



ARE YOU READY TO EXPORT - Video Summary

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Tip Six:

Make Shipping Easy

Shipping your work can be easy and efficient, if you lay the groundwork and develop tools to help you.

Who are you going to use to ship your work? Canada Post, Fed Ex, UPS and other shipping carriers all have different levels of service and convenience. Determine what works best for you and your customers.

In most cases for us, Canada Post has worked well. I can look up rates quickly to quote to my customers. I have integrated my small business account with Canada Post with my Paypal account for combined small business discounts that have given me the best shipping rates I've been able to find anywhere. I can offer customers different levels of shipping service: fast, slow, insured, not insured...it all depends on their comfort level and the risk they are willing to take.

Shipping labels and custom forms themselves? They can be filled out and printed online through the Canada Post website or Paypal, taped to the packages and dropped off at the nearest post office without waiting in line.

Harmonized Systems Codes, or HS codes are the internationally recognized way to help customs officers around the globe categorize your work. Knowing these codes and entering them on customs forms will help your work clear customs more efficiently. These are easy to reference online. Whether you ship using an online source like Canada Post or Paypal, or whether you're filling out customs forms at the post office, it's worth your while to make a list

of the HS codes that apply to your work. In the written transcript of this talk, you'll find three current websites to help you research and plan shipping.

I have a chart I've developed to help me make shipping more efficient. In it, I've kept track of popular items I ship, the type of packaging I use, dimensions and weight of the package and what the cost is to ship it to different provinces or countries around the world. Every time I ship something different or to a new place, I add it to the chart. Once a year I have to change the pricing in the chart, but everything else has stayed the same for 5 years.

And finally: you are a small business and likely doing much of this work yourself. Develop a shipping policy that reflects that. Determine whether you'll offer customers uninsured and insured rates to choose from. I offer both, with the clear understanding that if uninsured is chosen, I am not responsible for loss or damage once the package has shipped.

Shipping should be clearly priced separate from your work. Pricing should be based on how much you need to do to package your work. Throwing a skein of yarn into an envelope takes less time than safely packing a set of glass goblets. Your time should be reflected in that.

Shipping supports your work, but isn't your work. In 5 years, I've lost exactly 1 customer out of thousands because of shipping costs. Customers will adapt to that in order to have your work in their hands.

LINKS

Canada Post website: canadapost.ca

Paypal "ship now" (requires a Paypal account): <https://www.paypal.com/shipnow/>

Harmonized Systems Codes: www.foreign-trade.com/reference/hscod.htm