

PROCESSING LETTER-SIZE BOOKLETS

FYI

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The Postal Service has established new standards to improve processing and handling of automation compatible letter-size booklets. There are changes to tab size and location, paper weight and dimensions.

Booklets are mailpieces with a bound edge and include sheets fastened with at least two staples in the manufacturing fold (saddle-stitched), perfect bound, pressed-glued, or joined together by another binding method that is automation-compatible and produces an end where pages are attached. In general, booklets are open on three sides before sealing, like a book, and must be uniformly thick. Large, bound booklets that are folded for mailing, also called "quarter-fold" booklets, qualify for automation and machinable prices if the final mailpiece remains nearly uniform in thickness.

To improve the productivity of processing booklets and to decrease damage to mailpieces, the new standards require that booklets have three, 1 1/2-inch tabs placed on the sides of the mailpiece. For larger or heavier booklets, the USPS recommends 2-inch paper tabs. Glue spots or a continuous glue line may be used to seal booklets designed with pages that are shorter than the cover.

In addition, under the new standards, to minimize tab failure, tabs used to seal booklets paying automation or machinable prices may not be perforated. Tabs with perforations are easily broken,

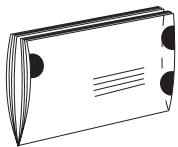
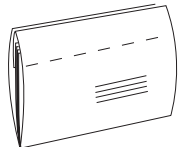
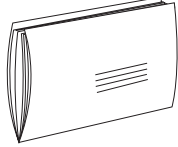
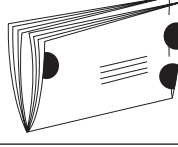
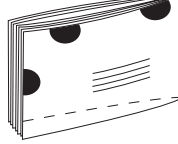
do not maintain their integrity, and are damaged in transport prior to entering the mailstream. Therefore, only solid tabs made of plastic, vinyl, translucent paper, opaque paper, or cellophane tape will be acceptable.

The allowable dimensions are changing for booklets. The maximum size for booklets is changing from 6 1/8 by 11 1/2 inches to 6 x 10 1/2 inches. The paper basis weight for booklets is changing from 50- to 60-pound paper to 50- to 70-pound paper.

The minimum size, thickness and piece weight for booklets are not changing. Although the current maximum weight of 3 ounces will not change and is applicable to all mailpieces prepared without envelopes, to improve machinability, the Postal Service recommends that 3-ounce booklets be no longer than 9 inches.

Beginning Sept. 8, booklets that do not comply with the new standards will not be eligible for machinable or automation letter prices. Nonmachinable booklets will be assessed a surcharge (for First-Class Mail), pay nonmachinable prices (for Standard Mail), or pay nonbarcoded prices (for Periodicals).

Final requirements for letter-size booklets mailed at automation and machinable letter prices can be found in the April 15 *Federal Register*, "New Standards for Letter-Size Booklets," available on Postal Explorer at pe.usps.com. Customers requiring additional information can contact their local manager of Business Mail Entry. □

If the spine or fold is...	Length	Cover Stock	Sealing	Tab in these locations...
 Spine or final fold on the bottom (longer) edge	5 inches to 9 inches long	50-pound	Three 1 1/2 inch non-perforated tabs	Two tabs on leading edge, one tab on trailing edge. Position lower leading tab 1/2 inch from the bottom edge. Position upper tabs within 1 inch from the top edge.
	Over 9 inches, up to 10 1/2 inches long	60-pound		
 Spine on bottom (longer) edge, non-perforated inner flap sealed within top (upper) edge	5 inches to 9 1/2 inches long	80-pound	Continuous glue line or glue spots	Perfect bound or saddle stitched, flap sealed inside, continuous glue line along flap preferred, minimum 1 inch glue spots acceptable if placed within 3/4 inch of right and left edges.
 Spine on the bottom (longer) edge, Cover extends no more than 1/2 inch beyond inner pages	5 inches to 9 1/2 inches long	80-pound	Continuous glue line or glue spots	Perfect bound or saddle stitched with a continuous glue line along the 1/2 inch cover overhang preferred, minimum 1 inch glue spots acceptable if placed within 3/4 inch of right and left edges.
 Final fold on the bottom (longer) edge, with the folded spine on the leading or trailing (shorter) edge	5 inches to 10 1/2 inches long	40-pound	Three 1 1/2 inch non-perforated tabs	Two tabs on leading edge, one tab on trailing edge. Position lower leading tab 1/2 inch from the bottom edge. Position upper tabs within 1 inch from the top edge.
 Spine on the leading (shorter) edge	5 inches to 9 inches long	60-pound	Three 1 1/2 inch non-perforated tabs	Two tabs on top edge, one tab on trailing edge. Position top tabs 1 inch from left and right edge. Position trailing tab in the middle.
	Over 9 inches, up to 10 1/2 inches long	70-pound		