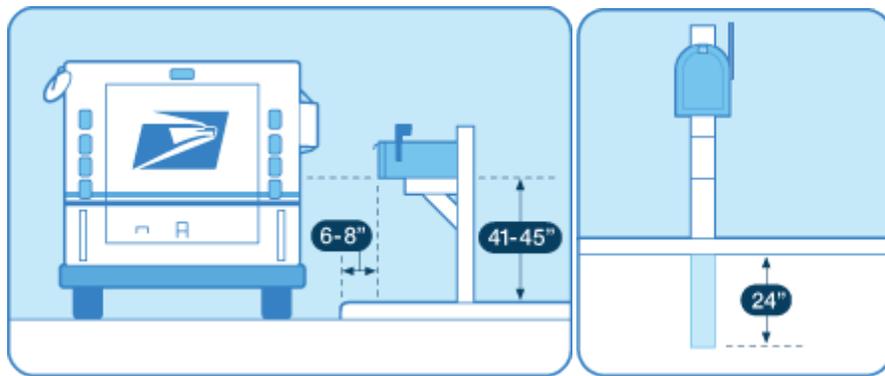


SO WHAT MAKES A GOOD MAILBOX?

From the wear and tear of daily use to constant assault from the elements, these guidelines will help you set up a mailbox that stands up to it all. If you're buying a new mailbox, look for the Postmaster General's seal of approval; every new mailbox design should be reviewed and approved before it goes to market. If you opt to construct your own mailbox, you should run your plans by your local postmaster. Overall, the mailbox you build will need to meet the same size, strength, and quality standards as manufactured boxes. The house or apartment number should be clearly displayed on your mailbox. And, if your mailbox is on a different street than your house, the street name should appear on it, too.

❖ PLACEMENT

Because of varying road and curb conditions, the Postal Service™ recommends that you contact your local postmaster for approval of the location of your mailbox before you put it up. Put a roadside mailbox where a carrier can safely reach inside without leaving the truck. That means positioning it about 41" to 45" off the ground and back about 6" to 8" from the curb. In the absence of a raised curb, contact your local postmaster for guidance. If you live in the city and are attaching the box to your house, just make sure it can be accessed easily from your sidewalk, steps, or porch. Because city carriers often shoulder heavy bags, put your mailbox about 4' from the ground. That way, your carrier won't have to stretch or bend to reach it. And remember to keep the path to your mailbox clear in inclement weather.



❖ THE POST

If you're mounting a curbside mailbox on a post near the street, the support should be secure and safe. The best supports are designed to bend or fall away if a car hits them. The Federal Highway Administration recommends:

- A wooden mailbox support no bigger than 4" x 4"
- A 2"-diameter standard steel or aluminum pipe
- Bury your post no more than 24" deep, so it can give way in an accident.
- Don't use potentially dangerous supports, such as:
 - Heavy metal pipes
 - Concrete posts
 - Farm equipment, such as milk cans filled with concrete

In areas with lots of snow, we suggest a semi-arch or extended arm-type support. That way, snowplows will be able to sweep under without knocking it down.

❖ MAINTENANCE

Your mailbox takes a serious beating from the weather, especially in the winter. We suggest a routine mailbox check-up every spring. You might just need to:

- Replace loose hinges on the door
- Repaint rusty or peeling parts
- Remount the post, if it's loose
- Replace missing or faded house numbers

And year-round keep obstructions away from your mailbox. Your carrier may not deliver your mail if there's a car, shrub, snowdrift, or unfriendly dog in front of it.