

FIRST Championship Robot Transportation

As the excitement of event season begins, it's time for teams to start planning their journey to the *FIRST* Championship, including how to transport their robots. To help you prepare, we've outlined your robot transportation options, the steps to follow, and essential tips to make the process as smooth as possible.

Transportation Options:

Option 1: Ship the Robot Using the FedEx Shipping Voucher

- The FedEx shipping voucher is for **your robot only**.
- **Do not** use the voucher to ship a second crate with pit materials. Doing so is an abuse of the system and FedEx's generosity.

Option 2: Self-Transport (Hand-Carry)

If your robot is transported using any method **other than the FedEx voucher**, your team is considered a "Hand-Carry" team.

Examples of Hand-Carry methods:

- Driving the robot to Houston in your own vehicle.
- Arranging with other teams to consolidate and transport robots via a shared truck.
- Using alternative shipping arrangements made by your team.

The Compass Alliance has some resources on [team travel and robot shipping](#). There are some helpful tips and tricks in here that can help teams who fall under the Hand Carry category in the section for robot shipping.

What's Next?

Step 1: Complete the Robot Transportation Form

- You will receive an email from frclogistics@firstinspires.org with two forms: one for Hand-Carry teams and one for teams using the FedEx voucher. **Every team must complete one of these forms.** Failure to do so will result in repeated follow-ups via email.
- **Teams that choose the FedEx voucher will receive an email with the FedEx shipping document and a packet with detailed instructions.**

Step 2: Prepare the Robot Crate

- Follow the “[Shipping Crate Construction](#)” document on the [Robot Transportation webpage](#) for guidance.
- **Overweight Crate Fees:**
 - **Robot Crates:** The FedEx Voucher covers up to 400 lbs. Crates exceeding 400 lbs. incur additional charges of **\$114 per 100 lbs (or fraction thereof)**. These charges will also apply to additional crates shipped to drayage (not allowed under the FedEx voucher).

Important Notes:

- Teams are responsible for these additional charges. Notify Shepard Exposition Services (Houston) via:
 - **Phone:** 832-799-5700
 - **Email:** orders@shepardes.com
 - Always include your team number and *FIRST* Championship participation details.

Step 3: Shipping to *FIRST* Championship

- Ship your robot by the date provided or by the **Tuesday after your last event**.
- Schedule pickup with FedEx Freight Express: **1.800.332.0807**.
- Ensure a **loading dock** is available for FedEx trucks. If not, request a lift gate when scheduling.
- Keep and track your shipping paperwork online at www.fedex.com.

Step 4: Shipping Sealed Lead Acid Batteries

- Include 6 copies of the “**Non-Spillable Battery Inside**” sheet (found in the provided packet):
 - Attach 1 sheet to each of the 4 crate sides.
 - Attach 1 sheet to each side of the internal battery box.
- Review the [Shipping Crate Construction](#) document for more details.

Step 5: Shipping Home from Championship

- Teams using the FedEx voucher must visit:
 1. The ***FIRST* Ship Desk** at *FIRST* Championship.

2. The **Shepard Exposition Services Booth** before Load Out for confirmation and approval.
- Domestic shipments may take **2–4 weeks** for delivery. Plan accordingly.
 - If you are hand-carrying your robot home, ensure you remove your crate and materials. A **\$150 cleanup fee** will apply if items are left behind.

For further assistance, contact Shepard Exposition Services or refer to the detailed instructions provided in your robot shipping packet.

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1) **How soon will my team get the shipping document from *FIRST* Robotics Competition?**
Once your team completes the Robot Transportation form you can expect to receive your shipping documents in one to two business days.
- 2) **How are my overweight charges calculated?**
Overweight charges are \$114.00 per 100 lbs. Example: A 545 lb. crate is rounded up to 600 lbs., incurring an additional **\$228 fee**. Tool Crates are charged at **\$114 per 1-100 lbs.** of the total weight. Example: A 340 lb. tool crate incurs a **\$456 fee**.
- 3) **What if we are a team outside of the U.S. and need to make our own robot shipping arrangements to a Regional event or *FIRST* Championship?**
Please check the [Robot Transportation page](#) for information and [additional tips](#).
- 4) **Can we ship laptops that have Lithium –Ion Batteries?**
It is highly recommended that you do NOT ship laptops containing Lithium-Ion batteries. In the event you must make sure the proper labeling is on the outside of the crate and that you have all of the proper MSDS sheets for your particular laptop.
- 5) **I received a notification from Shepard that my crate is overweight, but we do not agree. How do we dispute this?**
When you arrive at *FIRST* Championship, please visit the Shepard ship desk immediately and ask them to reweigh the crate. **DO NOT** open the crate before it is reweighed. Once the crate is opened you cannot dispute the overweight fees.
- 6) **I need my robot for an event 3 weeks after *FIRST* Championship. Is there a way to guarantee it is delivered before then?**
We will do our best to ship and return the robots as soon as possible once *FIRST* Championship is over. However, there is no way to guarantee they will be returned sooner than four (4) weeks after the event for U.S. and Canada teams, and eight (8)

weeks for teams outside of the U.S. and Canada. If you need your robot returned before the timeframe listed above, we suggest you seek out alternative methods to get your robot home.

- 7) **I shipped my robot to *FIRST* Championship using the FedEx voucher, but we will not be using the voucher to return the robot. Do we still need to visit the *FIRST* Ship Desk?**
Yes, the *FIRST* Ship Desk needs to see every team who utilized the FedEx ship voucher before they leave so we can update our records with your plan to return the robot home.

Plan Ahead and Stay Informed

A smooth transportation process ensures your team can focus on what matters—competing and celebrating your success at *FIRST* Championship!