
Amazon FBA Prep Checklist

Every labeling, bagging and carton requirement to get China shipments into Amazon without a rejection - plus the 2026 rule change every seller needs to know.

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WHAT'S INSIDE

- What changed in 2026: Amazon ended its own prep service
- Prep requirements checklist - FNSKU, poly-bagging, cartons, pallets
- Quality inspection checkpoints before a container loads
- Shipment document checklist
- Why shipments get rejected - and the fix
- Questions sellers ask before moving prep to China

1. What Changed In 2026

On 1 January 2026 Amazon stopped offering prep and item-labeling services for FBA shipments to the US store. Every unit now has to arrive at the fulfillment center already labeled, bagged, and compliant.

Topic	What it means
Who it covers	All US FBA inventory - whether sent directly to FBA, or routed through Amazon Warehousing and Distribution (AWD), Amazon Global Logistics (AGL), Amazon SEND, or the Supply Chain Portal.
What stayed the same	Labeling is still mandatory. You (or a prep provider) must apply a scannable FNSKU label to every unit before the shipment arrives.
If goods arrive unprepared	Shipments created after 1 January 2026 that arrive unprepared are no longer eligible for reimbursement if items are damaged or untrackable.
What to do about it	Prep and label upstream - at the factory or a China prep facility - so nothing has to be re-labeled or sent back at the Amazon dock.

Source: Amazon Seller Central - FBA prep and item-labeling service. Confirm current rules on Seller Central before you ship.

2. FBA Prep Requirements Checklist

Work through this before any container is sealed. Tick each line, or use it as a spec for whoever preps your goods. Requirements are set by Amazon and change from time to time - confirm the current wording on Seller Central.

- ☐ A scannable FNSKU label is applied to every unit (1 x 2 in or larger), and is not covered by another label or the poly bag seam.
- ☐ Loose or bundled items are poly-bagged, with the bag opening and material within Amazon's limits.
- ☐ A suffocation-warning label is applied to every poly bag with an opening of 5 in or more, in the destination marketplace's required wording.
- ☐ Multi-packs, sets and bundles are assembled and labeled so the ASIN scans as one sellable unit.
- ☐ Cartons are within Amazon's weight and dimension limits for the category (a single box is typically held to 50 lb unless one item exceeds it).
- ☐ Each carton carries the correct carton label, and the box IDs match the shipment plan in Seller Central.
- ☐ Pallets are built to spec (40 x 48 in, within height and weight limits) when shipping LTL or FTL, with pallet labels applied.
- ☐ Any category-specific labels are present - expiration, batch, battery, or country of origin.
- ☐ Fragile items are protected with bubble wrap or inserts, and no item can shift inside the carton.
- ☐ Hazmat items (lithium batteries, aerosols, liquids, powders) are declared, with the required UN 38.3 test summary where applicable.

3. Quality Inspection Checkpoints

Three checkpoints catch problems while they are still cheap to fix - before the goods leave China.

Stage	When	What is checked
Incoming	On receipt	Carton count and condition checked against the PO; SKU, quantity and spec matched; damaged goods documented with photos before they enter the pipeline.
Mid-stage	During prep	Spot-checks during labeling and bagging - FNSKU accuracy, bag seal and warning label, and unit condition after handling.
Pre-shipment	Before loading	Final AQL Level II sampling, defect classification, and a photo report signed off before any container is loaded.

Final inspection uses AQL Level II sampling by default. A 100% inspection can be arranged on request and is quoted separately.

4. Shipment Document Checklist

The paperwork that has to travel with (or ahead of) a direct-to-FBA shipment. Missing documents are one of the most common causes of a customs or receiving delay.

- ☐ Commercial invoice
- ☐ Packing list
- ☐ Bill of lading or air waybill
- ☐ FBA shipment plan and box IDs
- ☐ AQL inspection report with defect classification
- ☐ Unit and carton photos
- ☐ Carrier tracking reference
- ☐ Customs / export declaration

5. Why Shipments Get Rejected - And The Fix

These are the reasons FBA shipments most often get flagged at the fulfillment center, and how to avoid each one at the prep stage.

Common cause	How to avoid it
Wrong or unscannable FNSKU	The barcode will not scan at the FC, or points to the wrong ASIN. Apply correct, unobscured FNSKU labels at prep, and test-scan each SKU before loading.
Missing suffocation warning	Poly bags with a 5 in or larger opening need a warning label. Add it at bagging, in the destination marketplace's wording.
Overweight or oversize carton	Boxes over the categorical limit get rejected or re-handled. Confirm weight and dimensions before sealing, and split heavy SKUs.
Box IDs that do not match the plan	Labels that disagree with the shipment plan cause receiving delays. Reconcile box IDs against Seller Central before the container is sealed.
Damaged or loose packaging	Crushed cartons and rattling units are flagged at intake. Use correct void fill and reinforce edges on transit-heavy lanes.
Undeclared hazmat	Batteries, aerosols and liquids that are not declared are quarantined. Declare at intake and attach the required documentation.

These are commonly reported prep issues, not an exhaustive list of Amazon policy - always check the current Seller Central requirements for your category.

6. Questions Sellers Ask

Why prep in China instead of a US prep center?

China-based prep joins the shipment at the factory, so goods skip a second handling leg (factory - US port - prep center - Amazon). Labor and packaging materials are cheaper at source, which is where the widely quoted 60-80% saving comes from, and total lead time drops by roughly 7-14 days.

Can you prep products that contain batteries or liquids?

Yes, with the right documentation. Built-in or loose lithium batteries are handled as dangerous goods and need specific labeling plus a UN 38.3 test summary; liquids and aerosols have their own packing rules. We flag these at intake and apply the labels Amazon's hazmat workflow expects - or tell you when a product cannot move through standard FBA channels.

Do you handle returns, removals and relabeling?

Yes. We receive Amazon removal orders and customer returns, inspect them, and either relabel and re-prepare sellable units for a fresh shipment or consolidate them for disposal - so returned stock keeps working instead of being written off.

How long does prep take from factory to Amazon?

Prep processing at our Shenzhen facility typically runs 3-5 business days from goods receipt to shipment-ready. Add transit: roughly 2-5 days by express, 4-7 by air, 12-18 by ocean to the US West Coast, and 22-30 to the US East Coast. Door to FC is usually 15-35 days depending on the method.

Do you prep for marketplaces outside the US?

Yes. Beyond the US store we prep for the UK, EU, Japan, Canada and Australia, and each marketplace has its own labeling language, packaging and documentation rules. Tell us the destinations up front and we build the labeling spec per destination before prep begins.

Is there a minimum shipment size?

No formal minimum. We handle everything from a 100-unit test batch to full container loads, and flexible storage lets smaller sellers accumulate inventory until an FBA shipment makes economic sense.

Get Your Shipments FBA-Ready

Send us your product list and quantities, and we will quote prep, labeling and shipping to Amazon from our Shenzhen facility - with a written, itemised proposal and no obligation.

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