

# Going to the Post Office

*In this lesson, you will learn vocabulary and expressions that will make it easier for you to send and receive mail in an English-speaking country.*

## Pre-Reading

### A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Do you send letters and parcels by mail?
2. Is the cost of postage expensive in your country?
3. How has postal service changed in your town or city in recent years?  
Do you get home delivery service?



### B. Vocabulary Preview

Match the words on the left with the correct meanings on the right.

- |                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. postal carrier    | a) protection in case of loss or damage  |
| _____ 2. customs           | b) the cost of sending mail  |
| _____ 3. insurance         | c) a place where items are checked before they cross a border                                  |
| _____ 4. postage           | d) a person who delivers mail  |
| _____ 5. parcel/package    | e) a piece of mail that is too large or heavy for a regular mail slot                          |
| _____ 6. return address    | f) proof of purchase   |
| _____ 7. receipt           | g) a form of postage that costs more in exchange for faster delivery                           |
| _____ 8. postal/zip code   | h) the sender's address  |
| _____ 9. registered mail   | i) important mail that requires a signature upon receipt                                       |
| _____ 10. priority service | j) a code that helps identify exactly where a parcel is before it arrives                      |
| _____ 11. tracking number  | k) the bottom part of the address that identifies a region and contains numbers and/or letters |

## Dialogue Reading

Read the dialogue with your partner a few times. Take turns being each character. Practice your intonation and pronunciation. Circle any new words or phrases that you need to practice.

Postal Clerk:	<b>Can I help you?</b>
Customer:	Yes. <b>I'd like to send this package to Toronto, Canada.</b>
Postal Clerk:	<b>How would you like to send it?</b>
Customer:	How much will it be <b>by airmail?</b>
Postal Clerk:	<b>Let me weigh it and check.</b>
	<i>(a minute later)</i>
Postal Clerk:	<b>It'll be \$18.50.</b>
Customer:	How long will it take to get there?
Postal Clerk:	<b>It should take about four or five business days.</b>
Customer:	Okay. I'll send it by air.
Postal Clerk:	Please fill out this customs declaration form. The postage includes \$100.00 insurance. Would you like to buy any extra insurance?
Customer:	No, thanks. That's enough.
Postal Clerk:	<b>You forgot to put your return address on the parcel.</b>
Customer:	Oh, thanks. I'll do that now.
Postal Clerk:	<b>Is there anything else you'd like?</b>
Customer:	Yes. <b>I'd like to buy a package of 25 stamps.</b>
Postal Clerk:	Okay. <b>Here you are.</b> The total bill for the parcel and the stamps is \$28.50.
Customer:	Okay. Here you go.
Postal Clerk:	Thank you. Here's your receipt. Your tracking number is on the receipt.
Customer:	Thanks. Oh, by the way, <b>where is the mail slot?</b> I have some stamped letters to mail.
Postal Clerk:	<b>Just below the counter.</b> Have a nice day.

## Practice

Work with your partner. Role-play the dialogue on page 2, substituting the different expressions below. Then switch roles.

1. **Can I help you?**

- May I help you?
- How can I help you?

2. **I'd like to send this package to Toronto, Canada.**

- I'd like to send this parcel to Toronto.
- I want to mail this letter.

3. **How would you like to send it?**

- How do you want to mail it?

4. How much will it be **by airmail?**

- ...by parcel post?
- ...by ground transportation?
- ...by special delivery?
- ...by express delivery?
- ...by registered mail?
- ...by overnight delivery?
- ...by priority service?

5. **Let me weigh it and check.**

- Let me see.
- Let's see.
- I'll check.

6. **It'll be \$18.50.**

- That will be \$18.50.
- That will cost \$18.50.
- That comes to \$18.50.

7. **It should take about four or five business days.**

- It will probably take about four or five days.
- It will be delivered in about four or five days.

8. **You forgot to put your return address on the parcel.**

- You forgot to write the zip code on the package.
- You forgot to include the postal code on the label.

9. **Is there anything else you'd like?**

- Would you like anything else?
- Can I get you anything else?
- Is there anything else I can do for you?

10. **I'd like to buy a package of 25 stamps.**

- I'd like to purchase a money order.
- I want a change of address form.
- I'd like to have my mail held for two weeks.
- I'd like to send a registered letter.
- I'd like to buy some packing boxes, string, and tape.
- I need some padded envelopes.

11. **Here you are.**

- Here it is.
- Here they are.
- Here you go.

12. **Where is the mail slot?**

- Can you tell me where the mail box is?

13. **Just below the counter.**

- Right outside the door.

## Listening Practice

Listen to the recording of the dialogue from page 2. Fill in the missing words as you listen. Listen again. Now look back at page 2 and check your work. Did you fill in the correct words? Did you spell everything correctly?

Postal Clerk:	Can I help you?
Customer:	Yes. I'd like to send this _____ to Toronto, Canada.
Postal Clerk:	How would you like to send it?
Customer:	How much will it be by _____ ?
Postal Clerk:	Let me _____ it and check.
	<i>(a minute later)</i>
Postal Clerk:	It'll be \$18.50.
Customer:	_____ to get there?
Postal Clerk:	It should take about four or five _____ .
Customer:	Okay. I'll send it by air.
Postal Clerk:	Please fill out this _____ declaration form. The postage includes \$100.00 _____. Would you like to buy any extra insurance?
Customer:	No, thanks. That's enough.
Postal Clerk:	You forgot to put your _____ on the parcel.
Customer:	Oh, thanks. I'll do that now.
Postal Clerk:	Is there anything else you'd like?
Customer:	Yes. I'd like to buy a package of 25 stamps.
Postal Clerk:	Okay. Here you are. The total bill for the parcel and the _____ is \$28.50.
Customer:	Okay. Here you go.
Postal Clerk:	Thank you. Here's your receipt. Your _____ is on the receipt.
Customer:	Thanks. Oh, by the way, where is the mail slot? I have some stamped letters to mail.
Postal Clerk:	Just below the _____. Have a nice day.

## Vocabulary Review

### A. Odd One Out

Circle the word or expression in each group that does not belong, and explain why.

1. a) postal carrier  
b) mail slot  
c) mailman  
d) letter carrier

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3. a) stamp  
b) postmark  
c) mailman  
d) address

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5. a) express  
b) priority  
c) stamp  
d) airmail

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2. a) zip code  
b) return address  
c) postal code  
d) registered delivery

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4. a) string  
b) mailbox  
c) tape  
d) packing boxes

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6. a) postcard  
b) letter  
c) parcel  
d) insurance

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### B. Complete the Sentences

Complete the sentences using words you learned in this lesson.

1. A fast way to send a letter is by \_\_\_\_\_ .
2. If you send something very valuable, you should buy \_\_\_\_\_ .
3. If you want the person who will receive the letter or package to sign for it, you can send it by \_\_\_\_\_ mail.
4. If a parcel you send gets lost in the mail, the \_\_\_\_\_ number on your receipt will help locate it.
5. If you want to send money safely through the mail, you should purchase a \_\_\_\_\_ .



# Review

## Task 1

### LISTEN & ANSWER

Listen to the conversation and answer the questions.  
Your teacher will tell you if you have to write or say the answers.

1. What is the woman's main reason for going to the post office?

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2. What type of shipping service does the woman decide to use?

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3. Why does the postal clerk mention insurance?

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4. What did the woman forget to do?

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5. What other purchase does the woman make at the post office?

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## Review cont.

### Task 2

#### ROLE-PLAY

Find a partner. Imagine that one of you is the postal clerk and one of you is the customer. Do a role-play for your teacher or class using language from this lesson. Your audience will try to answer the following questions:

1. What is the main reason for the customer's visit to the post office?
2. Where does the customer want to send mail to?
3. What concern does the customer have?
4. How much does the customer have to pay for the postal service?
5. What else does the customer do at the post office?

### Task 3

#### ADDRESS & RETURN ADDRESS

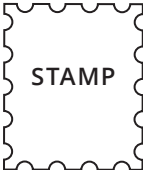
Write an address and a return address exactly as it should appear on an envelope. Make sure to write clearly and use the proper abbreviations.

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## Answer Key

### LESSON DESCRIPTION:

In this lesson, a customer speaks to a postal clerk about sending a package. Students learn vocabulary and expressions to use at the post office.

**LEVEL:** Low Int

**TIME:** 1.5 hours

**TAGS:** dialogues, post office, mail, letter, package, parcel, stamps, envelope, address, airmail, postal clerk

### Pre-Reading

#### A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

Discuss as a class or in small groups. Answers will vary.

#### B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

- |      |      |      |      |       |       |
|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1. d | 3. a | 5. e | 7. f | 9. i  | 11. j |
| 2. c | 4. b | 6. h | 8. k | 10. g |       |

### Dialogue Reading

Give your students time to read the dialogue in pairs.

### Practice

Have your students read the dialogue again and practice subbing in some of the different expressions.

### Listening Practice

Have students complete the dialogue by listening to the recording or by having two students read the completed dialogue from page 2.

### Vocabulary Review

#### A. ODD ONE OUT

- b – The other three are people.
- d – The other three are parts of an address.
- c – The other three appear on an envelope or package.
- b – The other three are involved in packaging.
- c – The other three are ways to send a letter or package.
- d – The other three are things you can send by mail.

#### B. COMPLETE THE SENTENCES

- |              |               |                |
|--------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1. airmail   | 3. registered | 5. money order |
| 2. insurance | 4. tracking   |                |

### Write Your Own Dialogue

Encourage your students to use vocabulary from the model.

*(continued on the next page...)*

## Answer Key cont.

### Review (Assessment Tasks)

The following tasks can be used for assessment purposes and/or review practice. You can save all of the tasks until the end or assess your students throughout the lesson.

#### TASK 1

Play the audio from this lesson. Then assign the questions. You can decide if you want your students to say or write the answers.

1. The woman's main reason for going to the post office is to send a package to Toronto.
2. The woman decides to use airmail.
3. The postal clerk notifies the woman that the package included \$100 insurance and asks her if she wants more than that.
4. The woman forgot to include her return address.
5. The woman buys 25 stamps.

#### TASK 2

Assess your students' ability to use the language learned in this lesson. You can decide if you want to see a script or not. You may also want to assign this as a peer evaluation. You may also want to assess your audience's listening skills.

#### TASK 3

You may need to review how to format an address before assigning this review task. Print *How to Format an Envelope* from our Miscellaneous Resources section:

<https://esllibrary.com/resources/2356>

#### SPELLING NOTES:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the word *Practice*. Most other English-speaking countries spell it this way: *Practise* (when used as a verb; *Practice* when used as a noun). Make it a challenge for your students to find this word in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spelling.

