

Wrapping and Packing Plants for Shipping

A Lesson Guide



Wrapping and packing plants

For Shipping

A Lesson Guide

By

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Wrapping and Packing Plants

Lessons for sellers and hobbyists

Wouldn't it be nice to have plant material arrive at its destination in excellent condition? Your customers or friends will love you for taking extra steps to pack their plants with care, and buyers won't mind paying a little extra for shipping/handling.

We wrote this EBook because many of our customers have made nice positive comments about the way we pack our plants; some even said they wished other sellers knew how to pack as we do.

My husband and I share our methods with detailed instructions and pictures. We have purchased plants from sellers all over the USA and have learned from their mistakes, sometimes the plant was all torn apart by the time I managed to remove the plastic wrap (seemingly shrink wrapped) so tight and close to the main stem, too much tape or staples, and dirt all over the place. I thought to myself, there has to be a way to wrap plants so people don't have to struggle to unwrap them, this method is what I came up with through many years of experimenting and currently use.

It's very rare that we need to resend plants because of damage.

How to use this EBook You can take all the methods here and make them your own or you can just use certain parts that you like and make up your own method that works for you.

We hope you benefit from this EBook, thank you for purchasing it from us.

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What is PDF? It means Portable Document Format and it was developed by Adobe systems.

A Quick Overview List from Selling to Shipping your Plants

- **Prepare plants** in advance for shipping and set them aside then list your auctions.
- **Make** the sale.
- **Send buyer** a thank you email; an invoice with payment instructions, you appreciate your buyers don't you?
- **After you receive payment** send your buyer an email confirmation; thanking them again and with an approximate shipping date. Buyers really appreciate us sellers keeping in touch with them. I know myself, if I buy something online and never receive any notices from the seller, not even a thank you; I don't think much of that seller and probably won't buy from them again. **Helpful Hint:** Make several email templates ahead of time, save them on your computer in a folder to copy and paste from when needed, it makes the process go faster. If you're a fairly busy ebay seller I would encourage you to subscribe to an ebay store because of their emailing feature, you can email multiple buyers with a few clicks, it's worth the extra fees each month, time is money, we use Priority Mail United States Postal Service 2-3 days for plants and leaves, sometimes boxes take a day or two longer though but plants do great the way we pack. Priority boxes are FREE, order them from the post office online Web Site www.usps.com they deliver them FREE to your door.
- **Ship plant material** Monday or Tuesday to be received before the weekend. **Important Note:** Don't wrap plants if they are soaking wet, water them a day or two in advance, if plants are dry on shipping day give them a little drink, not enough that water runs out the bottom and don't get leaves wet.
- **Pack boxes** Sunday or Monday or day of your choice; making sure all paper work is kept with it's box (don't mix things up; not good) be very organized, boxes can sit over night, print labels the following morning and take them to the Post Office. **Reminder:** Print sales copies from either "My ebay" packing slip, or print the payment notification PayPal sends you, print two copies, one for you and one for the customer. Place customer's invoice copy in the box before taping it shut.
- **Print Shipping Labels** from your computer using PayPal shipping or United States Postal Service's Click-N-Ship right from their web site www.usps.com; purchase Self Adhesive labels online or use typing paper and tape label on yourself (don't tape over barcode), then all you have to do is take your boxes to the P.O and leave them on the dock usually located outside in the back of the Post Office, there's no waiting in long lines (Make sure boxes are not sitting in the sun). A truck picks up boxes several times a day but **ask** your Post Office for a schedule of pick up times and any questions you might have about leaving boxes on the dock) **Remember; you can only** leave boxes on the dock if you are using labels printed with a Post Office bar code electronically, you will be charged the postal fees using credit card (register online before you start) or will be deducted from your PayPal account. Post Office delivers boxes to a dispatching town where they are sorted and dispatched to there destinations. **Important reminder;** don't leave boxes outside on the dock if your temperatures are very hot, and don't leave boxes in your vehicle because it heats up to over 100 degrees very fast, some people might not think of this.

Okay, grab a practice plant, your materials and let's get started.

Items You Will Need

| Items you will need | Picture diagram |
|--|---|
| <p>White 100% Premium Polyester fluffy Fiberfill (used for stuffing toy animals, pillows etc.) It usually comes in a 20 ounce bag. Find at a craft store.</p> <p>DO NOT USE COTTON; IT ABSORBS TOO MUCH LIQUID. Not good to have wet pieces of cotton up against the main stem for three to four days while the plants are in the dark box. diagram 1</p> |  <p>Diagram 1</p> |
| <p>Clear plastic wrap; Stretch-tite or Reynolds wrap (Reynolds wrap also available in a very large size from one of your discount stores). These brands are easiest to work with. You'll need a 12 by 11 inch piece to work with approx. diagram 2</p> |  <p>Diagram 2</p> |
| <p>Masking tape, one inch wide, to tape ends together. Tape dispensers hold the tape for you so you can have a free hand, holding with one hand, taping with the other. They are handy to have. diagram 3</p> |  <p>Diagram 3</p> |
| <p>Sheet of paper – typing paper or a piece of newspaper about 11 by 10 inches again, depends on size plants you're wrapping.</p> <p>Also you will need; Either, peanuts, or newspaper to pack around plant material inside the box, heat packs, Styrofoam cups if shipping in Winter time. You will need a scale to weigh your boxes, office supply stores carry them. Digital are more accurate, I recommend it. See diagram 4</p> |  <p>Diagram 4</p> |

Preparing Plants for Wrapping and Shipping

Tip: Make sure you fill pot (full) with soil up to the top edge. See diagram 5

Start preparing when you first plant your starter plants into their individual pots.

Train stems and leaves to grow upward not downward right from the start by making a sleeve (a piece of light weight clear plastic sheeting, cellophane or piece of a sandwich baggy works well) cut a piece to fit around your pot so one end overlaps the other then tape together with masking tape, leaving 1 in. above the pots edge. Place this around newly planted plants. Don't cover drainage holes.

Some plant varieties have larger leaves so this works well and they can grow like this for four to eight weeks until ready to ship, of course it's a good idea to check them once in awhile and make sure all is going well making sure crown has ample room to grow.
See diagram 6 to the right.

Please Note: Some plants varieties will not need this procedure; you will know which plants will need this as you start to learn a different way of wrapping plants for shipping.

Getting ready to list your plants on ebay

Put plants you're (selling) in trays ahead of time, also do a quick last minuet check and pot clean up to prepare for shipping day. That way after auctions go off you can find plants very easily. Also, make sure pots are wiped off and free from old fertilizer salts around the bottom and rim. This is a good time to give plants a visual check for pests.



Diagram 5



Diagram 6

How To Instructions

Picture Diagram

Fiberfill:

Holds soil in pot and supports leaves during shipping. One bag goes along ways.

Pull off a small amount of Fiberfill about 6 inch long by 1 to 2 inch wide, pull and shape into a longer section and place it on top of soil wrapping around under last row of leaves, see diagram 1 (do not dampen fiberfill) Works for any plant variety, even larger potted plants. The pot size I'm using here is 2 inches.



Diagram 1

Plastic wrap: 12 x 11 inch piece depends on size of plant you're wrapping.

Holds Fiberfill and soil in place.

While holding plastic in place with your thumb against pot, also keep fiberfill in place on top of soil; wrap plastic around edge of the pot clockwise by pulling and stretching **slightly** until it meets and overlaps around the other end, it will cling together very well, (follow the blue arrow in diagram 2 and 3 to the right), don't use tape, leaving a good inch or two above the pots edge it's very hard for people to unwrap plants with a lot of tape to deal with, less is better, leaves need to be in an upward position if possible.



Diagram 2



Diagram 3



Diagram 4

Diagram 3 – Right Way →

Diagram 4 – Wrong way →

Now bring the remaining plastic wrap under the bottom of pot wrapping again around the pot and seam to secure it, no need for tape it, it will hold nicely. Once you learn this technique you can wrap very fast because your not stopping to put more tape on see diagram 5



Diagram 5

Important reminder note: Plastic wrap should only be tight around the top of the pot with about two inches of plastic extending above the pot edge. **DO NOT** pull plastic across to the other side of pot; this is the mistake people make. **The object** is to wrap the plant from the outside in with no plastic touching plant stems, no worry's about plastic cutting stems and leaves. Everything is snugly secure and will withstand being bumped around during shipping, even if the plants travel upside down the whole trip, and they usually do see diagram 6



Diagram 6

You're probably thinking; this looks like a lot of plastic and over kill but it's really not, I never need to resend plants because of damage since I started wrapping like this, three years, I don't have any problems at all, you can use less if you wish to experiment.

Here is the finished plant wrapped in plastic and fiberfill diagram 7



Diagram 7

Wrapping Plant in Paper

The last step, place plant on paper see diagram 1 to the right see diagram 1 to the right.

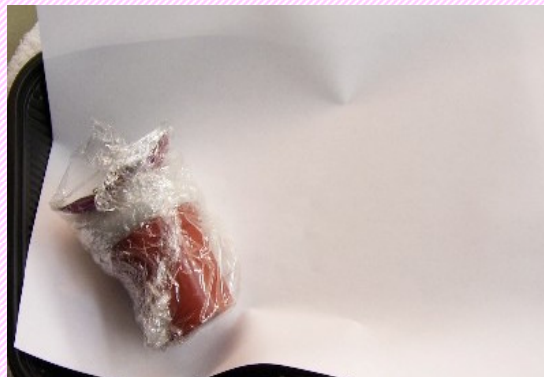


Diagram 1

Roll plant up in the paper, turning it to the right as you roll it up, see diagram 2 to the right.



Diagram 2

Continue rolling plant until you run out of paper as in diagram 3 to the right.



Diagram 3

Place a small piece of tape to hold paper closed.

Fold paper under bottom to close and cover bottom of pot, paper should hold without anymore tape but you can place a piece there if you wish to see diagram 4

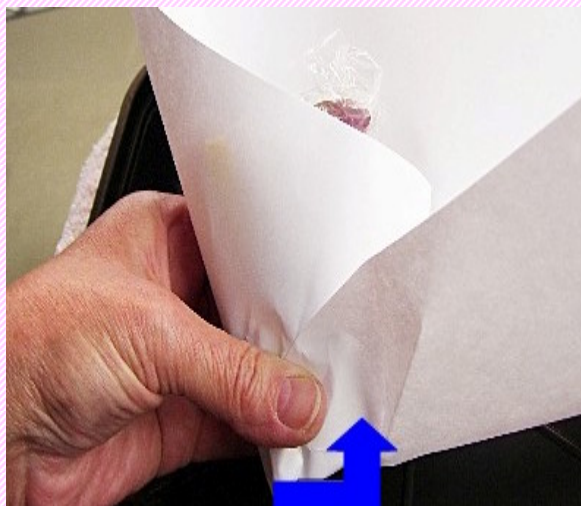


Diagram 4

Here is the bottom taped up see diagram 5



Diagram 5

Now, to finish closing the top, fold in paper (both right and left arrows) towards the center like the diagram to the right, then fold remaining paper towards the front like you would an envelope, make sure your not folding plant too. Place a piece of tape to hold in place. **Optional;** Place a piece of fiberfill on top of the plant before you finish closing the top paper, most likely the plant will travel upside down during shipping, this will help prevent damage and dirt all over the place see diagram 6

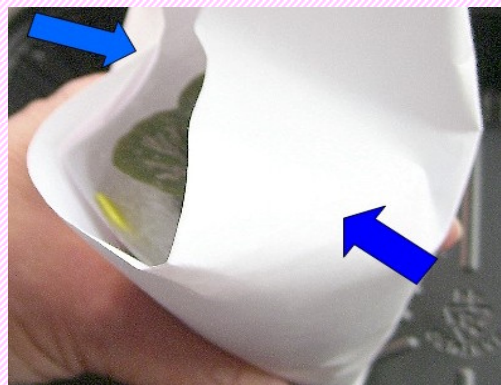


Diagram 6

This is how it should look when you're finished, see diagram 7 to the right.

Now you're ready to pack the box.

Tip: Keep a folder with your paid/ready to ship auctions printed, one for you and a copy for your buyer to be placed on top before closing box, after you tape box shut, weigh box; write the weight at the top of paperwork for later when you print your labels.

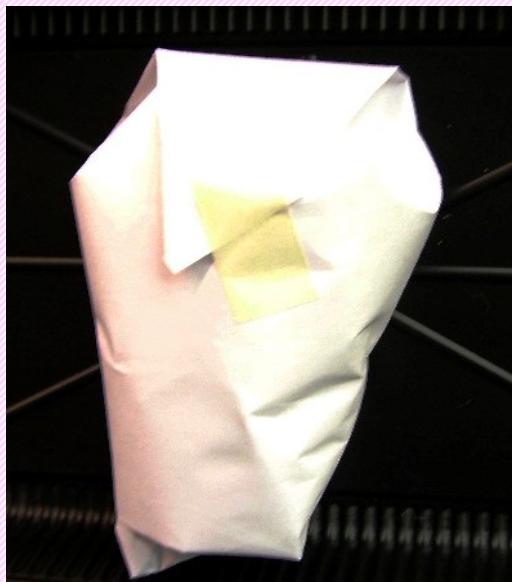


Diagram 7

Packing Your Box for Shipping

Options; You may either prepare boxes ahead of time or put boxes together as you go, it's up to you but I guarantee you, if you prepare ahead of time packing will go so fast you will be amazed. I can pack (not including preparation time) 15 to 20 boxes in about four to five hours, usually from 1 to 12 plants per order approx.

Use US Free Priority Boxes mentioned above on the Quick Overview [page 3](#) I know everyone knows what these boxes look like but here is a picture anyway for people new to shipping see diagram 1



Diagram 1

If you're using **newspaper** to fill the box, place two sheets in each corner then fill in the bottom, set plants in the center with some paper between the plants then fill the box just enough so plants won't shift around, don't over pack or smash plants down with an over amount of paper. These plants were placed in Styrofoam cups for winter shipping a heat pack is optional see diagram 2



Diagram 2

If you're using **peanuts** pour a couple of inches in the bottom, set plants in then pour more peanuts to fill the box where the flaps close, enough so top doesn't cave in after closing if you press down on the top of box. See diagram 3



Diagram 3

Place customers copy of purchase paper work on top before you close box, also, any other instructions such as, what to do when their plants arrive, I usually give instructions, tell them to take off the fluffy white material and plastic, some new growers don't know they need to take this off. You'd be surprised some people leave it on not knowing, See diagram 4

Now you're ready to print the labels electronically through PayPal or USPS, or hand write the address, load boxes in your vehicle, and take them to the Post Office.

When you get home email your customers to let them know their box was taken to the Post Office.

Congrats! Now you're done.

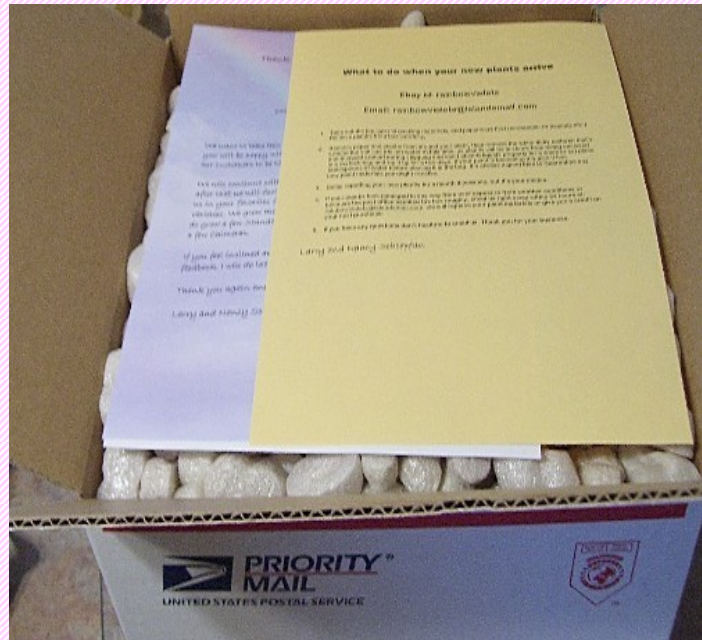


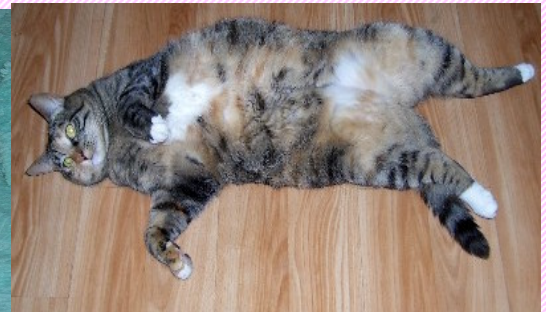
Diagram 4



Honey



Oreo



Heidi

Hey you guys, we have been helping mom pack and we are plum tuckered out.

Just a little humor for you.
Guess you can tell who rules this household

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