should preferably be made of steel and attached so that they cannot be damaged in transit.

HOW DO I PACKAGE LONG GOODS?
Long goods must be packed so that they are stable and so that they do not bend if lifted in the middle. You should use reinforced tubes, rigid corrugated cardboard, or wood reinforcements. DHL has special rules regarding maximum lengths for different modes of transport. The maximum lengths and fee rules for each product are described in our product sheets.