The Beginner's Guide to Freight Shipping Version 2.0

Updated for 2016

Introduction: What is Freight Shipping?

Are you a new business owner that needs to ship your products to your customer? Or perhaps your business has grown to the point where you're going to start shipping? Maybe you are already shipping freight, but want to do so more efficiently with a better understanding of the process?

If you answered ***Yes*** to any of these questions, this book is for you. It will introduce you to the freight shipping industry, and get you the information you need to master the freight world. Let's start with a definition of "Freight Shipping."

FREIGHT SHIPPING is the transportation of goods from one location to another, usually by a commercial carrier. In the United States, it is a multi-billion dollar industry, and a pillar of the American economy. Goods can be transported by rail, truck, plane, or boat, though for our purposes we'll be focusing on ***LESS THAN TRUCKLOAD (LTL)*** and ***TRUCKLOAD*** shipping.

Over the course of this e-book, we'll get you up to date on everything you need to know about the domestic freight and shipping industry. We'll discuss the difference between carriers and brokers, and dive into the mechanics of the freight and shipping industry. We'll cover the two basic categories of domestic freight shipping: LTL and Truckload shipping, and their similarities and differences in terms of pricing, documentation, insurance, billing, transit times, and much more.

At the end of the e-book you'll find FAQs that we've encountered through our years in the business, as well as a glossary of shipping terms. As you read, certain terms will be ***HIGHLIGHTED***. You'll be able to find the definitions of these terms in the Glossary. You'll also find links to blog posts we've created throughout the text, as well as instructional Freight Papers.

We've created this e-book for those of you looking to incorporate shipping into your everyday business practices, but this information can also be applied to someone looking to do a one-time freight shipment. Regardless of where you're coming to freight from, this e-book will get you set up with everything you need to know about LTL and Truckload freight shipping.

Don't be discouraged if at first this seems like a lot. With a little practice freight can be easily understood, and can help grow your business by leaps and bounds when managed properly.

Let's get started!

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Carrier vs. Broker

In this chapter we'll discuss carriers, dispatchers, and drivers that will be handling your freight on a daily basis. We'll also discuss freight brokers, and how they differ from carriers.

Throughout this book, we'll be referencing the terms ***CARRIER*** and ***FREIGHT BROKER*** regularly, so it's important to define them early. As you'll see, the terms are not synonymous, but they do complement each other. Together they act as the building blocks of the freight shipping industry. Let's start with the carriers.

The aptly named ***FREIGHT CARRIER*** is a company that owns and operates a fleet of trucks that move freight from point A to point B. They are the foundation of the freight industry, and vary in size and scope, from small local carriers with a limited number of trucks that service niche geographical areas, to national carriers with hundreds of trucks at their disposal and hubs across the country. For example, let's look at Southeastern Freight Lines. True to its name, SEFL (Southeastern Freight Lines) is a mid-size LTL carrier that specializes in moving freight across the southeastern part of the United States.

You'll also encounter national carriers, such as R&L Carriers. R&L is one of the largest LTL carriers in the country. They service most parts of the United States, from Florida to Washington and everything in between. R&L Carriers are a good example of a carrier that can move your freight from coast to coast, using their own trucks and drivers throughout transit.

These LTL carriers are divided into many different departments designed to streamline the shipping process. Let's start at the beginning, with the ***DRIVERS*** and trucks. Drivers are often regionally based, shuttling freight from residences and businesses to their local terminal, where another driver will move the freight to the next terminal.

Next we have the ***DISPATCHERS***, the men and women who designate where and when their drivers need to pick up and deliver freight. These dispatchers are in constant contact with their drivers, confirming pickups and deliveries are completed and scheduled correctly.

There is also a ***CUSTOMER SERVICE DEPARTMENT***, made up of representatives who handle most of the incoming pickup requests as well as tracking any shipments that are currently in transit. Carrier customer service teams are capable of assisting customers in a number of ways, and are often the first responders for any issues that might occur.

As we'll discuss later, sometimes freight can be damaged, lost, or delivered short, and most carriers have an ***OS&D*** department. OS&D stands for Overages, Shortages, and Damages, and they'll be the one to handle any issues of damage or loss with your shipments.

We'll discuss freight carriers in more detail as we make our way through this book, but let's switch sides and take a look at freight brokers, specifically what they are and what they do.

A ***FREIGHT BROKER*** is a third party company that acts as a bridge between freight carriers and freight customers. The biggest misconception for a freight beginner is that these two (Brokers and Carriers) are one in the same. They are not. A simple way that I like to think of it is this: If the freight industry is a giant machine, the freight carriers are the moving parts, and the freight brokers are the oil that makes sure everything runs smoothly.

It's important to understand the term "third party" when dealing with a freight broker. While a freight carrier will physically be handling your freight on its shipping path, most of the time a freight broker will never actually see your freight (outside of an occasional picture). While there will always be geographic proximity between carrier and customer, a broker works remotely through a transportation management system that we'll discuss in greater detail later in this book. Brokers act as coordinators for your freight shipping, and though they won't be driving the trucks, a good freight broker will be every bit as "in the loop" as the dispatchers, drivers, and dockworkers.

As with any industry, there are varying levels of service delivered by freight brokers depending on company, reputation, culture, etc. The first purpose of the freight broker industry is associated with lower shipping rates from the carriers due to volume. This service is offered by all freight brokers, and for some will serve as their primary and sole service. But how does the freight broker get better rates than a customer going directly to the carrier? The simple answer is volume/bulk. A freight broker will have multiple customers that ship under their account, and this number can stretch from hundreds to thousands of customers. With freight brokers bringing all this business to the carriers, they are in a higher position of power than your average shipper. This power enables them to negotiate lower rates and contracts that are unavailable to the typical consumer. The freight broker can then pass these lowered shipping rates to their customers. This is the most basic service offered by a freight broker: cheaper shipping rates.

The second service that a good freight broker should provide is customer service. While some freight brokers are content to only offer their customers lowered shipping rates, other freight brokers (the good ones) consider the “cheaper rates” part of their service the necessary, but ultimately less-important, facet of their business. The primary goal of a good freight broker is developing a strong customer/ broker relationship. Many of these freight brokers consider themselves “full service,” in that they will handle any and all aspects of their customer’s shipments. That can include scheduling pickups, dealing with delivery issues, claim issues, damage issues, or a host of other situations. This sort of service provides a sense of comfort and convenience for many customers. A good freight broker is a true shipping professional, and these freight professionals know the ins and outs of a complex shipping world so their customers don’t have to.

In conclusion, carriers and brokers are not interchangeable, though they work closely together in the freight industry. A freight carrier is physically responsible for moving shipments from point A to point B. A freight carrier is a company that owns trucks, employs drivers, and charges for their service of picking up and delivering freight. On the other hand, a freight broker is a third party company that offers lower shipping rates to customers. A good freight broker also offers an array of customer services, and is always working to develop meaningful and helpful customer relationships with the ultimate goal of handling all aspects of their customer’s shipments.

Now that we’ve got that our basic definitions out of the way, we can move forward to the actual mechanics of your typical LTL shipment. In other words, what *exactly* happens with your freight after it’s picked up.

Chapter 2: LTL Shipping Basics

In this chapter we'll talk about the basics of a standard LTL shipment, and go step-by-step through the process of LTL transit, including terminal breakdowns.

We've discussed the foundations of the LTL freight industry, so let's move on to some specifics about what happens to your freight once it's picked up. In this chapter, we'll track your LTL shipment from pickup to delivery. **Please note that the following will apply only to LTL shipping.** Truckload shipping has its own set of rules that we'll discuss later.

One of the most important parts of LTL shipping is the network of carrier terminals. These terminals can range in size, but they all act as departure and arrival points for LTL freight. Unlike truckload shipping, LTL freight is not picked up and delivered on the same truck. Instead, LTL freight is transferred from truck to truck at different terminals until the freight arrives at the destination terminal. From there, it will be loaded onto a final truck and delivered to the consignee.

To get a better understanding of what I'm talking about, let's "trace," or track, a typical LTL shipment:

A pickup is scheduled through carrier dispatch or customer service. This pickup is usually done by phone, but some carriers use emails as well. This request will let the carrier know where to pickup, what to pickup (commodity), how much they'll be picking up (pallet/piece count & weight) and what time the freight will be available for pickup (All carriers require a two hour-window and at least a two-hour cushion when scheduling pickups). The pickup location is known as the ***SHIPPER***.

For this example, let's say the shipper is in Austin, Texas and the delivery will be in Miami, Florida. When the freight is picked up and loaded into the back of the truck, the driver will stamp the freight with a ***PRO NUMBER*** - a shipment's identification and tracking number. The driver will then make his way to his next pickup. Pickup routes are determined by carrier dispatchers and take into account quantity and weight of shipments, as well as geographical locations. It's common practice for deliveries to be completed in the mornings, while pickups are usually taken care of in the afternoon. After the driver has completed all his scheduled pickups or his truck is full, he then

heads back to the ***ORIGIN TERMINAL***. The carrier's second shift dock crew will remove the freight from the truck, scan the PRO Numbers into the carrier system for tracking purposes, and from there will begin to load the freight back on to trucks heading out of the terminal the next morning. In our example we had freight picked up in Austin heading to Miami. Therefore, the freight will be loaded on to a truck headed east. The night crew also takes all the freight coming from elsewhere that needs to be delivered in Austin, and loads it on to a truck for delivery the next morning. Morning comes and the carrier trucks, full with freight to deliver, head out on their routes. They'll off-load all freight in the mornings until their trucks are empty, and from there they will begin the process again with more pickups. The shipment heading out of Austin will be on a truck heading eastbound, for a stop at the next terminal in Baton Rouge or maybe New Orleans. The freight will be unloaded, the PRO will be scanned into the carrier system for tracking purposes, and the freight will be reloaded on to the correct truck, and then will ship out for the next terminal, probably Atlanta. From Atlanta the freight will move to Orlando and then down to Miami, following the same steps listed above at each terminal location. Once it finally reaches its destination terminal, the freight will go out on a truck in the morning and be delivered to its final destination, known as the ***CONSIGNEE***.

Shipper ➔ Origin Terminal ➔ Transit ➔ Destination Terminal ➔ Consignee

This is the life of a typical LTL shipment. As you can see, it's a lot of moving parts with lots of hands on the freight. It's important to keep this in mind as you package your freight for transit (we'll take more about this later), as the freight will be moved off and on trucks by forklifts as it makes its way to its final destination.

Now that we've covered the basics of LTL shipping, let's move on to LTL freight quotes.

Chapter 3: LTL Freight Quotes

Here we'll discuss what information is needed for a standard LTL quote. We'll also talk about when volume quotes are needed, and how they differ from a regular quote.

We've discussed what it means to ship LTL freight, so let's move on to pricing. **Once again, the below section applies only to LTL shipping.** We'll talk about full truckload pricing later.

There are two types of LTL quotes that are available, and how much freight you plan to ship will determine which one you need. Remember this disclaimer though: A "shipment" is the packaged freight going from Point A to Point B. So if you have freight heading to two separate consignee locations, even if the shipper location is the same, they will be considered two separate LTL shipments. With that covered, let's start with your standard LTL quote.

There are four pieces of information that you must have for a standard LTL quote:

Origin Zip Code
Destination Zip Code
Total Weight
Freight Class

Of the four, three are pretty self-explanatory. The origin zip code is the zip code where the freight will be picked up. Note that this is not the origin terminal zip code, or the city, or even the manufacturer zip code. This is the *actual* zip code for the address where the freight will be loaded on to the truck. The destination zip code is the opposite of the origin zip, in that it's the zip code where the freight will be delivered. Once again, this is the actual delivery address location, not the city or terminal zip code. As most cities have more than one zip code, it's important to get the correct zip codes. Part of the pricing for LTL shipments come from the distance the freight will travel.

The third part of a standard LTL quote is the total weight of the shipment. This weight includes any packaging or palletizing that is needed to make the freight ready to ship. Make sure that your weights are exact, as carriers will use industrial shipping scales to make sure the weight claimed on the BOL matches the actual weight of the shipment. If it doesn't, you'll be charged for the difference. This is called a ***REWEIGH***, and we'll discuss reweighs and other freight accessorials in later chapters.

The final piece of information needed for your standard LTL shipping quote is the ***FREIGHT CLASS***. There's plenty to say about freight classes and what they entail, so we're going to devote a full chapter to them later in the book.

These four pieces of information are all you need to get an accurate LTL quote. Keep in mind, a standard LTL quote is only valid if your freight will be taking up 12 feet or less of linear truck space, as well as 7,000 lbs. or less. Twelve feet safely stores up to six standard pallets (48x40x48 inches, Length x Width x Height). But what if your shipment takes up more room than just twelve feet of space? Or what if your shipment weighs over 7,000lbs? That brings us to our second type of LTL quote: ***VOLUME QUOTES***.

A volume quote is used when the freight is too large or too heavy for a standard LTL quote. To get an accurate volume quote, you'll need the standard four pieces of information needed for any LTL shipping quote: origin zip code, destination zip code, total weight, and class. In addition, you'll need:

Total piece count
Dimensions of the pieces
Commodity

Once you've gathered your information, it's a matter of reaching out to the carrier's volume department to receive a quote number that correlates with your volume quote. Once you have your quote, simply put your quote number where it will be prominently visible on the BOL (usually in the "Special Instructions" section of the bill of lading). The rest of the process is similar to a standard LTL shipment. The shipment will be moved from terminal to terminal until it reaches its final destination.

When dealing with volume quotes, remember their purpose is to save you money. Similar to the old "buy in bulk" adage, the quotes you receive on a volume quote will be cheaper than if you ran the quote using general LTL rules. That being said, it's very important that you include the volume quote number on the BOL used at pickup. Without it, your volume quote will not apply and you'll end up paying much more than you anticipated for the shipment.

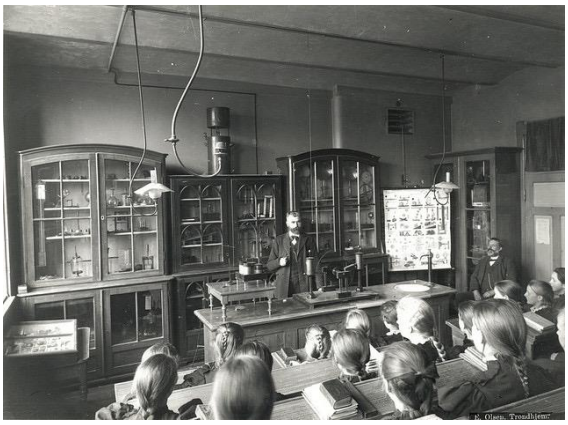
For more information, **Download our Freight Paper on LTL Volume Quotes**.

Chapter 4: LTL Freight Class

In this chapter we'll talk about LTL freight class, and how to determine if you are shipping at the correct class.

Last chapter, we briefly discussed the importance of freight class when it comes to quoting both standard and volume LTL shipments. In this chapter we'll get into some of the specifics of a freight class, and how it affects your LTL shipments.

To begin, every single shipment will have a freight class – a number between 50 and 500 designated by The National Motor Freight Classification System. This number determines an item's "transportability," and is generated using four factors: ***DENSITY, STOWABILITY, HANDLING,*** and ***LIABILITY***. Each item will also have an ***NMFC NUMBER***. This number will be put on the shipment's BOL for carrier invoice issues, as well as cost and quoting.



An item's density is also known as the pounds per cubic foot. Using the commodity's weight and dimensions, coupled with a simple math equation, you can find an item's density rating or number. This number is important for a variety of reasons. For some items, their freight class is dependent upon this density rating. It's a general rule of thumb that the lower the density of an item, the higher the freight class. The higher the freight class, the higher the shipping cost. So, the lower the density the higher the cost of shipping, and vice versa (Higher density = lower class = lower shipping cost).

An item's stowability is determined by its ability to be stowed or transported in relation to other pieces of freight on the truck. Unlike density, there is no number based scale to determine the item's stowability, and this element of freight class is somewhat subjective.

The third factor in determining freight class is the item's handling. Similar to stowability, there is no scale to determine this per commodity. Items that are fragile, or have larger than normal dimensions are often at higher risk to the carriers, so their level of handling will ultimately lead to higher freight classes.

The fourth and final factor in determining an item's freight class is the liability associated with the item, and takes into account the probability of the freight shipment being damaged, stolen, or damaging other adjacent freight.

So how do you make sure you're shipping your items at the correct class?

The best way to handle a question of class is to bring it to your freight broker. This is exactly the sort of complicated issue that brokers are made for, and you can be confident they will confirm you're shipping at the correct class, thereby avoiding any possibility of a re-class (We'll get more into re-classes later). If you do not have a freight broker, then your best bet is to reach out directly to the carrier. Most carriers have classing agents that can help you decide the relevant freight class for your shipment.

With so many items to ship there is bound to be some overlap and confusion for finding the correct class, not to mention people will often lie on their freight classes to achieve lower rates. Please don't do this. The carriers will catch on quick, and you'll end up paying for it in the end.

In conclusion, the most important part of freight class to remember is that the higher the class, the higher the cost. We'll finish with a simple example of how freight class affects LTL pricing:

Say you are moving a pallet of steel bars. These bars will be heavy but will not take up too much space on the truck; therefore they have a high-density rating (the item is very dense). They are not fragile or breakable. They are on a standard, packaged pallet that can be easily handled and transported from one terminal to the next. They are not particularly expensive. This item will likely have a freight class of around 50, the lowest freight class, and ultimately the cheapest.

On the other hand, let's say that you need to move a ten-foot long fiberglass kayak. The kayak is light and only weighs around 100 lbs. Using the weight and dimensions of the freight we find that the density of the item is very low. The length of the freight is also a problem, as it doesn't fit well in trucks that are built to handle standard pallets. The packaging of the freight is non-existent and there's no simple way to move the freight from truck to truck as it makes its way through transit. The liability of the item comes into play because though it's fragile, it is very expensive, so the carrier will have to assume major costs if something happens and a damage claim is filed. All of these factors add up to a higher classed item, possibly as high as 400. The difference between an item classed at 50 and one classed at 400 can be hundreds of dollars. As you can see, freight class is very important when it comes to LTL shipping.

As with the entire shipping industry, the best way to avoid issues is to have correct information and lots of it. Make sure you are using the right class, and stick with it. Know your freight commodity, dimensions, packaging, value, and weight. This information will help you wade through the muddy waters of freight classification.

For more information, **Download our Freight Paper The Mysteries of Freight Class.**

Chapter 5: LTL Accessorials

In this chapter we'll talk about LTL accessorials, including descriptions of some of the more common additional services applied to LTL shipments.

From a pricing perspective, a standard LTL shipment is considered dock-to-dock, business-to-business. This means when the driver arrives for pickup, he expects to be able to back his truck up to a loading dock. From there, the shipper will load the freight on to the back of the truck using a forklift or pallet jack. The freight will then be in transit until it arrives for delivery to another business dock.

Of course, not everyone has a shipping dock or a forklift, and sometimes you need things delivered to a residence or some place other than a business. This is where LTL freight accessorials come in. ***LTL ACCESSORIALS*** are additional services that have an additional cost (most of the time) because they are considered outside of the carriers "standard" procedures. There are many types of these additional services that you can buy, and different carriers offer different services for different prices. To get an exact quote for some of these services, you'll need to use your broker's TMS system or contact the carrier direct. But for our purposes, I'm going to list some of the major services freight carriers provide on a daily basis and define them. We'll start with the most common.

Origin Liftgate / Destination Liftgate: A liftgate is a gate attached to the back of carrier trucks that assists in lifting pallets or freight from the ground. It is used when there is no forklift or dock to assist in loading the freight. Only certain trucks have this option available, and usually the cost ranges from $25 to $50 for the service. It can be used at both pickup and delivery if necessary, and is often used for residential deliveries (as homes rarely have docks). Because different trucks are being used to deliver and pick up the freight, the charge can be applied to both pickup and destination if a liftgate is used at both ends. **Download the FreightPros Guide to Liftgates.**

Residential Pickup / Residential Delivery: As we mentioned before, most standard LTL pickup and deliveries are considered business-to-business shipments. There is an additional charge when the pickup or delivery is at a residential location. Oftentimes the carrier must take smaller trucks into the residential areas due to street size. The carrier will also call to set up a delivery appointment before taking the freight out for delivery, to ensure that the consignee is home. Sometimes, a residential pickup or delivery will need a liftgate to assist the driver in getting the freight from the ground to the truck. The charge for this pickup or delivery service varies from carrier to carrier (as all accessorial charges do), but anywhere from $75 to $150 can be a normal rate. ***Download The Guide to Residential LTL Shipping.***

Notify Consignee: On standard LTL shipments, deliveries are handled on a first come, first serve basis. This means that once an item arrives at the destination terminal, it will automatically be loaded on to a truck for delivery. Delivery to the consignee will occur sometime that next day, depending on the driver's route. But what if a shipment needs an appointment for delivery? Or even just a "heads up" to confirm plans to receive freight? This service is pretty self-explanatory as you're paying for the carrier to call (notify) the receiver (consignee) to let them know their freight is ready to be delivered at the consignee's convenience. It's important for the consignee phone number and contact to be visible on the BOL used at the time of pickup, otherwise the carrier will not know who to call to set up the delivery appointment.

Inside Pickup / Inside Delivery: The name of these services can be a bit misleading to the shipping beginner, so we'll provide a bit of context and clarification. We've already discussed that a standard LTL shipment is dock-to-dock, business-to-business. But what if you don't have a dock? Well, generally those without a dock will need a liftgate to get the freight off the truck. Once it's on the ground the carrier has completed their standard delivery, and they're free to leave and continue to their next drop or pickup. This means if you don't have a forklift or some other way to move your shipment, you'll have to break down the pallet or crate and move the pieces into your warehouse or shop manually. With Inside Delivery / Inside Pickup, the driver will take the freight into your garage, store, shop, etc. As opposed to sitting out on the curb, your freight will be more accessible and easier to unpack/unload. Inside delivery/pickup is often paired with residential deliveries and pickups as well, though there is a caveat that needs to be noted. Because of liability issues, a freight carrier cannot actually enter your house. LTL shipping is not a moving company, so they will not be taking your freight into your living room or kitchen. This would require the use of a "white glove service," and is outside of the LTL shipping industry. What they can do with this service is take the freight up your driveway to your garage or porch. This ensures that your freight is not sitting on the curb with no way to move it.

Hazardous Materials: When freight is considered hazardous, for obvious reasons, special handling needs to be employed. This means that hazardous freight needs to be moved with other hazardous material as opposed to non-hazardous freight. The driver will also need special permits to handle and drive the freight.

Tradeshow Pickup and Delivery: To move freight to and from a tradeshow requires a series of special actions. For many tradeshow pickups and deliveries, drivers will be required to wait in line to pickup or unload their freight. Because of this delay, the carriers need to coordinate their driver's routes to account for these hold-ups, and this is the primary reason for this additional charge to be applied to your LTL shipment. ***Download the Tradeshow Shipping Freight Paper.***

Limited Access Delivery / Pickup: Similar to a residential charge, limited access applies to any location that is outside of a normal shipping business. This charge includes

locations such as: Government buildings, schools, universities, prisons, farms, ranches, airports, and shipping ports (among others). This service will also need to be included for any location that is literally "limited" in its accessibility. This includes unusually small parking lots, guard gates, fenced locations, etc. Any place that it would be difficult to maneuver a 53ft. or 48ft. semi-truck will need to be considered for Limited Access. This charge can be very subjective, so it's best to ask the carrier or your broker if the location will be limited access if you think there might be a chance. ***Download the Limited Access Freight Paper.***

Overlength / Overdimensional: This service is needed when a single piece is over the standard LTL limitations of space (12 linear feet). Different carriers vary on their "limits," so check with your broker if you have an overlength piece. Keep in mind if you have two pieces that are overlength, you'll need to acquire a volume quote to ensure your shipping cost is correct. This charge does not cover for a volume shipment.

Construction Site Pickup / Delivery: If you have freight picking up or delivering to a construction site, an additional charge will be applied. This charge varies depending on carrier, so check with your broker or carrier before shipping.

Guaranteed Delivery: One of the golden rules of LTL transit is that the transit time of a standard LTL shipment is always measured in "estimated" days. This means that if a shipment is a day (or even week) late, the customer will still be responsible for the charges, regardless of the tardiness of the delivery. Though delayed freight can be frustrating, this is an industry-wide standard that applies to all LTL carriers. But what if you have something that absolutely must be delivered by a certain date? You can pay for this service, "guaranteeing" that this freight is delivered on time. If the freight does not deliver by the agreed time, the carrier will not charge for the shipment. But when guaranteeing a shipment, you'll always need to confirm that the carrier offers the service. They will check the distance, time limits, and other factors before giving you a confirmation that they offer the service for your particular shipment. A standard guarantee applies to delivery before 5pm, however some carriers offer a 12pm delivery guarantee for an additional cost. Keep in mind that a guarantee service only applies to standard LTL shipments. This excludes volume shipments, residential shipments, or any shipment that requires an appointment for delivery.

Sort and Segregate: This charge is often applied for deliveries to grocery stores or warehouses that require the carrier to unload the freight, unpack, and then sort the goods accordingly. The charge varies between carriers, so confirm with your broker or carrier if you need an accurate accessorial quote.

Download the Additional Services Cheat Sheet.

Chapter 6: LTL Packaging

Here we'll discuss the basics of packaging for your LTL shipment.

Packaging is an integral part of the freight industry, and in this chapter we'll go over some of the different packaging standards observed by carriers in the LTL shipping industry, as well as some hints and tips to keep your freight safe during transit.

The most common type of freight is a palletized shipment. Pallets come in all sizes, but a standard pallet is usually about four feet by four feet (Length x Width) or 48" x 48". A pallet makes it easy to secure your freight and works best for LTL shipping because it's simple to move a pallet with a forklift or a pallet jack. As we've mentioned before, LTL freight moves from terminal to terminal, truck to truck. And how do they move the freight during this process? They use a forklift.

A forklift works great with pallets, so if you're looking for the best possible packaging for your LTL freight, a pallet is the way to go. It's important, no matter its value, that the freight is properly secured to the pallet. This can be done using industrial saran wrap to make sure the freight will not fall off the pallet during transit. Its also important to securely package the individual pieces together, as you don't want them separating during transit. Separated freight results in freight being lost and shipments delivering short.

Though pallets are the preferred packaging for LTL freight shipping, they are not the only way freight is secured. Another common way to package freight is known as "crating." Crating provides an extra level of protection for your freight, as it is fully enclosed. It's preferred to palletize the crate to make it easier for the carriers to move the freight from dock to dock, but it's not absolutely necessary.

Occasionally, carriers will permit shippers to move separate boxes (sometimes as many as five) as part of a single shipment, but we do not suggest it. Boxes may become separated during the transit process, resulting in lost freight. With so many moving parts, it's easier and simpler to make sure your boxes are consolidated to avoid losses.

Chapter 7: LTL Claims and Insurance

In this chapter we'll talk about claims and insurance as they relate to lost or damaged freight.

It's in the best interest of everyone in the shipping industry (customer, carrier, broker) that freight is picked up and delivered as quickly and safely as possible. As we've discussed throughout this book, carriers and brokers work very hard to ensure this process for their customer. However, sometimes mistakes do happen. In this chapter we'll discuss what happens if your freight is damaged or lost, and how to best avoid such issues.

Let's begin with the concept of freight insurance. As you ship your LTL freight, you'll need to protect it from the possibility of damage as best you can, however, if an item does get damaged in transit, you'll want to get paid for that damage. There are two types of insurance you can get for your freight: carrier insurance or third party insurance.

Carrier insurance is the insurance covered internally by the carriers for the freight that they transport. Coverage is based on commodity, value, freight class, size, weight, and distance traveled. Before we get any further with carrier insurance, let's say outright that carrier insurance coverage has its fair share of limitations. Each carrier's coverage differs, but overall, they rarely pay out even half of what the claims will sometimes amount to.

Now, before we go bashing on freight carriers and their insurance limitations, let's consider a few things. First, insurance is a notoriously fickle and subjective business across the board. Whether it be car insurance, home insurance, or life insurance – payouts can be tough. Secondly, the freight industry is a slick one with lots of moving parts. When you're dealing with freight transportation and shipping, damage is part of the game regardless of carrier. It's not sustainable for a carrier to pay out every damage claim in full for every shipment that they move. They would be out of business. All of this is not to say that carriers don't pay out for damage or loss claims, it's only that the process is easier and smoother using a third party insurer.

Third party insurance is offered through any good freight broker, and the premium (though it varies based on coverage amount) is often inexpensive, sometimes as low as $40 for up to $10,000 of coverage. When getting third party insurance you'll also have an insurance certificate, physical proof that your freight is covered. But how does this third party insurance work and why is it better? Well, for one thing, you'll get paid. As long as your freight's value can be proved using a commercial invoice, the third party will pay out your claim without too many questions. Of course, there are deductibles to take into account, but a third party insurer will go directly to the freight carrier, essentially bypassing you. Apart from being convenient, claims are often paid faster using third party insurance.

Like any insurance, the claims process can be tricky, but there are a few things to keep in mind as you file a claim for damaged or lost freight:

ALWAYS NOTATE DAMAGE – It's very important to always notate damage on the delivery receipt if there's even a hint of damage to your shipment. This ***POD (Proof Of Delivery)*** will be key when you file a claim through the carrier for damage. Without any damage notated on the POD, the chance of a claim being paid out shrinks from about 80% to less than 10%. The POD will be the most important aspect of the claims process, and just like other aspects of the freight industry, the more notes and the more information available, the smoother the process.

TAKE PICTURES ASAP – Even if you notate on the POD that the freight is damaged, take pictures immediately to document the damage. These pictures will be used later in the claims process to prove the carrier damaged the shipment.

HAVE DOCUMENTATION READY – For a claim to be paid out (lost or damaged), you'll need some form of commercial invoice to prove the value of the freight you're claiming. Along with the signed POD, pictures, and claim forms, these documents will be the reason your claim does or does not get paid out.

BE PATIENT – Like any sort of insurance situation, claims can take a while to get paid out. A good rule of thumb is to allow 60-90 days once the claim has been filed before expecting any sort of payment. It's also important to remember that the carrier will be the one paying out the claim (directly or through a third party), not the freight broker.

Download the Freight Paper How to File A Freight Claim.

Chapter 8: LTL Billing and Auditing

In this chapter we'll discuss the billing practices of both carriers and brokers.

First off, the freight billing structure will be different if you're going directly to the carrier than if you're working through a freight broker. If you're going carrier direct, this means you have an account with the carrier, and they'll send you the invoices for your freight shipping. You'll pay them directly, and any sort of invoice discrepancies will have to be settled individually between customer and carrier. Usually, it takes the carrier between one and two weeks to send out their invoices after the freight has delivered. Each carrier will have a different set of standards when it comes to billing - there is no industry standard - so if you do go carrier correct you'll have to coordinate the details with the carrier billing department.

If you're using a freight broker, you won't be seeing any invoices directly from the carrier. Instead you'll receive your bills from the freight broker. With the carrier invoicing the broker direct, a quality freight broker will first audit the charges. What do I mean, "audit," the charges? When a freight broker audits charges they go through each and every invoice and additional charge, and confirm the legitimacy of the charge before passing the charges on to the customer.

So what are these "additional charges" we keep referring to? Well the two most common invoice charges we see are the ***RECLASS*** and the ***REWEIGH***. True to their names, these are assessed when a shipping item is either reclassed to a higher class (a more expensive class) or an item is reweighed to a higher weight (a more expensive weight). In order to process these additional charges, the carrier will have to produce ***W&I (Weight and Inspection) CERTIFICATES*** that provide proof for the additional charges. If a reclass is a density-based discrepancy, the carrier will provide updated freight dimensions and/or updated weights confirmed by a registered and official scale. If the item is being reclassed due to item description, then its up to your freight broker to explain and fight the charges for the correct class on the item. If your freight has been reweighed, the carrier will need to provide official documentation of the reweigh including the name of the person who weighed the item, the old and new weights, and the location and identification of the official scale used.

Your freight broker will have sufficient knowledge of the carrier invoice system to help wade through the mud and get you the correct rates. Though reclasses and reweighs are the most common invoice issues we see, other accessorials are applied after the freight has been delivered and with the addition of these services, the price of your freight shipment will increase. This includes (but is not limited to) liftgate charges, limited access pickup or delivery, inside delivery or pickup, and residential pickup or delivery.

Download the Freight Paper on Freight Invoice Auditing.

Chapter 9: Online TMS

In this chapter we'll discuss the use of online transportation management systems, commonly known as TMS, and how it can affect and streamline your freight shipping.

TMS stands for Transportation Management System, and is used to coordinate and control hundreds of freight shipments from pickup to delivery. Any good freight broke will have access and mastery of a TMS system, and though the details on most systems vary, the overall format is the same. A TMS automates many of the aspects of a standard LTL shipment, a convenient tool when it comes to LTL shipping.

An online TMS system is, firstly, a web-based tool, meaning a customer logs into a website, just like logging into your Facebook account. This enables customers to take advantage of the services of a TMS from anywhere. This sort of remote access is highly effective for freight shipping, an industry where information updates and changes constantly.

But what can you do through this TMS system? Pretty much anything related to your freight. Think of an online TMS system as a one-stop freight center, where a customer can quote and set up shipments, save locations and items, and generate BOLs. Let's dig into some of the services that you can expect using a TMS system.

Quote Shipments – Using an online TMS system, you'll be able to quickly and easily quote shipments. The only information you'll need for a standard LTL quote are the two zip codes for pickup and delivery, freight class, and total shipment weight. Simply input this information (as well as any accessorials you might need) and the TMS system will give you all available options to ship your freight. This includes carrier options, pricing options, and even varying transit times. Some carriers are cheaper with longer transit times, while others are more expensive, but get the freight delivered faster. You'll be able to compare these rates and carriers to find the best way to ship your freight.

Build Shipments – So you've quoted the shipment and the price is right. The next step is to set the shipment up for transit. Using an online TMS system, this process is simplified and convenient. Using a TMS, you can build your shipments and BOLs, schedule the pickup with the designated carrier and even track the shipment until delivery. When it comes to setting up shipments, the first step is to confirm and input your address and

contact information. You will also need to select the pickup date and pickup window. Once you've selected your address and pickup date, you'll input the weight, class, piece count, NFMC code, freight description, and any additional services you'll need. After that, you'll be able to add any special instructions including PO or SO numbers that may be needed for pickup or delivery of the freight. These sorts of identification numbers are often used for both shipper and consignee and can prove to be essential to a successful LTL freight shipment. After all the necessary information has been input for the shipment, it's simply a matter of selecting the appropriate carrier and confirming the shipment. Often, you'll have to confirm the terms of use (ask your broker if you need clarification on these terms) and finally the system will generate a BOL, most often the form of a PDF that can be printed out and given to the driver when he arrives for pickup.

Once the shipment is built in the system, it can be scheduled with the carrier. One of the great things about an online TMS system is that not only are they helpful for the broker and customer, but most major carriers can link into TMS systems as well. For instance, once a shipment is picked up and a PRO is scanned into the carrier system, that PRO is then uploaded to the online TMS system automatically, making it easier to track and confirm the pickup. These online systems also assist in contacting selected carriers, as most systems will have updated terminal information, perfect for tracing shipments and booking pickups.

Saving Items/ Locations – Let's say that you ship the same product all the time. Nobody wants to input the same information (weight, class, description, etc.) time after time, so most online TMS systems allow a user to save an item for easy access in future shipments. This saved item can be selected next time you're building a shipment, and makes the process faster and easier.

The same can be applied to saving locations in your online system. Instead of taking the time to input the address information every time, you can simply save the location in your TMS account. That way, next time you ship to said location, it's just a matter of selecting the location off a list and all the necessary information is automatically input into your shipment and on to your BOL.

Density Calculator – Some online systems offer their users access to a density calculator. A density calculator determines an item's density using weight and dimensions. Once the calculator has determined the density, you can confirm the density number with your NFMC sub class to make sure you are shipping your freight at the correct class.

As I mentioned before, each online TMS system has its own variances and unique tools, so we've gone over only the most basic services provided by these sort of online systems. It's also important to recognize and note that these online TMS systems are not foolproof, and there are limitations on their rating and pricing systems. A good rule of thumb when it comes to trusting an online TMS system is that it's safe for standard

LTL shipments. This means that most systems will work fine for shipments up to 12 linear feet of truck space (approx. 6 standard pallets) and/or 7,000lbs. Anything outside of those parameters might require a volume quote, and therefore the carrier would have to be contacted directly to supply the correct price and quote number.

If you have more questions about online TMS systems, reach out to your freight broker. They'll be able to explain the in's and out's of their particular system, so you can get the most out of your own transportation management system.

Chapter 10: Truckload Equipment Types

Here we'll discuss the different types of trucks or "equipment" available to ship full truckload shipments.

In this chapter, we'll switch gears and move to the other side of the freight shipping industry: ***TRUCKLOAD SHIPPING***. Though there is an overlap of industry standards between Truckload and LTL, it's best to view them as separate entities with their own rules, practices, and principles. Let's start with the common truckload equipment used.

The term "equipment" means "what kind of truck" in the shipping industry. Similar to the air travel industry, these different pieces of equipment are used for different types of freight shipments. Apart from their uses, their costs are also different. Let's start with the most common piece of equipment, the ***DRY VAN***.

A dry van is your normal, 53 ft. or 48 ft. semi-truck. It is enclosed, not heated or cooled, and has swing doors in the back for loading and unloading freight. If you've ever driven on an interstate, you're familiar with this sort of equipment. A dry van can transport any freight that fits inside the trailer (standard dimensions are 102 in. wide and 110 in. high), or 26-28 standard sized pallets. The typical maximum weight these trailers can scale is 45,000 lbs., but this will vary from carrier to carrier depending on preferences and trailer type.

If you're looking to move bigger equipment that won't fit inside a dry van, you're looking for a ***FLATBED TRAILER***. This equipment is primarily used for large equipment that needs to be side-loaded. The trailers most commonly used are 48 ft. in length, with a maximum weight limit of 48,000 lbs. Keep in mind that flatbeds and dry vans do not offer the services of a liftgate. Another important aspect to consider when it comes to shipping on flatbed trailers is the security of the freight once it's on the trailer. Apart from being subject to the elements, you'll need to make sure your freight is properly secured to the deck. Carriers often offer straps and tarps to insure that your freight is as secure and safe as possible.

The third type of equipment available for a full truckload shipment is a ***STEP-DECK TRAILER***. This equipment is very similar to a flatbed truck in that it has no roof or sides, however a portion of the trailer deck is lower. This is in place primarily to increase the legal height the freight can occupy. For a standard flatbed trailer, the maximum height is 8.5 ft. while a step deck allows a maximum legal height of 10 ft. Keep in mind this drop-deck limits the length of the trailer in a way a flatbed does not. There are also several variations of this type of trailer that can accommodate commodity heights up to 13 ft., but as with most specialized pieces of equipment, availability can be limited.

The final piece of equipment we'll discuss is a refrigerated truck, also known as a ***REEFER*** truck. This is for shipments that are temperature controlled, whether it be for freezing or heating purposes. This type of equipment is found nationwide in both 53 ft. and 48 ft. lengths. Although a common piece of equipment, they can often be difficult to source as demand shifts throughout the year, moving the equipment into different markets, and limiting availability. The typical temperature range in these trailers is from -10 degrees Fahrenheit to 75 degrees Fahrenheit. Pricing will typically be more expensive than a dry van as you're also paying for the fuel to the run the motor on the trailer, which regulates the temperature.

Download the FreightPros Truck Equipment Guide.

Chapter 11: Truckload Quotes

In this chapter we'll talk about getting full truckload quotes, and how they differ from standard LTL quotes.

As mentioned in the beginning of this book, the differences between less than truckload and truckload shipping are many. In this chapter we'll briefly discuss the basic mechanisms behind full truckload shipping including quotes, processes, and even pricing and insurance.

Let's begin with the basic foundation of truckload shipping and introduce a few terms that we'll visit again during this chapter. Unlike LTL shipments, there is not a system or set of parameters that can be applied to "standardize" truckload shipping. This lack of system lends to a more fluid shipping industry than that of the LTL variety, and allows for more negotiation between broker, carrier, and driver. Instead of abstractly trying to explain the details of a truckload shipment, let's take an example and move through the quoting process.

Joe owns a business in Orlando, FL that sells computer equipment. It's a good time of year for Joe, as he's made a big sale and has a buyer in California that's purchased 100 large boxes of equipment. Joe has done the math and it comes out to about 20 pallets of material. Usually Joe ships smaller pieces LTL, but with such a large shipment he knows that his freight won't fall under the standard LTL parameters. That leaves Joe with two options; get a volume quote from a standard LTL carrier, or get a full truckload quote. Considering the size of the shipment (a normal dry van usually holds about 26-28 single-stacked pallets) Joe knows its going to be more cost efficient to buy space for the entire truck as opposed to buying spaced based on cubic capacity. So what's Joe's next step?

The first step in acquiring a full truckload quote is assembling information, some of which is information also needed for a typical LTL shipment. For an accurate truckload quote he'll need:

- Origin and destination zip codes, as well as the estimated date of pickup.

- Total piece count and weight including dimensions of the pieces and if they are stackable.

- Commodity being shipped including the freight value. Unlike LTL, a freight class is not used in full truckload shipping, and pricing is subjective and dependent on value and insurance.

- Equipment being used for shipment. If you're unsure on the equipment needed, speak with your Truckload representative for advice.

Once Joe has all his information compiled, it's time to take it to his freight broker. From there, his broker will post the load on a series of Internet ***LOAD BOARDS***. Carriers monitor these load boards across the country. A good broker will also reach out to their network of trucking carriers and operators as more options allow for better pricing and service. Price negotiations will commence between the broker/shipper and the carrier, and depending on availability of drivers, freight size, distance, and local freight market, a price will be agreed upon.

Full truckload price negotiation and carrier vetting are the primary reason we suggest using a qualified freight broker when it comes to shipping full truckload freight. In order to get the cheapest rates from the carrier, certain information is needed that can only be provided by a freight professional. If Joe, a novice freight shipper, attempts to set up his own full truckload shipment there is the chance the carrier will give him a bad deal, forcing him to overpay on his quote and shipment. Also, freight professionals have the experience and tools to properly vet and secure the carrier. Making sure the carrier has the proper registrations, operating authorities, and insurance are critical in this process. If your freight moves with a carrier who does not have these things in place then you, your freight, and fellow motorists are at risk.

Once the carrier is "locked in" to the shipment, normal shipping protocols kick in, similar to those in the LTL world as discussed in previous chapters. The only difference being that in truckload, the shippers usually produce their own BOL. This BOL will be given to the driver when he arrives to pickup the freight. The freight will be loaded into the truck, given a PRO number, and then will be considered "in transit."

Unlike LTL shipping, a full truckload shipment will remain on the same trailer for the entirety of its transit. This differs wildly from standard LTL shipments, where terminals are used to move the freight from shipper to consignee. With a truckload shipment, once loaded, the freight will not be unloaded until its final destination. Even if the transit time is more than one day (Which in the case of Joe is true, it takes more than one day to get from Florida to California) the freight will remain on the same trailer.

When it comes to protecting your full truckload freight, the process is similar to LTL shipping. Carriers will be required to carry a certain amount of insurance (usually around $100,000) and then if damage does occur the carrier will be responsible for covering any issues. You can also buy third party insurance, just as in LTL, and the third party will pay out the claim and be compensated from the carrier.

Conclusion

We've covered everything from brokers and carriers, to claims and insurance and even billing practices. We've talked about the many differences between Less-Than-Truckload freight and Truckload freight, and when it's best to use both. We've touched on transportation management systems, quotes, freight class, and even reefer trucks.

Below you'll find a Glossary of the many terms we have referenced in this book, along with some frequently asked questions that we've compiled over the years.

We hope this book has introduced you to freight shipping in a way that is fun and easy to understand, and that you'll be able to look back as needed on the information and instructions it provides.

Want to know a little about who wrote this book? FreightPros is a full-service freight broker based out of Austin, TX. Founded in 2009, we work with both LTL and Truckload shippers to get our customers the best rates and service in the business. We've been included in the Inc. 5000 list of fastest-growing private companies in America in 2013, 2014, and 2015. We have been part of the Austin Business Journal's "Fast Fifty" for 2014 and 2015, as well as Winner of the 2015 Austin Energy and Technology Innovation Award at the Greater Austin Business Awards.

Check out our shipping blog for regular updates and tricks for navigating the freight world, and our extensive collection of instructional Freight Papers, all available for FREE download. Check us out on social media, and happy shipping!

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Glossary

Accessorial – An additional service that can be requested for an LTL shipment. Common accessorials include liftgates and residential deliveries/pickups. Additional cost varies depending on service and carrier.

Bill of Lading (BOL) – Document used to show all relevant details for a freight shipment. BOLs include pickup and delivery information, weight, class, contacts, billing, and carrier information. The BOL is given to the carrier at time of pickup and accompanies freight through transit.

Carrier – A company that owns their own equipment and transports freight across the country using drivers, dispatchers, and terminals.

Consignee – The receiver of a freight shipment. The opposite of a shipper.

Customer Service Representative (CSR) – Carrier department that handles tracking and tracing, pickups and deliveries. They work in close proximity to dispatchers, drivers, and claims departments.

Density – A number signifying an item's pounds per cubic foot. Density is determined using the length, width, height, and weight of an item. Density is used to determine freight classing and pricing, and is one of the most important aspects of LTL shipping.

Dispatcher – Carrier department that coordinates driver routes including pickups and deliveries. They work closely with carrier customer service representatives and communicate directly with drivers throughout the day.

Dock Workers – Carrier department in charge of loading and unloading freight from carrier terminals. They can also scan PRO numbers into the carrier system.

Driver – Carrier department of drivers who operate the trucks used to pickup and deliver freight. They work closely with dispatchers to coordinate pickup and delivery routes on a daily basis.

Dry Van – Standard equipment for Truckload and LTL shipments. A 53 or 48 ft. trailer that is neither heated nor cooled, used to transport freight.

Flatbed – Equipment used in truckload shipping that has no top or side panels, thereby providing no protection to freight. Generally used on large freight items that cannot fit in a standard dry van.

Freight Broker – A third party company that supplies shipping rates and service to customers, and acts a bridge between carrier and customer. A full service broker provides complete shipping service (often using TMS) to their customers on top of lower shipping rates.

Freight Class – A number assigned to freight shipments to identify that item's transportability. Freight class is used to determine shipping cost and pricing, and is notated on the BOL by the NMFC number.

Freight Shipping – The transportation of goods from one location to another, usually by a commercial carrier.

Handling – A factor in determining an item's freight class. Items that are fragile or over-sized are often harder to handle, resulting in a higher freight class.

Less Than Truckload (LTL) – A type of freight shipping focused on moving shipments that take up less than a full truckload. LTL has its own structure for pricing, and quoting (including volume quotes). In addition, LTL has its own carrier and broker structure, separate from Truckload shipping.

Liability – Used to determine an item's freight class by ascertaining the item's probability of damage or theft.

Liftgate – A lift attached to the back of some carrier trucks that assist with loading and unloading freight when a dock or forklift is not available. Often used for residential deliveries and pickups.

Load Board - An online message board used by truckload brokers and carriers to assign jobs, pickups, and deliveries.

NMFC Number – National Motor Freight Classification System number that notates an item's class on the BOL.

Notify Consignee – Accessorial available for purchase on shipments that need an appointment for delivery.

OS&D Department - Carrier department in charge of overages, shortages, and damage.

PRO Number – Identification number assigned to freight after it has been picked up by carrier that allows for tracking/ tracing.

Proof of Delivery (POD) – Document signed at time of delivery by consignee, notating freight received in good form as well as time of delivery and name of receiver. Also known as a Delivery Receipt (DR).

Reclass – Invoice discrepancy when a carrier invoices a shipment at a higher or lower class than noted on the BOL.

Reefer – Equipment used to transport freight that needs to be temperature controlled during transit.

Reweigh – Invoice discrepancy when a carrier invoices a shipment at a higher or lower weight than noted on the BOL.

Shipper – The origin location of a freight shipment. Opposite of consignee. They are responsible for handing over the freight along with the BOL to the carrier.

Step Deck – Equipment used in Truckload shipping, similar to a flatbed trailer but with a lowered deck portion that allows for greater freight height possibility.

Stowability – Used to determine an item's freight class by ascertaining the ability of the freight to be stowed alongside other freight in the carrier's truck. Similar to "handling."

Terminal – Carrier hub where LTL shipments are moved during transit. Carrier terminals are situated across the country and come in varying sizes.

Transportation Management System (TMS) – Online freight system used by carriers and freight brokers to coordinate and organize customer shipping needs, including but not limited to: building BOLs, creating shipments, tracking shipments, and invoicing customers.

Truckload (TL) – A type of freight shipping specializing in moving freight that requires a full truckload of space. This aspect of freight is wholly different from LTL and has its own carrier and broker structure.

Volume Quote – A type of LTL freight quote needed when the shipment is outside the parameters of a standard LTL shipment in regards to weight or size. The quote must be visible on the BOL used by the shipper to be applicable to the shipment.

W&I Certificate – Weight and Inspection certificate created by the carrier when a shipment is reweighed or reclassed.

FAQs

Will I always need a bill of lading (BOL) when shipping?
Yes. Both LTL and TL shipping require the use of a BOL given to the driver by the shipper.

Is there insurance coverage for all my shipments?
All LTL carriers and most Truckload carriers provide insurance, however, the amount of coverage varies between carrier and commodity. Most freight brokers also offer third party insurance.

What's the difference between a freight carrier and a freight broker?
A freight carrier is a company that owns trucks and employs drives to transport freight. A freight broker is a third party that acts as a liaison between carrier and customer, providing customer service and cheaper freight rates.

Must I have a freight broker to transport freight?
A freight broker is not required to ship LTL or TL freight. That being said, a freight broker can often save time and money for business owners who are new to the freight shipping industry.

What is freight class?
Freight class is a number given to all LTL freight by The National Motor Classification System. This classification helps determine shipment pricing.

What is a "standard" LTL shipment?
A standard LTL shipment is one that takes up less than twelve linear feet in the back of a carrier truck (Six standard non-stack pallets). The shipment also weighs less than 7,000lbs.

What is a "standard" pallet size?
A standard pallet size is 48 inches length x 48 inches width. Another size considered by most to be standard is 40 inches length by 48 inches width. The pallet height will vary per shipment.

What is a TMS?
A TMS is a Transportation Management System used by freight brokers and carriers to coordinate pickup, delivery, and tracking of an LTL shipment.

What is a POD?
Also known as a Proof of Delivery or Delivery Receipt, this is a document signed by the consignee at time of delivery notating the status of the shipment as delivered. Any damage or loss should be notated on the POD in order to have insurance claims paid out.