



How much is a P.O. Box?

P.O. Boxes have been here since there was a mail to deliver. Getting a P.O. Box is considered one of the safest ways to receive and manage mail. You can get your mail at a location other than your home which guarantees a safe delivery and prevents any theft activity. However, people often wonder how much a P.O. Box is. Let's dive deeper into this and answer the commonly asked question: how much does a P.O. Box cost?

What is a P.O. Box?

Before we explain a P.O. Box price, let's take a look at what P.O. Box actually is. A P.O. Box (a Postal Box) is a lockable mailbox that is located in a post office station, usually in the post office's lobby. You can reserve it at the nearest post office if you cannot or do not want to receive mail directly at your home.

This is a great option if you are looking for a safe place to receive your mail. You can rent such a box for 3, 6 or 12 months. A great thing is that most post offices offer 24-hour access, 7 days a week. Usually, you access your P.O. Box with a lock and key. Some post office stations also have combination locks.

How much does a P.O. Box cost?

Actually, it is very difficult to discuss the average P.O. Box cost. P.O. Box rental prices vary – it depends on different factors. You can either spend as little as \$20 for a 3-month rental at one of the cheapest locations, or as much as \$360 at an expensive one.

You can find a thorough overview of the pricing on the US Postal Service website. You can also contact your postal office station to find out if there are currently any boxes available. You can usually pay for P.O. Box rental online or at a self-service kiosk. Payments by email or in person are also available.

P.O. Box price – determining factors

As mentioned above, prices vary. There are three factors that determine the cost of renting a P.O. Box: the length of time you will rent it, the size of the box, and its physical location.

Length of rental time

Depending on the post office, you can choose to rent and pay for your P.O. Box in 3-, 6- or 12-month periods. A 12-month period is only available in some of the post office stations. You can usually get the best deal if you pay upfront for 6-12 months. It is much more expensive to constantly renew for shorter rental periods. So, if you already know you will need your P.O. Box for at least a year, it is much cheaper to choose an annual rental from the start.

Some post office stations also offer a 'baker's dozen' promotion – you reserve a P.O. Box for 12 months and you get the 13th month for no extra cost. Keep in mind that your rental can keep renewing if you choose to have the fees charged automatically to a credit card.

The size of the box

In most cases, smaller P.O. Boxes are less expensive. In general, there are five sizes of P.O. Box, ranging from extra small to extra large. However, not all sizes are available in every location. The table below presents the boxes according to their sizes. Most boxes are 14.75" deep.

Box size	Dimensions	Capacity
Extra small	3" x 5.5"	2 rolled-up magazines or 10-15 letters
Small	5" x 5.5"	5 rolled-up magazines or up to 15 letters
Medium	5.5" x 11"	Many magazines and large envelopes stacked flat
Large	11" x 11"	2 shoe boxes and 10-15 letters
Extra Large	12" x 22.5"	Multiple Flat Rate Boxes and parcels

What happens when your mail exceeds the capacity of the box? It is called an overflow condition. If this is something that has happened to you, you should use caller service, change to a larger box, or use one or more additional boxes to which mail will be addressed.

Location

There are two fee structures, depending on location. They are identified as Competitive and Market Dominant. Competitive ones are allowed to charge higher fees. However, they often offer additional services in exchange (this may be e.g. electronic notification). Usually, the bigger the city, the more expensive the P.O. Box.

For example, a small P.O. Box in a town in a rural area may cost \$26 for a 3-month rental and the same box for the same period in a big city will cost you over \$40. Also, P.O. Box prices can change annually in places where the postal service controls enough of the market to set prices without competition.

Summing up, you will find the average P.O. Box cost depending on size, location, and rental period in the table below:

Size	3-month in 'Competitive' location	6-month in 'Competitive' location	3-month in 'Market Dominant' location	6-month in 'Market Dominant' location

Extra Small	\$13 - \$44	\$21 - \$75	\$13 - \$34	\$21 - \$57
Small	\$17 - \$87	\$28 - \$150	\$17 - \$50	\$28 - \$84
Medium	\$26 - \$144	\$42 - \$250	\$26 - \$87	\$42 - \$145
Large	\$37 - \$230	\$62 - \$400	\$37 - \$159	\$62 - \$265
Extra Large	\$64 - \$360	\$109 - \$625		

Are there any extra fees when I open a P.O. Box?

Yes, there are also some extra rental fees. They include:

1. Key deposits: \$4 per key issued (for the first two keys, then it's \$8 for any additional duplicate key). Keep in mind that there are no fees for the first two keys at Competitive locations.
2. Late payment or lock replacement fee: \$23.

Why should I get a P.O. Box?

A P.O. Box brings you a lot of benefits that look really appealing. First of all, P.O. Boxes are fully secure. They are located inside the post office station. They can only be accessed with a key or combination code. This is a huge step towards maintaining your privacy, as P.O. Box kind of masks your real address. Sometimes you may want to refrain from sharing your home address, e.g. depending on your profession.

P.O. Box is perfect for those who want to keep their home business mail separate from their personal mail. By getting a P.O. Box, you get a new mailing address that you can use for selected contracts and transactions. Another thing is delivery speed. You usually receive your mail faster than you would at your home address as the mailbox is located right inside the post office lobby. No trip in the postal mail van needed! Your new mail is usually available before 12 pm and you don't need to wait for the postman.

What is more, P.O. Boxes are normally quite cheap, anyone can afford one. Finally, it's a great option if you move constantly. You don't have to change mailing addresses for bills, bank statements, magazine subscriptions etc.

How to set up a P.O. Box

Setting up a P.O. Box is a snap. First, you have to select a location. According to US regulations, you can get a P.O. Box at most USPS locations, no matter where your home or business is.

Obviously, most people choose their P.O. Boxes near their home or place of business. Once you decide on the location, time to choose the size of your P.O. Box. You select out

of the general sizes: extra small, small, medium, large, and extra large. The price of your P.O. Box will depend on the chosen size and location.

The next step is choosing a rental term and completing the 1-page form to confirm your identity. You can apply online or go in person. Then, you have 30 days to activate your P.O. Box and pick up the keys. When you receive your keys, you can start sharing your new address and redirecting your mail.

Summary

As you can see, setting up a P.O. Box is both beneficial and affordable. P.O. Box prices vary, depending on size, location, and rental period but it's not difficult to choose the right option that will fully satisfy your needs. Some P.O. Boxes are as cheap as \$13 and some extra-large boxes may even cost as much as \$625. If you need maximum convenience, you can also consider a virtual P.O. Box. It's a real street address you can easily access online. It has been designed for both personal and business use.

How does it work? You rent a virtual P.O. Box and the virtual mailbox service delivers mail to your email in soft copy format. You receive a scan – you can choose if you only want a scan of the envelope showing who has sent the mail or a scan of the contents. Getting such a P.O. Box is extremely easy. Similar to a regular P.O. Box, you choose a mailing address where your mail will be delivered. You choose a plan, file the form, and redirect your mail. Interested? Check the available options and pricing [here!](#)