

Post office will not ship laptops, iPads abroad

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(AP) -- The U.S. Postal Service is banning international shipments of electronics with lithium batteries such as smartphones, laptops and iPads, citing the risk of fire.

Beginning Wednesday, consumers may no longer make the shipments, including to army and diplomatic post offices. That means friends and family will have to use more expensive private companies such as UPS and [FedEx](#) to ship electronics to U.S. troops based abroad.

The Postal Service cited discussion by the International Civil Aviation Organization and the Universal Postal Union. They issue semi-binding guidelines for global trade.

Officials expect that U.S. consumers can resume shipments in most cases after Jan. 1, once the agency develops a new policy "consistent with international standards."

[Lithium batteries](#) are believed to have caused at least two fires on cargo planes since 2006.

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