

Dear Sir/Madam,

If this is not correct place to send this, then sorry, but was email that was on the page I was reading.

Please accept my apologies for not using real name, but as I am currently working as a courier, the chances of losing my job are very high if it is found out that I do anything like this.

I have and currently deliver for most of the companies, apart from Royal Mail, from the North of Scotland to the Lake District and the Midlands so have a fair bit of experience as the frontline of this industry.

I am aware that there are quite a lot of issues that cause customers and drivers alike problems in the parcel delivery industry. Not all are the fault of the driver or the customer, but ultimately, I believe this is where the majority of the issues arise.

- 1, One of the main issues is lack of naming or numbering on doors, especially in blocks of flats, or incomplete or different address for the same property.
- 2, Security entry systems that do not work or switched off – in my experience this is in about 60% of cases. Could be 20-40 flats but only number 4 has a working bell. This is mainly caused by 'feuding' landlords over who pays what, whilst the residents and deliveries etc are stuck in the middle.
- 3, Message on delivery notes to leave with neighbour if out, all very good, but check that neighbour is ok to accept parcel first, about 20-30% get annoyed and abusive with this option, so parcel gets returned to depot.
- 4, If remote door opening is not working, then customer will have to come down and open door, which to me is logical. 'Door doesn't work and not coming down to open it, want parcel at my flat door and your problem how you get it there.' Then complain that driver didn't attempt to deliver parcel. This is very common.
- 5, Message to leave in shed, at back door etc. Great, but how do you get through the 2m fence and chained up gate to do so? Generally, this is confusion or disagreement in the household. Lady of the house wants parcels put in shed, man of the house doesn't so locks gate.
- 6, Incomplete or what we call 'entitled if they could be,' addresses. Like 'Sophie, University of London,' or Mr Somebody, 24 Any street, Some town., where this a block of flats? This is generally people that don't want friends and relatives to know that they stay in a flat, and pretend they own the whole block.
- 7, Wrong or incomplete phone numbers associated with delivery. Most courier companies have the ability to call or text customer, but 80% have wrong or incomplete number. This is down to customer not the sender or courier.
- 8, Swapping of door numbers, in blocks of flats – this is generally a student thing and if you ask if they are '????,' they will always answer yes, so have to ask what their name is before handing parcel over. They get lots of free stuff doing this.
- 9, If driver asks you to check parcel as it doesn't feel right or maybe rattles inside box, then please open and check, DO NOT accept and then complain that it is damaged afterwards, driver loses out, not the company.

Solutions to some of above.

1, Use the actual postal address for property, this needs to be sorted UK wide as there is no actual logical system at the moment. An example is on a block of flats that I have delivered to on numerous occasions, where 3 people bought 3 flats each. It has nine flats, 3 on each floor. Each person bought a 'strip' from top to bottom, so left hand flats are 1,2 and 3, middle ones are 4,5 and 6, right hand flats are 7,8 and 9, thus putting 1,4 and 7 on the ground floor. Landlords blame the planning departments and vice versa and so on. A weirder example is the new housing estate, where houses are numbered in the order they were sold, made sense to somebody somewhere.

2, Put in place something similar to 'section 75 for septic tanks,' in relation to security systems, thereby removing the landlord feuding and penny pinching.

3, If want parcels left in shed etc. then at least make sure courier can gain access, and don't call to complain that parcel wasn't left as asked.

4, Insist on RECIPIENT contact details if sending parcels to a friend or relative.

Other issues that cause problems.

1, Age verified deliveries. We don't like asking for passport or driving licence details any more than the customer likes showing them. Why do we do this? Because we do not know if you are a mystery shopper behind that door and if you are and we don't ask, then we are immediately sacked.

2, It makes no difference if we delivered to you yesterday, we still need to do the same procedure every time.

3, If you have ordered 10x 20kg bags of dog food, then I will park my van as close to your house as possible, I will not move it to the other end of the street. If you don't want neighbours to see where your deliveries are from then go to shop and get it yourself.

4, Something came up and you won't be in today, so want delivery tomorrow. This is no problem, but you will need to inform the sender, reschedule delivery with the company. The driver cannot do this, we can ask but it is always assumed the driver is lying or being lazy. We'd love to be able to do this for you, but not allowed. This also goes against the driver if you do not reschedule, so it is in drivers' interest to deliver if at all possible.

5, Something happened, and you need delivered to different address, again this is not an issue, but driver in most cases can do nothing about this. Parcel has to go back to depot or sender to be readdressed, this is just the way it works. Goes against driver if delivers to different address than on parcel. Yes, there are some cases where this can be done, but if delivery is in London, we are not going to drive to Edinburgh to deliver it.

5, Password or passport required deliveries. Again, this has to be done for some items. Drivers have no choice, yes you could tell me password over phone and ask me to leave it somewhere, but that will get marked as 'No password or passport.' Why? Again, we don't know if you are a mystery shopper doing checks or if the phone call is being monitored. All calls and texts are recorded so no idea who is listening in.

Things that courier companies could do to make this all work easier and better.

1, Increase time limit for customer to respond to text, 3-5 mins is not enough time for most people to respond. Should be able to text driver up to 5pm or till driver has signed out.

2, Get proper recognisable phone numbers that are registered as such, so customer knows that it is a real phone call or text from the delivery company. Most phones and email software, count this as spam and customer never sees them or just deletes call. This would also help with call minder systems, where calls don't go through.

3, Allow more time for deliveries and 'turn a blind eye' to drivers actually taking parcels into customer's house. This would only be done at customer request, generally elderly or disabled etc. This is a big no allowed, and you have to check that you are not 'being watched' if you do this. (If this happens then DO NOT thank driver on feedback for doing so. This is another sackable 'offence'.)

4, Stop penalising drivers for obviously damaged parcels. Ideally, they would not be taken out for delivery, but they have to, then driver gets blamed for damage.

The pressure on time making deliveries. How much time do drivers actually have to make delivery?

1, In general this is set around anything from 30 secs to 3 minutes. As an example, let's use a 'normal' day. This consists of 9 hrs – supposedly - which includes all loading, travel to delivery area, all deliveries and re-deliveries and travel to collection depot. So, we have 540 minutes total. Just use 240 parcels as example. Travel to area – 35 mins, travel back to depot 35 mins. Lunch break – supposedly 30 mins – which never happens. 95 mins gone leaving 445 minutes. This allows 1.85 minutes or 1 minute 51 secs per delivery, including travel or driving between deliveries. So, if you have to wait for 5-6 minutes for someone to answer door, if disabled or infirm then they need the time, then you may need to check ID, or get password on top of this, then you will be behind with your deliveries, so have to make time up with other deliveries.