

Royal Mail API Shipping V3 Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: Can you give me an overview of the steps that I need to take to get shipping using API Shipping V3?

1. Ensure your commercial lead has agreed with your Royal Mail Account handler the need for API Shipping
2. Expect a qualifying call from Royal Mail Customer Solutions team which will help you in setting up your account on developer.royalmail.net portal
3. On developer.royalmail.net go to Getting Started and create an Application (including your Royal Mail Account number in the Application name and record the client secret and ID on screen
4. Contact APIm.support.and.approvals@royalmail.com and ask to provide visibility of API Shipping V3
5. Await a Pro Shipping Account Confirmation email from shippingsupport@royalmail.com and click on the link provided to set your password
6. Go onto Pro Shipping Maintenance> API Security to enter your API User ID and Password
7. Complete your API code development using the Swagger, Technical User Guide and Reference data file on developer.royalmail.net
8. Test your API calls and responses including manifesting, sample shipment labels and error handling in the Onboarding (sandbox) environment and request Customer Solutions team to upgrade you to the Production environment
9. Once the Customer Solutions team are satisfied that your code works correctly they will promote you to the Production environment in APIM so whilst your API endpoint will remain the same, it will now point to the Production Environment.
10. Await a Production Pro Shipping Account Confirmation email from shippingsupport@royalmail.com and click on the link provided to set your password
11. Go onto Production Pro Shipping Maintenance> API Security to enter your API User ID and Password
12. After a week's successful operation in ELS, your BAU support will be transferred to shippingsupport@royalmail.com.

Q2. Where can I find the latest version of the Royal Mail API Shipping Swagger?

The latest versions of these resources are available in the Swagger.UI Project on the 'API Shipping V3' page on the [Royal Mail Developer Portal \(https://developer.royalmail.net\)](https://developer.royalmail.net). The Swagger can be used to test your code. The API Shipping V3 Technical User guide is also available on the site.

Q3. Is an eBay/Amazon plugin available?

A plugin is not currently available.

Q4. Do you have an environment for me to test against?

Yes, you will initially be given access to an Onboarding environment before proceeding to the Production environment. This is a sandboxed environment that allows you to test the ability to create/ cancel shipments, print labels and print Customer Collection Receipts

without any data being sent to downstream systems and without any charges being incurred against your account.

Q5. Can Royal Mail implement the Web Services using API for me?

No, Royal Mail only provides an API Swagger.UI project and reference data to give you an understanding of the API Shipping operations and therefore cannot complete any web service implementation for your business.

Q6 What is the API End Point and what authorisation steps are needed?

Both onboarding and live access to the API is obtained via the following URL:

<https://api.royalmail.net/shipping/v3>

The Client ID and Secret must be provided in the HTTP header of all API requests otherwise access to the API will be rejected and a HTTP 401 (Unauthorised) will be returned. The Client ID and Secret are obtained by registering an application on the Royal Mail Developer Portal

You must complete all required test activities in the onboarding environment prior to being permitted access to the live environment by the Royal Mail Customer Solutions Team.

Once you log in on the developer portal and have been authorized to use your subscribed APP, the onboarding environment is made available to you. This will allow you to test your APP integration without data being passed through to the Royal Mail operational and billing systems and without incurring any charges against your account.

Q7: Are there any additional Headers in the responses that I may consider to be different to the Swagger norm?

Yes- There is a header in the responses, X-Rate-Limit header, which returns a rate limit of the throttling plan that you are currently on. e.g. "name=rate-limit-1,25000;"

Q8. Which Service Offerings can I use on API Shipping?

See the 'Reference Data File on the API Shipping V3' page at <https://developer.royalmail.net> for the service offerings available via API Shipping. You can use any of these service offerings providing that your Royal Mail SAP account has been setup to use them. To see the services available on your account on API Shipping, go onto your Royal Mail Pro Shipping system account and check the Maintenance / Services screen. Click on the "Refresh Contracts" button in the top right hand corner of the screen to refresh from OBA the latest services available on your account.

Note if the service does not appear on your OBA account, they will definitely not be available to you on API Shipping. If the service does appear on OBA, in some cases it will still not be available on API Shipping, particularly letter only format or Non-VATable services. Contact your Royal Mail Account Manager if you need additional services set up on your SAP account.

Q9. What do I need to do to set up the Local Collect alternate delivery option to offer my customers delivery at a nearby Post Office® branch?

Whilst API Shipping produces the Special Delivery / Royal Mail Tracked Local Collect labels, you will need to integrate with Local Collect API to get the relevant Post Office or Royal Mail Enquiry Office address details and include this in the API Shipping call. To take advantage of this delivery option, you need to integrate via our Local Collect API. Please visit the 'Local Collect API' pages at <https://developer.royalmail.net> for more details and to request access to this service.

Q10. How do I cancel a shipment?

Using the PUT/shipments/cancel operation, that will cancel any shipments which have not been manifested. Shipments can also be cancelled via the web based Royal Mail Pro Shipping system under the Current Shipments screen using the Cancel Shipment button. For more help with Pro Shipping visit <https://www.royalmail.com/pro-shipping-help>

Q11. What's the format of the PUT /shipments/{shipmentId}/printLabel response?

As an API Shipping V3 user, the default format in the PUT /shipments/{shipmentId}/printLabel response is Base64 encoded PDF. If you require data stream access, the Customer Solutions team can configure your system settings for data stream. This will enable the format of the PUT /shipments/{shipmentId}/printLabel response to be one of the following options:

- Base64 encoded PDF
- Raw XML Data & Base 64 encoded PDF
- Raw XML Data & Base64 encoded PNG images of the barcodes only

The Customer Solutions team then check your sample labels meet our specifications prior to them being used.

Q12. Can I reprint labels or Customer Collection Receipts?

You can reprint shipment labels using the Print Label: /shipments/{shipmentId}/printLabel function (if the shipment has not been manifested) and you can reprint Customer Collection Receipts using the POST /manifests, POST /manifests/bycarrier, or POST /manifests/byservice function. You must not reprint labels to use on multiple items going to the same address. This is regarded as fraud and is actively monitored by Royal Mail.

Q13. How do I track the parcels I have shipped?

There is a separate Royal Mail web service available for tracking. To take advantage of this Tracking option, you need to integrate via our Tracking API. Please visit the 'Tracking API' pages at <https://developer.royalmail.net> for more details and to request access to this service. You can also track shipments individually via the Royal Mail website: <http://www.royalmail.com/track-trace>.

Please note the Tracking API is not suitable for bulk or batch tracking requests. Please

contact the Customers Solutions team to discuss alternative solutions for bulk or batch processing tracking solutions.

Q14. For Average Weight services, when the Average Weight option is enabled, can I submit the total weight and volumes by format as part of the End of Day Process?

Yes, Please call the Shipping Systems Help desk on 0345 266 6615 to set the End of Day Average Weight option. This is only available for Average Weight services. The average weight and quantity by format then needs to be entered on the Royal Mail Pro Shipping system User Interface as part of the End of Day Process. For more information see API Shipping V3 Reference Data file on <https://developer.royalmail.net>. For more help with Pro Shipping visit <https://www.royalmail.com/pro-shipping-help>

When this option is enabled, the Customs Documentation option (CN23 and Commercial Invoice) is automatically disabled. Note when Customs Documentation is auto disabled, no error code is returned irrespective of the INCO term code included in the POST /shipments call

Q15. What is the relationship between Parcel (Labels) and Items for an International Shipment?

For International services, where Customs Documentation option is selected (via the API Shipping) these shipments may have more than one item in a Parcel. So Items in a Customs Declaration context refer to the contents of the Parcel, as declared on the API Shipping Customs Documentation- e.g. 10 socks, 10 hats in the same parcel.

Q16. Can I use the same username and password for more than one Royal Mail account?

No, access to API Shipping or Royal Mail Pro Shipping UI is unique to one Royal Mail Account number; so if a shipper has two Royal Mail account numbers, that shipper would have a pair of unique Login details (username & password).

Q17. Why am I receiving messages telling me that the authentication failed?

Please check that your Username and Password is correct for the environment (Production or Onboarding) and that you have correctly implemented the required security elements. If you require further support with these errors visit <https://www.royalmail.com/pro-shipping-help>

Q18. I'm getting an authorisation error E0007. Have you set me up on the system?

Error Code E0007 response message is generated due to one or more listed fields below being invalid;

- Username
- Password

or the number of users of the same credentials is more than the number agreed during the OnBoarding process.

For more help visit <https://www.royalmail.com/pro-shipping-help>

Q19. Why has the Department Reference that I used been ignored?

There are three reasons why a department reference would be ignored:

- The requested department reference is not available in Online Business Account (OBA), hence you would have to create it in OBA first. The syntax of the department reference in the call must be exactly the same as that in OBA.
- Data transmission of newly created / updated department references between OBA and API Shipping is dependent on you clicking on “Refresh Department” in Pro Shipping UI / Maintenance/ Departments.
- If the department reference used is outside the reference’s valid date range From / To, then it will be ignored.

Note: Department references are not applicable to Tracked or Tracked Returns Service Offerings.

Q20. Does API Shipping validate the recipient postcodes against the recipient Post Town?

Yes, if there is a mismatch between the Post Town and the Recipient postcode when API Shipping validates against the Royal Mail PAF file, the Postcode provided will overwrite the Post Town with the associated Post town to that postcode. This function depends on Royal Mail setting your Account/ Posting Location with Partial Postcode setting being disabled. For more help with changing this setting visit <https://www.royalmail.com/pro-shipping-help>

Q21. What are the API Shipping system availability and down times figures?

API Shipping is available 24/7 99.8% of the time and down time is less than 0.2%.

Q22. What can I do if the system is unavailable?

Go to <https://www.royalmail.com/pro-shipping-help> for what you can do if the system is unavailable.

Q23. Is there a mechanism to check for outages planned or otherwise?

If we have a significant reduction in service or an outage we will publish this on <https://status.intelligentshipper.net/proshipping> and provide regular updates until it is resolved.

For planned outages we will aim to provide details on the same site 7 days in advance.

Q24. Can I give my customers the 21 character UID of a Parcel (as seen on the shipment label) for tracking purposes?

Yes. The 21 Character UID of a parcel can only be used via www.royalmail.com and the data displayed for tracking will be determined by the service used to ship the item.



Royal Mail Group Ltd, registered in England and Wales, number 4138203, registered office: 100 Victoria Embankment, London, EC4Y 0HQ.

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