LTL shipping terms and shipper guide

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You accept these terms when you place an LTL order. They add to the Freight Sidekick Terms and Conditions at freightsidekick.com/terms, which still apply. Part 1 is what you agree to. Part 2 is how to keep the bill matching the quote. The version you accepted is saved on your order with the date and time.

The six things that matter most

1. Your price is for the freight as you declared it: count, dimensions, weight, class, and the services at each stop.
2. Every LTL carrier weighs and measures after pickup. A difference is billed after delivery, usually within 90 days and in some cases up to 180 days after the carrier's invoice. The carrier alone decides when.
3. Pickup and delivery dates are estimates. Transit counts business days.
4. Inspect before you sign. Write any shortage or damage on the delivery receipt. Concealed damage must be reported within 5 days.
5. Carrier liability is a per-pound limit, not insurance. Used or uncrated goods are usually covered at about $0.10 per pound.
6. You may cancel before pickup. A same-day cancellation can carry a dry run fee, usually $50 to $150 depending on the carrier. If the driver arrives and the freight is not ready, a $150 re-attempt fee applies.

Part 1. What you agree to

1. Who we are

Freight Sidekick is a freight brokerage agency. We arrange your shipment through the logistics providers we represent and the LTL carriers they contract with. We are not the carrier and we do not operate trucks. The carrier's rules tariff governs how it weighs, measures, classes and handles freight and what it pays when freight is lost or damaged. Nothing in these terms makes Freight Sidekick liable for the carrier's acts.

2. Your quote and what it covers

Your price is based on the route, the freight as you declared it, and the services you selected at each stop. Fuel is included. The quote is good for 30 days from the date it was issued. A quote is a quote, not a booking: the carrier accepts the shipment when it is tendered.

Pickup and delivery dates are estimates, not guarantees. Transit time counts business days only. Carriers schedule against available capacity, and LTL carriers do not take pickup appointments. If you need a firm delivery date, ask us about guaranteed service before you book.

3. What you declare

You are responsible for the accuracy of everything the quote is priced on:

- the piece count and the packaging (pallets, crates, boxes, loose pieces);
- the dimensions of each piece at its longest, widest and tallest points, pallet included;
- the weight of each piece, pallet and packaging included;
- the commodity and its freight class;

- whether a piece can have another pallet stacked on it (freight is non-stackable unless you say otherwise);
- hazardous materials, declared on the quote and on the bill of lading;
- the type of location at each stop and the services it needs.

Our freight class tools help you estimate; the carrier's inspection decides.

4. Re-weigh, re-measure and re-class

Every LTL carrier weighs and measures each shipment after pickup, on its own scale and dimensioner, and may inspect the freight to confirm its class. If the carrier finds a higher weight, larger dimensions or a different class than you declared, it corrects its invoice and may add an inspection fee. The corrected charges are yours.

Corrections arrive after delivery, usually within 90 days. Federal law (49 U.S.C. 13710(a)(3)(A)) lets a carrier issue a corrected bill up to 180 days after its original invoice, which is dated when the carrier bills our provider, not when your freight delivers. We do not control when a carrier audits a shipment or when it bills a correction, and we cannot shorten that window. When we receive one, we send you a re-bill notice with the reason, the carrier's correction and the amount due.

5. Services added at the door

A service the carrier performs that was not on the quote is billed as a correction at the carrier's tariff rate. The usual ones:

- a liftgate used at a stop that was not booked with one;
- a stop the carrier classes as residential or limited access (schools, churches, farms, storage units, construction sites, military bases and similar), judged by the location type, not by the room to maneuver;
- inside pickup or delivery, a delivery appointment, or a call before arrival that the receiver requires;
- a piece longer than the carrier's standard length (overlength), or freight that needs special handling;
- a re-attempt when nobody is there to ship or receive, a redelivery, a reconsignment (address change after pickup), storage at the carrier's terminal, or the return of refused freight.

6. How a re-bill is paid

A re-bill is due on receipt. If you paid by card or ACH, the notice carries a secure payment link for the difference; the same processing fees apply (3% by card, $8 by ACH). If you have a billing account, the correction appears on your next invoice. Freight charges, including corrections, are due regardless of any pending cargo claim and may not be offset against one.

To dispute a correction, tell us within 14 days of the notice. We request the carrier's scale ticket or inspection record and compare it with your declared numbers. Carriers set their own dispute windows and a late dispute may not be accepted, so send your own weight and measurement records as soon as you can.

7. Pickup, missed pickup and cancellation

You may cancel an LTL order before pickup; the order returns to a quote and can be booked again. A same-day cancellation can carry a dry run fee, usually $50 to $150 depending on the carrier. If the driver arrives and the freight is not ready, not accessible, or not as declared, or if you cancel after pickup, a re-attempt fee of $150 applies, or the carrier's tariff rate if higher. A missed pickup also restarts the transit estimate.

LTL carriers generally pick up in the afternoon on business days. We can give you an estimated window on the day of pickup but cannot set a time. Have the freight staged, wrapped, labelled and the bill of lading we sent you printed for the driver.

8. Delivery

The receiver must count the pieces and inspect the freight before signing the delivery receipt, and write any shortage, loss or visible damage on it, on the driver's copy as well. A clean signature tells the carrier everything arrived in good order. Damage found after the driver leaves must be reported to us within 5 days of delivery. Refused freight, redelivery, reconsignment and terminal storage are billed at the carrier's tariff rate, with the $150 re-attempt minimum where a second trip is made.

9. Carrier liability, not insurance

The carrier's rules tariff limits what it pays for loss or damage: the lowest of the invoice value, the replacement cost and a per-pound limit, with a cap per shipment. New goods are commonly covered at $1 to $25 per pound depending on the carrier and the class. Used, refurbished and uncrated goods are commonly limited to about $0.10 per pound. Discounted and brokered rates often carry a lower limit still. Current limits by carrier are published at freightsidekick.com/resources/ltl-liability-and-insurance-guide; the tariff in effect on the day of shipment controls.

Full-value coverage is optional. It is arranged through our provider network, priced before you book, and subject to that program's terms and exclusions. Freight Sidekick does not issue insurance and is not liable under the Carmack Amendment (49 U.S.C. 14706) for loss, damage or delay.

10. Claims

A cargo claim is against the carrier, or against the coverage provider when full-value coverage was purchased. We prepare and file the claim for you as a service; doing so is not an assumption of liability. Claims are valued at your cost, usually the invoice value of the goods, not the retail price.

- Note loss, shortage or damage on the delivery receipt at delivery.
- Report concealed damage within 5 days of delivery.
- The written claim must reach the carrier within 9 months of delivery.
- Keep the damaged freight and all packaging until the carrier inspects it or releases it in writing. Discarded freight is the most common reason a claim is declined.
- The carrier acknowledges within 30 days and pays, declines or offers within 120 days.

11. Bill of lading

Use the bill of lading we send you for every LTL shipment. Check it when it arrives and tell us about any error before pickup; a bill of lading that differs from the quote causes corrections, inspection fees and reconsignments. The carrier's bill of lading and tariff terms govern the carrier. They do not change the terms between you and Freight Sidekick.

12. Hazardous materials

Declare hazardous materials on the quote, with the proper shipping name, UN number, class and packing group, and ship them packaged, marked and labelled as the regulations require. You are responsible for fines, penalties, cleanup and carrier charges that result from undeclared or misdeclared hazardous materials.

13. Payment

Card and ACH orders are paid through the secure payment link we email, and the pickup is scheduled once payment is received. Card payments carry a 3% processing fee and ACH payments a flat $8 fee. Billing accounts are invoiced on the terms approved on your credit application, net 30 unless agreed otherwise in writing. Past-due balances may move the account to prepay, and the costs of collection are yours.

14. Versions

These terms carry a version number. The version you accepted when you placed the order governs that order. It is saved on your order with the date, time and account, attached to your booking confirmation, and filed under Docs on your order. The current version is always at freightsidekick.com/terms.

Part 2. Shipper guide: keep the bill matching the quote

Almost every surprise on an LTL bill comes from a number that was off or a service nobody mentioned. This part is how to avoid both.

Weigh it, after packing

- Weigh each pallet or piece on a scale after it is packed and wrapped, with the pallet on the scale.
- If you cannot weigh it, estimate over, never under. Add the pallet (a wooden 48 x 40 weighs about 35 to 45 lb) and the packaging, then round up to the next 10 lb. An over-estimate costs a little on the quote; an under-estimate costs a correction plus the carrier's inspection fee.
- Enter the weight per piece, and check that the total on the quote matches what you weighed.

Measure it at the widest points

- Length, width and height of each piece as it will be handed to the driver: pallet included, anything that sticks out included. Round up to the next inch.
- Nothing should overhang the pallet. Overhang gets crushed, and it adds inches that change the class.
- Keep a standard pallet at or under 72 inches tall, floor to top. Some carriers allow up to about 84 inches with notice. A piece over 8 feet long usually carries an overlength charge, and over 12 feet needs a conversation first.

Class it from the real numbers

- Freight class follows density: the weight divided by the cubic feet of the piece, pallet included. Lower density means a higher class and a higher rate.
- Use the freight class calculator at freightsidekick.com/tools/estimate-freight-class with your measured numbers. A class guessed low is reclassed after inspection; a class from real measurements holds.
- Mark a pallet stackable only if another pallet can safely sit on top of it. Everything else is quoted as non-stackable.

What the carrier checks	What happens when it is off	How to avoid it
Weight, on the carrier's scale	Re-weigh: billed at the higher weight, plus an inspection fee	Weigh after packing, pallet included; estimate over
Dimensions, on a dimensioner	Re-class to a lower density and a higher class; overlength if a piece is long	Measure the widest points; no overhang; round up
Commodity and class, by inspection	Re-class at the carrier's determination	Class from measured density; describe the commodity plainly
Location type and services used	Liftgate, residential, limited access or inside service added at tariff rates	Say what each stop is and what it needs before you book
Freight ready and receiver available	Re-attempt $150, or the carrier's rate if higher; storage if it waits at a terminal	Stage it before the pickup window; confirm the receiver's hours

Describe each stop

- Business or residence. A home, a farm or a business run from a home is residential to the carrier.
- Dock and forklift, or neither. Without a forklift the driver needs a liftgate to get a pallet to the ground, and liftgates have weight limits.
- Limited access: a school, church, storage unit, construction site, military base, mall, fairground, hotel, medical site or similar. The carrier judges by the type of place, not by how easy it is to reach.

- Receiving hours, an appointment requirement, a call before arrival, or inside delivery (to a garage, a lobby or just inside the door, not up stairs or into a suite).

Package it for a network, not a single truck

LTL freight is loaded and unloaded several times and rides beside other shippers' goods. The packaging protects it, and a claim is judged on whether the packaging was adequate.

- A sound 48 x 40 pallet with no cracked or missing boards.
- Heaviest boxes on the bottom, corners lined up, an even top, nothing past the edge.
- Stretch wrap from the bottom up, four to five full turns, with a few turns around the pallet itself so the load is anchored to it.
- Corner boards and banding for heavy or fragile freight. Crate machinery, glass, stone and electronics; uncrated goods are covered at the used-goods rate.
- A label on every piece with the shipper, the receiver, the piece count ("1 of 3") and the bill of lading number.

Protect it

- Photograph each piece after wrapping and before the driver loads it. Photos with a date are your evidence.
- Record serial numbers and keep the vendor invoice; a claim pays from it.
- Use opaque wrap and plain cartons. Retail boxes and brand names advertise what is inside.
- Declare the value when you quote. If it is above the carrier's per-pound limit, add full-value coverage before you book; after pickup it is too late.
- Do not ship cash, documents, securities, live plants or animals, or perishables outside temperature control by LTL. They are excluded from coverage.

At pickup

- Have the freight staged where the driver can reach it, and the bill of lading we sent printed for the driver. Do not use the carrier's blank form.
- Check the piece count on the bill of lading against what is going on the truck, and have the driver sign for the count.
- If the driver notes anything on the bill of lading at pickup, tell us the same day.

At delivery

- Count the pieces first, then walk all four sides of each pallet before signing.
- Write what you see on both copies of the delivery receipt: "carton 3 of 4 crushed, top right corner" is a record; "damaged" or "subject to inspection" is not.
- Photograph damage on the truck or at the curb, before you sign.
- Open and inspect within 5 days. Report concealed damage to us at once, and keep the freight and every piece of packaging until the carrier releases it in writing.
- Refuse only freight that is a total loss or unsafe. Accept, note and file for anything you can repair or use.

If a re-bill arrives

- Read the reason. The notice says what the carrier found and the amount of the difference.
- Compare it with your own weights, measurements and photos. If your records show the carrier is wrong, reply within 14 days and attach them; we request the scale ticket or inspection record from the carrier.
- Pay the undisputed part on time. A dispute does not pause the due date on the rest of the invoice.

Questions: support@freightsidekick.com · (877) 345-3838