



**Shippo API  
Quick Start  
Guide**

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# What is an API?

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## *What are APIs and what do they do?*

Here at Shippo, it's a common question from our customers – especially those who want to automate shipping – who want to spend more time on the stuff that matters.

## *So, what is an API?*

API is an acronym for application programming interface. APIs are the bits of code used for communication between data servers to power services.

Businesses will often use APIs to communicate and integrate with internal and external applications, choosing information they want to send and receive data between each end.

# Using Shippo's API

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Shippo has an easy-to-use, customizable API that you can depend on to offer shipping to partners, merchants, and more.

With our single integration, you'll get everything from labels and manifests to tracking and returns. We standardize carrier processes and streamline the complexities of shipping, so you can offer a best-in-class solution without the upkeep.

Shippo's API is used across business use cases, including:

- [Logistics Providers](#)
- [E-commerce Platforms](#)
- [Marketplaces](#)
- [Direct Retailers](#)

[We have a quick and easy set up process](#), so you can generate your first label in no time!

# API vs. Web App

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There are a few key differences between the Web App and our API integration.

## Web App

With our Web App, [you can easily set up an account](#) (usually in 5 minutes or less) and instantly start printing shipping labels for USPS, DHL, and more.

[You can also connect with more carriers](#), integrate with e-commerce platforms, and customize the experience for your business.

## API

[Developers can easily use the powerful Shippo API](#) to customize and automate shipping processes to meet your business' needs.

Shippo lets you integrate with multiple carriers through one API, and it's easy to implement with step-by-step sample code, pre-built client libraries, and test keys.

# API vs. Web App

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## What's the difference?

*With the API, you can build your own shipping experience!*

Our API tends to be more customizable and can provide a highly-automated shipping experience.

For lots of shippers, the API gives users more flexibility to ship higher quantities. Most of our high volume customers use our API to create labels because it gives them the freedom to create more than 100 in batches.

In addition, the API gives customers the ability to add more features like third-party billing, multi-piece shipments, Cash on Delivery, and a few others.

# API vs. Web App

Here's a high-level overview of the benefits of both:

	Web App	API
Get Rates	✓	✓
Create Label	✓	✓
Batch	100 Max	10,000 Max
Multi-piece	✓	✓
Refunds	✓	✓
Manifests	✓	✓
Notification Emails	✓	✓
Pickups	✓	✓
Alcohol	✓	✓
Third Party Billing		✓
Insurance	✓	✓
Dry Ice		✓
Saturday Delivery		✓
COD (Collection on Delivery)		✓
Reference Text	✓	✓
Bypass Address Validation	✓	✓
Return Labels	✓	✓

# API FAQ

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## How do I compare carriers with the API?

- *You can create, modify, delete, and specify which shipping carriers you want to use via the Shippo API. This allows you to connect your shipping account to compare and purchase different rates for each shipment. Once you add your own account, you will get your negotiated rates from your carrier account.*

## Tracking with the API

- *The Shippo Tracking API allows you to track shipments across all carriers with normalized data, full tracking history and real-time updates. When combined with webhooks, you will get push-style notifications anytime a tracking update occurs from the carrier.*

## International Shipping

- *You can still ship internationally with the API – including creating customs forms!*

## Support

- *Our support team still has you covered! We can quickly diagnose questions about the API – whether it's a quick question about how to retrieve rates or problem solving is something seems off. If you run into an issue, send your API code to [support@goshippo.com](mailto:support@goshippo.com) for help diagnosing.*