

Half a million gifts to be returned on ‘Takeback Tuesday’: Royal Mail prepares for surge with rollout of lockers, shops and parcel postboxes

05-01-2026

Royal Mail is reminding customers of new, more convenient ways to return parcels ahead of Takeback Tuesday – the busiest day of the year for sending back online purchases following the busy Christmas shopping season.

Royal Mail data shows returns are expected to rise by around 25 per cent this week, with Tuesday set to be the peak day as shoppers send back an expected half a million items bought in the run-up to Christmas.

This year marks the first returns season where customers can take advantage of several convenient new ways designed to make dropping off parcels with Royal Mail easier than ever. These include:

Proof of postage at postboxes: Customers can now drop off parcels that fit in any of the 115,000 postboxes – located within half a mile of 85 per cent of UK addresses – and request proof of postage using the Royal Mail app.

Postboxes of the future: Royal Mail is rolling out 3,500 postboxes of the future across the UK to allow customers to easily return larger parcels. These solar-powered postboxes feature built-in digital scanners, removing the need to access the app to obtain proof

of postage.

Royal Mail Shop outlets: More than 8,000 convenience stores across the UK have become Royal Mail Shop outlets, enabling customers to drop off parcels and purchase Royal Mail postage at more locations and longer opening hours.

Parcel lockers: More than 2,600 parcel lockers are now available in high-footfall locations such as Sainsbury's stores and other major retailers, offering customers a secure self-service returns option.

Customers can also continue to return parcels at any of the Post Office's 11,500 branches, Royal Mail's 1,200 Customer Service Points and 1,400 parcel postboxes — or choose to have their postie collect returns from home using the Parcel Collect service.

To find your nearest Royal Mail drop off point visit: [Services Near You | Royal Mail Group Ltd](#)

Ricky McAulay, UK Operations Director at Royal Mail, said: “We know customers want

returns to be quick, simple and on their terms. That's why Royal Mail has expanded the ways people can drop off parcels — from proof of postage at any postbox to thousands of new Royal Mail Shop outlets and parcel lockers across the UK. Whether

you prefer to hand it to your postie at your doorstep or drop it off whilst going to work or doing some shopping, Royal Mail is making returns more convenient than ever."

Source: [International Distribution Service](#)