

Direct Mail Checklist: Design & Preparation

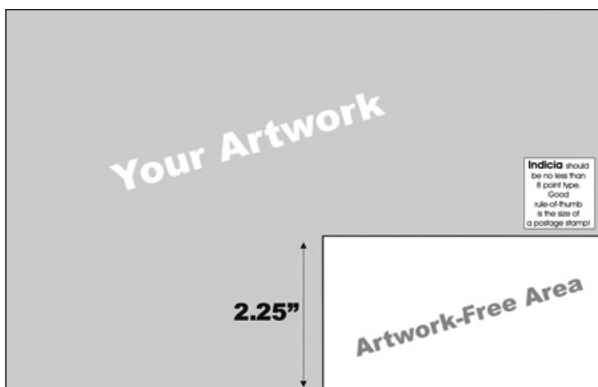
Design Checklist

Mail Piece Design:

- Check aspect ratio is more than 1.3 and less than 2.5 (ratio is determined by dividing the length of a piece by the height) and a letter size piece must be rectangular and horizontal/landscape in design (a flat can be either vertical/portrait or horizontal/landscape).
- Postcards claiming first-class postcard rates must be smaller than 4.25" x 6" and be printed on material that is a minimum of .007" thick (commonly known as 7 pt stock).
- Postcards larger than 4.25" x 6" are considered letters in First-Class Mail. Standard Mail does not have a postcard category and treats all postcards as letters.
- Postcards larger than 4.25" x 6" are required to be printed on a minimum of .009" thick (commonly known as 9 pt stock).
- Some classes of mail have specific rules and requirements:
 - Any mail containing personal information may need to be sent First-Class Mail or First-Class Presort.
 - Non-profit mail requires a return address.
 - Standard and Non-profit mail that use an ancillary endorsement will require first class postage to be paid for any returned mail.
- Wafer Seals/Tabs have various rules, refer to QSG 201b for more information. Best plan is to have all folded edges at the right and bottom and tabs at the top.

Paper and Other Design Elements:

- 7 point stock for small postcards and 9 point stock for larger postcards.
- Visibly recycled and dark colored paper may not be automation compatible. This includes Astrobright colors.
- Coatings and varnish should be avoided on the addressing area.



Addressing Checklist

Address Block:

- Minimum font size is 8 pt. type (any readable font).
 - Rule of Thumb: an area of 2" high x 4" wide is recommended to fit all of the barcode and address information without having other text/graphics in this area. Best practice would be to plan 2.25" x 4" from the bottom right of the mailpiece (incorporates next checklist items).
- Must be no higher than 2.75" from the bottom edge and lower than 0.625" from the bottom edge of the piece.
- At least .5" on the right and left to edge of piece or .125" from any graphical elements.
- The address block area is free from coatings or varnish.
- Also recommended that no text be placed in the bottom 0.625" as the post office may use this area to apply additional barcodes and stickers.
- In a window envelope, a minimum of .125" space around the entire address area must be maintained (do the "tap" test!).
- For most efficient handling sequence, package, and container numbers and breakmark should be printed in the address block.

Barcode:

- Barcode should have at least .5" of space between the last bar and the leading edge of the piece (right edge).
- Barcode should have at least .125" of space between any graphical element and the first bar of the barcode.
- Should be generated using the ZIP+4, delivery point and check digit for POSTNET barcodes.
- Recommended barcode width is 22 bars per inch.
- Intelligent Mail barcode requirements are advanced. Please contact your TMD representative for details.

Indicia:

- Contains correct class/rate
- Contains "U.S. Postage Paid"
- Contains permit number
- Contains mailing city and state

CASS/DPV & Presorting:

- CASS Certification/DPV is required for all automation postal discounts.
- Presorting requires a sample to be weighed and the thickness measured (measure this at the thickest part of the pieces—i.e. the stitches or thickest folds). A sample of 10 is a good rule of thumb.