

# DIRECT

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## Beginner's Guide To First-Class Mail

### *What Is First-Class Mail?*

First-Class mail is one of the most popular and efficient ways to send letters and flats. First-Class mail offers speedy delivery. Currently, the USPS is delivering mail 1-3 days locally and up to 4 days nationally. If you are planning on sending out time-sensitive or personal information, First-Class mail is your best choice and is required for any invoices, credit cards, and other personalized correspondence. For organizations looking for consistent delivery with a limited margin of error, First-Class mail is the ideal choice.

### *What Are The Differences Between First-Class And Marketing Mail?*

The primary differences between First-Class mail and Marketing mail are price, speed of delivery, options for mail forwarding, and returns on mail with outdated addresses. If you are planning on sending out time-sensitive or personal information, First-Class mail is your best choice and is required for any invoices, credit cards, and other personalized correspondence. First-Class mail is typically delivered in 1-3 business days.

Marketing mail does not have a guaranteed delivery time, although many resources estimate an average of under 5 business days locally and up to 13 days nationally. Additionally, Marketing mail does not offer free automatic returns and mail forwarding. All other factors aside, Marketing mail is significantly more cost-friendly than First-Class mail — if your delivery schedule is more flexible.

### *When Should I Use First-Class Mail?*

First-Class mail is ideal for an organization looking for consistent delivery times while still staying within a reasonable budget. Invoices, credit cards, and personalized correspondence are required to be sent via First-Class mail.

When processed as First-Class, the mail is touched less and processed quickly, keeping the utmost integrity of the mailpiece. In addition, First-Class mail is given priority over Marketing mail, making it the best choice for time-sensitive mail — especially during peak mailing seasons. First-Class mailings are eligible for added delivery confirmation services such as Certified Mail®, so you can be sure your mail was delivered on time. There are studies that show First-Class mail, arriving in an envelope with a return address and stamp are more likely to be opened by recipients. This makes First Class Mail a favorite for organizations who want to improve the odds that their correspondence is opened.

### *What Are The Advantages of First-Class Mail?*

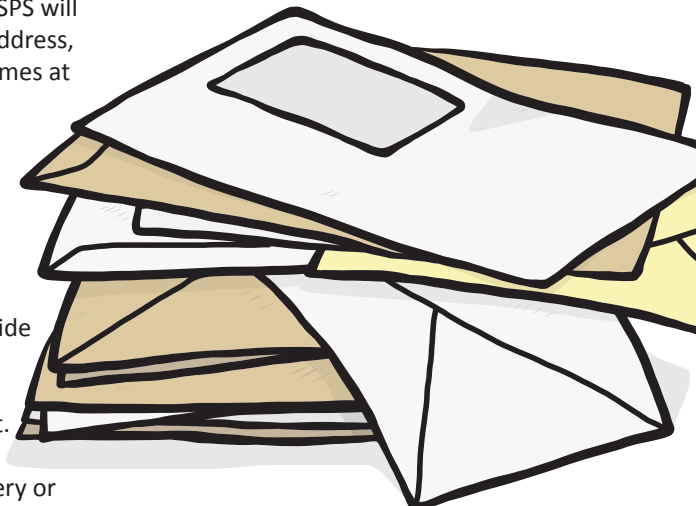
- Delivery times for First-Class mail remain consistent, even during peak mailing times because the USPS gives it priority over other classes of mail.
- Sending mail First-Class can help mitigate the costs of returned mail. If a First-Class mailpiece is undeliverable, the USPS will forward the mail to the correct address, or return it to the sender, sometimes at no charge.
- Consumer perception that this mail is “important” and is likely to be opened and read.
- Add-ons like Certified Mail® provide evidence of mailing so that you know when your items are delivered to the correct recipient. This also includes information about the date and time of delivery or attempted delivery.

### *Is First-Class Mail The Same As Priority Mail?*

The only commonality between First-Class and Priority Mail is that delivery is expected within 1-3 days. First-Class mail is typically used for standard size envelopes, postcards, flats, and lightweight packages. First-Class mail has specific weight and size requirements to qualify for the First-Class price. The rates of First-Class mail flats are also significantly less than Priority mail rates.

Priority Mail is more popularly known for parcels, and is much better for individual use, rather than bulk mailings, there are no commercial rates for Priority Mail. Priority Mail sizes start much larger than First-Class mail, they also offer Flat-Rate pricing for specifically sized parcels.

*Read more about First-Class mail on our blog post [Beginner's Guide to First-Class Mail](https://www.mw-direct.com/blog/posts/beginner-s-guide-to-first-class-mail/) at <https://www.mw-direct.com/blog/posts/beginner-s-guide-to-first-class-mail/>.*



## Team Treats



# Strawberry Balsamic Bruschetta

*Need a perfect way to utilize those summer strawberries you picked? Try this recipe by Delish for Strawberry Balsamic Bruschetta.*

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 baguette, cut into 1" slices
- 1/4 c. plus 2 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 2 c. ricotta
- 2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 tsp. Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 c. strawberries, chopped
- 2 Tbsp. fresh basil, thinly sliced
- Balsamic glaze for serving

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 400°.
2. Place baguette slices on a medium sheet tray and drizzle or brush with 1/4 cup olive oil. Bake until bread is toasted, about 10 minutes.
3. In a medium bowl, mix ricotta with salt, pepper, and 2 teaspoons oil. Spread each toast generously with ricotta mixture, then top with strawberries.
4. Garnish with basil and drizzle with balsamic glaze. Serve.

Find the full recipe here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8m4xw7n>

## FUN FACTS:

July 1st is National U.S. Postage Stamp Day which celebrates the day the United States issued its first postage stamp in 1847. Since we are a company that works with mail, we just had to share a few fun facts about the history of postage stamps.



- The United States issued the first postage stamp on July 1st, 1847. However, stamps were not required at that time for mailing. They officially became mandatory in 1855.
- The most popular U.S. postage stamp was a 1993 stamp of Elvis Presley that sold over 120 million copies, whereas the most valuable U.S. postage stamp was the 1918 Inverted Jenny which sold in 2016 at auction for \$1,351,250.
- The first postage stamps were not created with a self-adhesive back. People had to use their own glue or paste and hope the stamp stayed attached.
- The only country to print stamps without its name on them is Great Britain. Great Britain invented the adhesive postage stamp in 1837.
- In 2013, Belgium printed millions of postage stamps that were chocolate scented. They also apparently tasted like chocolate, but we don't recommend trying that out...



### PROMOTIONS & INCENTIVES

Emerging and Advanced Technology

This promotion encourages mailers to continue to adopt use of the USPS omnichannel feature, Informed Delivery®. Participants may create Informed Delivery® campaigns through the portal or submit elements through their eDoc submission, and develop campaigns that meet best-practice requirements.

- Regular and nonprofit Marketing Mail letters and flats, and First Class Mail presort or automation letters, cards, and flats that meet the promotion requirements will be eligible for an upfront 2% postage discount during the promotion.
- **Registration:** July 15, 2021 - November 30, 2021
- **Promotion period:** September 1, 2021 - November 30, 2021

CTA: Need help with informed delivery? Contact us [info@mw-direct.com](mailto:info@mw-direct.com)



## First Class Mail

When it comes to qualifications for mail classes and the best options for each mailer, the information out there can be a bit confusing, especially about First Class mail. The primary differences between First Class and Marketing mail are price, speed of delivery, and options for mail forwarding or returns on mail with outdated addresses. If you are wondering what qualifies your mailpiece for First Class, or what the advantages and disadvantages are, here are some facts you might find helpful:

**First Class mail is typically delivered in 2-4 business days.**

Delivery times for First Class mail remain consistent, even during peak mailing times because the USPS gives it priority over other classes of mail. With Marketing mail, the delivery times are inconsistent and the USPS processes it on a "time available" basis. If timing is your concern, First Class mail may be your best option.

**First Class mail is required for any invoices, credit cards, or personalized correspondence.** First Class mail is touched less and processed quickly, keeping the utmost integrity of the mailpiece. This is also why First Class mail is more expensive than Marketing mail, rising incrementally with each ounce. Any time-sensitive information in the above categories, must be sent First Class.

**First Class mail can still reach people with outdated addresses.** If a First Class mailpiece is undeliverable, the USPS will forward the mail to the correct address, or return it to the sender, sometimes at no charge. This gives mailers who mail First Class a big advantage.

**First Class is best for peak mailing season.** In 2019, the USPS was projected to deliver 800 million packages between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day and that number was projected to significantly increase in 2020. Because First Class mail is given priority over Marketing mail (that could take between 5-20 days), it is the best choice for time-sensitive mail during the holidays.

**However, First Class mail may not be the best option if cost is the primary concern.** First Class mail rises incrementally with every ounce, whereas Marketing mail allows up to 3.3 ounces per piece without any increase in postage. If the information is not time-sensitive, mailing at the Marketing mail rate is more cost-efficient, especially for large volume mailings.

Questions? Our experienced mail professionals can help you understand the qualifications of First Class mail including mailpiece design, quantities, and timelines. [Contact us](#) today at 1.800.686.6666 to learn more about First Class mail and determine the best solution for your next mail project.



THE PLUS PODCAST

With Midwest Direct



## The Plus Podcast: EP 4: Everything You Should Know About Mail

Mail has one of the best response and engagement rates available in marketing today. However, it is also a demanding channel that requires expertise and experience to manage well. Midwest Direct can save you time and money while increasing visibility and delivery rates of your most important business communications and marketing messages. To get the most for your money, you need the help of a professional mailer to ensure your mail is in compliance and that you have achieved best practices. When you contact us, we'll help to educate you on the best options for your mail at every point in the delivery chain — from data acquisition and preparation through delivery, response tracking and reporting. We manage the logistics, prepare the data and postal preparation and manage first-class mail, and marketing mail (standard mail) for clients ranging in size from large out-of-state financial institutions to local non-profit organizations. We can pick up, commingle and deliver mail to the USPS within about five hundred miles of our two locations in Cleveland, OH, and Pittsburgh, PA.

Listen to Sean Gebbie, President of Midwest Direct, at [mw-direct.com/pluspod4](http://mw-direct.com/pluspod4) to learn how you can become more efficient, get more information, spend less, and prove your ROI before your next mailing. [Contact us](#) today at 1.800.686.6666 and ask how we can add the power of digital marketing and tracking to see when your print actually triggered a response in an online channel.



Mandy's

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*"If your dream is a big dream, and if you want your life to work on the high level you say you do, there's no way around doing the work it takes to get you there." – Joyce Chapman*

# DIRECT Hit



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## Inside This Edition...

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## Discover The Myths About Commingling



Read about it on [mw-direct.com/blog](http://mw-direct.com/blog)

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Questions or comments?  
Email us at [marketing@mw-direct.com](mailto:marketing@mw-direct.com).