

Letter to Mars? Royal Mail works it out for British boy, 5

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Britain's Royal Mail has turned to NASA for help after a five-year-old boy wrote in asking how much it would cost to post a letter to Mars.

But Oliver Geddings probably won't be able to send a letter to [outer space](#) as the price—£11,602.25 (\$18,000, 16,000 euros)—is well beyond the reach of most children's pocket money.

In its reply to Oliver, who wants to become an astronaut, the Royal Mail explained on Friday how the figure was calculated.

"Fuel is very expensive and affects the cost of sending letters around our planet," senior customer advisor Andrew Smout wrote.

"NASA also told me that their last visit to Mars, carrying the Curiosity rover, cost about \$700 million.

"The spaceship itself is very small so storage is at a premium. Based on how much the spaceship weighed compared to how much it costs to get to Mars, they said that something weighing up to 100 grams would cost them approximately \$18,000 to fly to Mars."

The Royal Mail added that the price of the letter would be covered by 18,416 first class stamps.

Oliver, from near Lytham St Annes in northwest England, wrote back to Royal Mail thanking them for their reply. "It's very expensive to send a

letter to Mars. You would need so many stamps!" he added.

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