

# MAIL GUIDE

# 101



creative communications



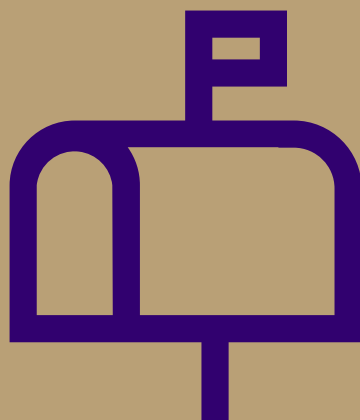
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## YOUR GUIDE TO A SUCCESSFUL MAILING

This guide is designed as a tool to help you understand the basic requirements and specifications for preparing a successful mailing. Following these recommendations will save you and your department TIME and MONEY! An effective mailing starts with a properly designed mail piece.



## General INFORMATION



### MAIL PIECE COLORS

- Select white or pastel colors. These colors allow maximum contrast for postal equipment address readability.
- Avoid recycled stock with flecks in it.
- Leave a blank “knock-out” of 4” wide x 2” high for addressing on colorful mail pieces.

### ASPECT RATIO

Minimum: 1.3, Maximum: 2.5

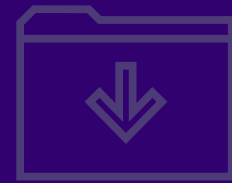
The width of the mail piece divided by the height. The total must equal a minimum of 1.3 up to a maximum of 2.5. Failure to meet this requirement will result in additional postage charges.

### POSTCARD SIZE REQUIREMENTS

(see page 6 for design requirements)

The mail piece must be a rectangular card (not in an envelope) and meet requirements below in order to qualify for the USPS postcard postage rate.

DIMENSION	MINIMUM SIZE	MAXIMUM SIZE
WIDTH	5 inches	6 inches
HEIGHT	3.5 inches	4.25 inches
THICKNESS	.007 inch*	0.16 inch



# Submitting ELECTRONIC ADDRESS FILES

## LETTER SIZE REQUIREMENTS

(see page 6 for design requirements)

A letter is a regular card or envelope that meets the requirements below.

DIMENSION	MINIMUM SIZE	MAXIMUM SIZE
WIDTH	5 inches	11.5 inches
HEIGHT	3.5 inches	6.125 inches
THICKNESS	.007 inch*	0.25 inch

## FLAT SIZE REQUIREMENTS

(see page 7 for design requirements)

To be classified as a flat, a mail piece must also:

- be flexible enough to go through postal sorting equipment. For example, a carton, hard-bound book, or an envelope with contents that cannot bend is a “parcel” even if it fits the dimensions for a flat.
- not be “lumpy”. The thickness may not vary more than ¼” except within 1” of the edges.
- A rectangular card or envelope that is larger or heavier than a letter, & meets at least one following:
  - a. more than 6½ inches on its shorter side; or,
  - b. more than 11½\* inches on its longer side; or,
  - c. more than ¼ inches thick.
- For more info, see <https://pe.usps.com/text/dmm300/601.htm#ep1064709>

DIMENSION	MINIMUM SIZE	MAXIMUM SIZE
WIDTH	11.5 inches	15 inches
HEIGHT	6.125 inches	12 inches
THICKNESS	.25 inch*	0.75 inch

For a mailing with pieces larger than flat sized dimensions, please contact Mail Preparations for consultation ([mailprep@uw.edu](mailto:mailprep@uw.edu)).

## SAMPLE FORMAT

(link to downloadable template)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	name	address1	address2	address3	city	state	zip	country	box number
2	John Smith	Assistant Professor	Boston College	1234 Maple St	Los Angeles	CA	90021		
3	Jane Doe		Winston Hospital	4567 SW 110th St	Vancouver	BC	V6L 0Z3	Canada	
4	Stanley Baker	University of Washington	School of Research	Bioengineering Dept.	Seattle	WA	98195		Box 351234
5									
6									

Be sure to provide the following information in separate columns:

- First Name
- Last Name
- Address 1
- Address 2 (if applicable)
- Address 3 (if applicable)
- City
- State
- Zip
- Country
- Additional Variable Fields

Accepted file formats:

- Excel Spreadsheet
- Text: Tab Delimited
- Text: Comma Delimited

**Note:** When possible/applicable, do not provide pre-merged material. Our team will process your address file and merge the addresses.

**Questions?** Send information and/or questions regarding electronic address files to the Mail Prep List Coordinator at [addrfile@uw.edu](mailto:addrfile@uw.edu).

# Designing your LETTER or POSTCARD

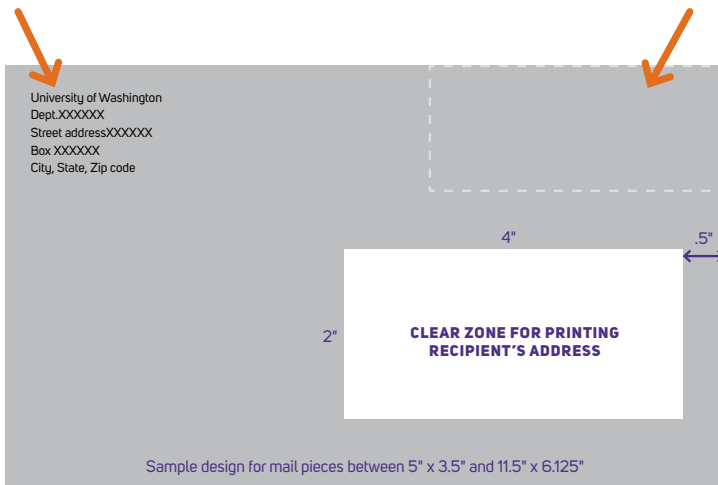


# Designing your FLAT-SIZE MAIL PIECE

## LAYOUT FOR FRONT OF LETTER OR POSTCARD

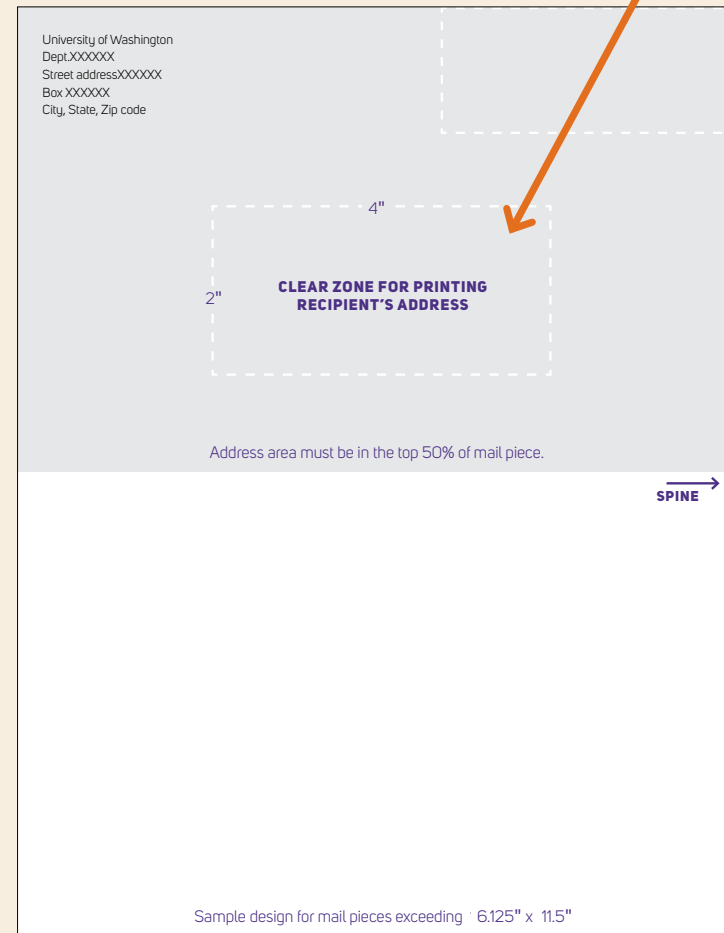
Return area no more than 50% of width or 33% of height of mail piece

Permit or postage area: 3.5" wide x 1.5" high



## LAYOUT FOR FRONT OF FLAT-SIZE MAIL PIECE

Address must (1) be in top half of mail piece and (2) be right side up.

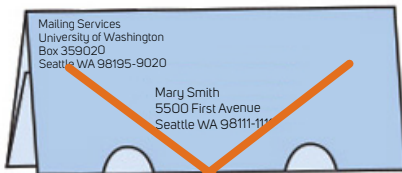


**LETTER IS BETTER** — APPROXIMATELY HALF THE POSTAGE AS A FLAT-SIZE MAIL PIECE!

# Self Mailers / FOLD ORIENTATION



A folded self-mailer is formed of two or more panels that are created when one or more unbound sheets of paper are folded together and sealed to make a letter-size mail piece. The number of panels is determined by the number of sheets in the mail piece and the number of times the sheets are folded.



**INCORRECT**

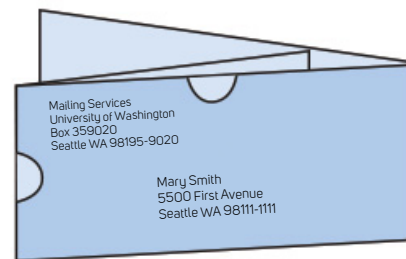


**CORRECT**

For tri-fold self-mailers, the mailing address must be on the middle panel, with the final fold creating the non-address side.



**CORRECT**



**CORRECT**

DIMENSION	MINIMUM SIZE	MAXIMUM SIZE
WIDTH	5 inches	10.5 inches
HEIGHT	3.5 inches	6 inches
WEIGHT	28# bond	3 ounces
ASPECT RATIO	1:3	2:5
THICKNESS	0.007 inch*	0.25 inch

*\*0.009 inch if the height exceeds 4.25 inches or if the length exceeds 6 inches*

## ADDITIONAL PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

more info here <https://pe.usps.com/TEXT/dmm300/201.htm#ep1147122>

- Rectangular, with four square corners and parallel opposite sides.
- Maximum number of panels: 12, except for:  
Quarter-folded self-mailers made of a minimum 70-pound paper basis weight or equivalent may have as few as 4 panels. Quarter-folded self-mailers made of 55 pound or greater newsprint must have at least 8 panels

**Questions about your self-mailer? Contact your Account Manager!**

# Mail Classification / POSTAGE

## QUALIFICATIONS FOR NON-PROFIT BULK MAILING

### Slowest, Most Cost-Effective

- 200 minimum US addressed pieces
- Address list MUST be processed through postal software: NCOA & CASS
- Return address must include “University of Washington” and department name
- Mail pieces must be the same weight and size
- Postal delivery 3-14 business days
- Content subject to approval. Contact mailprep@uw.edu with questions

## QUALIFICATIONS FOR FIRST CLASS PRESORT

### Includes Forwarding & Return Services

- 500 minimum US addressed pieces
- Return address must include “University of Washington” and department name
- Address list MUST be processed through postal software: NCOA & CASS
- Mail pieces must be the same weight and size
- Postal delivery 1-3 business days

## QUALIFICATIONS FOR FIRST CLASS

### Includes Forwarding & Return Services

- No minimum volumes
- Postal delivery 1-3 business days

## CAMPUS/DESKTOP MAIL

- No minimum volumes
- Delivery same or next day

## GLOSSARY



### Aspect Ratio

The dimension of a mailpiece expressed as a ratio of length divided by height (for letters and cards, length is the dimension parallel to the address as read). For example, a postcard 5-1/2 inches long by 3-1/2 inches high has an aspect ratio of 1.57. An aspect ratio between 1.3 and 2.5, inclusive, is required for automation compatibility.

### National Change of Address Linkage System (NCOA)

An address correction service that the USPS provides to mailers through USPS licensees. The licensees match mailing lists submitted to them against change-of-address information for the entire country from all Computerized Forwarding System units. If a match is made, NCOALink can correct the address before it is printed on a mailpiece. Additional information and a list of Vendors and Licensees that have been certified through CASS and MASS address matching software is available online.

### Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS)

A service offered to mailers, service bureaus, and software vendors that improves the accuracy of matching to delivery point codes, ZIP+4 codes, 5-digit ZIP Codes, and carrier route codes on mailpieces. CASS provides a common platform to measure the quality of address matching software and to diagnose and correct software problems. An Overview of the CASS Program and list of CASS certified vendors are available on PostalPro at <https://postalpro.usps.com>.

### Indicia

Imprinted designation on mail that denotes postage payment (e.g., metered postage or permit imprint).

### Non-machinable

The inability of a mailpiece to be sorted on mail processing equipment because of size, shape, content, or address legibility. Such mail must be processed manually.

### Machinable

The ability of a mailpiece to be sorted by mail processing equipment. Compare with nonmachinable.

### Machinable Parcel

A parcel that is of the correct size and weight to be safely sorted by mail processing machinery such as a parcel sorting machine.

### Match Perfect

A match mailing is the process of producing and inserting multiple personalized pieces into a single mail piece.

### Folding Terms

Bi-fold folded once forming two panels.

Tri-fold folded twice forming three panels.

Quarter-fold folded twice with each fold at a right angle (perpendicular) to the preceding fold. One sheet of paper quarter-folded creates four panels.

## CONTACT US

with any of your mailing questions.

### Mail Prep Supervisor

(206) 543-4944  
mailprep@uw.edu

- Mail piece design
- Job estimates
- Free consultation

### Mail Job Scheduling

(206) 543-4944 or 3-3257  
charliej@uw.edu or addrfile@uw.edu

- Schedule mailing
- Service Request Form assistance
- Job estimates

### Mailing Address File Preparation

(206) 221-5859  
addrfile@uw.edu

Address file questions & submission

### Print and/or

### Mail Service Request Form

<https://filessubmit.creatcom.washington.edu/c2/>

### Account Manager Lookup

<https://finance.uw.edu/c2/directory>

