



# Suspicious Packages

In this instance, the term suspicious packages is being used as a general term to cover a number of articles that could pose a potential threat, to include letters, packages or parcels, and unattended luggage or backpacks. Potential threats include, but are not limited to, IEDs [improvised explosive device] that take any form and can be any size, biological

hazards such as anthrax, chemical hazards, and radiological hazards.

It is possible to come in contact with a suspicious package at home, in your workplace, or in public. You should always exercise caution if a package seems suspicious; report it immediately, and be prepared to act in a manner that

enhances your safety as well as others. While there is no "one size fits all" procedure, the following information provides guidance on how to prepare, how to identify, and what to do if you receive or encounter a suspicious package. Above all, if you perceive a threat, call 9-1-1 from a land line.

## How to Prepare

- 1 **Stay informed** of possible or reported threats in your area.
- 2 Understand how to identify suspicious mail or packages.
- 3 Become familiar with your office and community protocols for handling suspicious mail or packages and the contact numbers for regional/installation fire and emergency dispatch center, Naval Security Forces, local security, law enforcement, and HAZMAT agencies.
- 4 **Make a plan** that includes identifying who you would immediately notify and steps you would take to safely protect yourself and others from suspicious mail or packages.
- 5 **Build an emergency supply kit** with non-perishables for your home, office, and car that includes gloves and a dust mask in case you must shelter in place, evacuate, or are placed in lockdown.

## How to Identify Suspicious Mail or Packages

Through various collaborative documents, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) along with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), U.S. Postal Inspection Services, U.S. Postal Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Center for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) have identified the following characteristics of suspicious mail or packages that have repeatedly shown up:

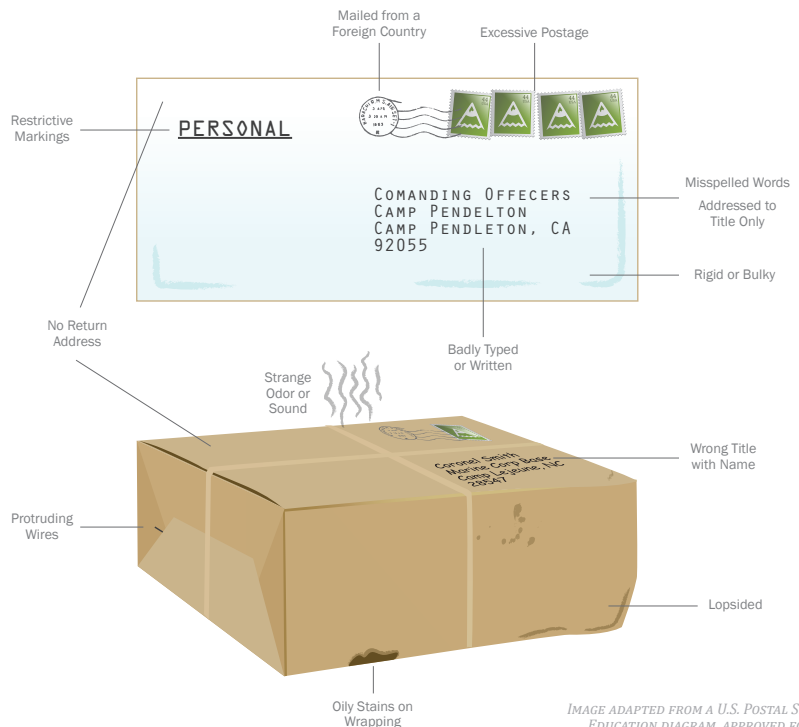


IMAGE ADAPTED FROM A U.S. POSTAL SERVICE EDUCATION DIAGRAM, APPROVED FOR USE.

**Set your own course through any hazard: stay informed, make a plan, build a kit. Live Ready Marine Corps.**



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- An article may be unattended or arrive unexpectedly.
- An article may have protruding wires, aluminum foil, powder-like substance, or oil stains, and may emit a peculiar odor or sound.
- Mail bombs may have excessive postage or use foreign postage.
- The return address may be fictitious or non-existent.
- The postmark may show a different location than the return address.
- Mail bombs may bear restrictive endorsements, such as "Personal" or "Private."
- Mail bombs may display misspelled words, incorrect titles, and poor or distorted handwriting, or the name and address may be prepared with homemade labels or cut-and-paste lettering.
- Parcel bombs may be unprofessionally wrapped with several combinations of tape or string used to secure the package, and may be endorsed "Fragile—Handle With Care" or "Rush—Do Not Delay."
- Letter bombs may feel rigid, or appear uneven or lopsided.
- Package bombs may have an irregular shape, soft spots, or bulges.

## What to Do if You Receive or Encounter Suspicious Mail or Packages

If a package or other article seems out of place or strange to you, or you suspect a package or other article may contain a bomb or biological, chemical, or radiological threat:

- Remain calm, and listen to your intuition, without worrying about embarrassment if you are wrong. It is always better to be safe than sorry.
- Don't shake, open, touch, smell, or taste the article or any substances on the article.
- Activate your emergency plan.
- Immediately call 9-1-1. Use a land line. Do NOT use a cell phone or device that sends a signal, as it could trigger an explosive device.
- Notify your commander and local law enforcement (dial 9-1-1) to report and describe the suspicious article. If on or near a Marine Corps

Installation, report the package at [www.USMCEagleEyes.org](http://www.USMCEagleEyes.org).

- » If in an airport or other passenger or freight terminal, notify Transportation Security Administration (TSA) personnel.
- Isolate the suspect parcel, but do not place it in water or a confined space such as a drawer, cabinet, or closet.
- Keep others away.
- Shut off air conditioning units and fans that could circulate possible chemical, biological, or other hazards to other areas of the building.
- If possible, open windows in the immediate area to assist in venting potentially harmful or explosive gases.
- Evacuate the immediate area, but

do not leave the vicinity altogether until you have spoken with law enforcement, and they have cleared you to leave.

- Pay attention to emergency or Marine Corps Mass notification System alerts put out by Giant Voice, Indoor Voice, or the enterprise Mass Notification System: (desktop notification, email, short message service (SMS) text, and telephone alerts, to include alerts using a smartphone application). These alerts will contain instructions, indicating whether you should evacuate, shelter in place or take other action. Follow-on messages will provide updates and alert you when the all clear has been given.
- If you handled the article in any way, wash your hands with soap and water.

## Where to Find Additional Information

- U.S. Postal Inspection Service Suspicious Mail or Packages Poster—<https://postalinspectors.uspis.gov/radDocs/bombs.htm>
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Bomb Threat Call Procedures and Checklist—[http://emilms.fema.gov/is906/assets/ocso-bomb\\_threat\\_samepage-brochure.pdf](http://emilms.fema.gov/is906/assets/ocso-bomb_threat_samepage-brochure.pdf)
- Department of Homeland Security—<http://www.dhs.gov/ensuring-building-security>