

FREIGHT PALLET PACKING GUIDE

PLUS COMMON LTL MISTAKES TO AVOID



WESTGATE GLOBAL LOGISTICS



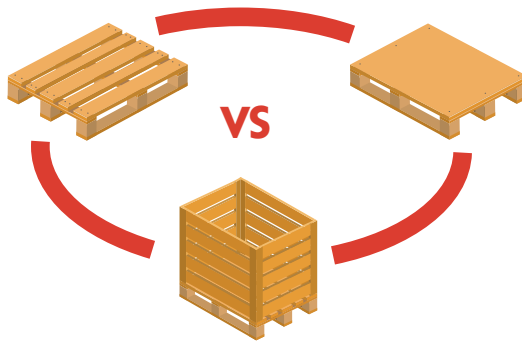
Less than truck load (LTL) shipping can be an extremely efficient way to move shipments when you don't need to fill an entire trailer. However, if the LTL shipping process is not implemented well, it can have some potential disadvantages, costing the company more time and money than necessary.



Packing pallets correctly for shipment is a serious safety issue as well and could be full of risk if the business isn't careful. If your pallet isn't stacked properly, you risk damaging the product, injuries from toppling pallets or workers tripping over the overhang, and time lost trying to fix the improperly packed pallet. Avoid injuries, damage and claims with these tips.



1. PALLET, SKID, OR CRATE?



First, it is important to know how and when crating is more appropriate than skidding. For instance, machinery is usually best to be crated. To the point that some carriers will refuse machinery if only sitting on a skid and not crated. There are also NMFC product codes where the same item will ship at a lower class when crated compared to being only on a skid. Lower freight class typically equals better costs.

Select the correct pallet, skid or crate for your shipment to avoid overhang and support your product. Not all are created equal so make sure you are using one made of material best suited to your shipment and that is still in good quality. Using old wooden pallets is a recipe for disaster by increasing your puncture risk from loose nails or splintered wood. But plastic pallets are expensive but lighter and can be sterilized.

2. STACKING PROPERLY

Neglecting to stack your cartons using best practices can cause damage to your product but also harm the people working with your shipment. One of the most common causes of damage is due to the shaking or vibration in transit. Vibration can cause the goods to rub against each other and internal parts to break.

How you stack your shipment can reduce the vibration. Improve how stable your pallet is with always placing heavy goods first, stack up to the edge (but not hanging over), place boxes like you would place bricks, secure with strapping, and pick the best shrink wrap for your shipment. Pyramid patterns are one of the biggest offenders so avoid using this pattern. The partial interlock pattern is what we recommend for maximizing strength. Proper planning and training can help you to ensure your pallets are safe and stable.

**PARTIAL
INTERLOCK**





Pallet overhang accounts for a huge amount of damage and injuries. The four vertical corners of the box provide the majority of its stacking strength. If you don't align the corners of the box above and below, you are reducing the compression resistance of the box and increasing your chances of damage.



3. SHRINK WRAPPING TECHNIQUE

Though it is often a point that is overlooked, the wrapping technique will impact the stability of your shipment. Scrapes, scuffs and punctures account for a good amount of damage when the shipper doesn't prepare for all the machinery and movement the load will face in transit. We recommend you create an external cardboard wall around the palletized goods and then properly wrap them in shrink wrap. If you aren't using machinery, make sure your team is properly trained on how to manually wrap. A common set of mistakes is not wrapping around the pallet enough times (at least 5) and not remembering to twist the wrap every other time around. This will increase the durability.

4. THINKING YOU DON'T NEED HELP

Proper, sturdy packaging and labeling is a surefire way to help prevent problems and claim charges. It would seem an obvious thing to point out that different carriers have different shipping rates. When shipping an LTL load, it is crucial to compare carrier costs in order to get the best rate and avoid overspending when a cheaper solution was available. But if you work with a cheaper solution and they aren't familiar with how to safely handle your freight, it could actually end up being more costly. Vet your carriers carefully or work with a partner who is familiar with your needs and can pair you with the best suited carrier. Utilizing experts to compare rates and negotiate better deals could save hundreds, if not thousands of dollars, not to mention the stress of doing all this alone.



In order to ship smarter, a shipper needs to know how to get the most benefit for the cheapest price. Understanding common LTL shipping mistakes makes it much easier to avoid these issues. LTL shipping is a growing side of the freight industry and shippers need to know these common pitfalls in order to avoid a potentially costly shipping mistake.

Here are some ways to avoid common LTL shipping mistakes you could be making that hinder productivity and negatively impact the bottom line...

1. Know your dock delivery set up to plan for additional services needed
2. Include proper labeling and documentation
3. Train employees in OSHA regulations and the risks associated with not following them
4. Provide correct load dimensions
5. Provide accurate class designations
6. Use the right equipment to weigh the freight correctly

If you're tired of dealing with the frustration that comes with shipping via LTL carriers, working with an experienced 3PL to manage your less than truckload shipping tasks is a smart idea that can save you a tremendous amount of money.

Contact

Westgate today to speak with a shipping specialist about how to palletize your goods!

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