



Dangerous Goods Pre-Booking Checklist

A DG shipment rarely fails because the cargo is unsafe — it fails because two documents disagree. Clear these eleven checks before you book; the quick reference alongside carries the numbers you'll reach for.

A IDENTIFY & CLASSIFY — FROM THE SDS

- ☐ **Current SDS in hand; read Section 14**
The UN number, proper shipping name, class and packing group all come from §14. A stale SDS makes everything built on it wrong.
- ☐ **Proper shipping name used verbatim**
The regulated §14 name — not a brand or model. N.O.S. (not-otherwise-specified) entries also need the technical name in brackets.
- ☐ **UN number matches the packing configuration**
Shipped alone vs in / with equipment is a different UN number (see the matrix). Confirm class and packing group agree with §14.

B LITHIUM BATTERIES — THE CASE THAT TRIPS MOST SHIPPERS

- ☐ **Chemistry and size read off the nameplate**
Ion or metal; watt-hours per cell and per battery, or grams of lithium. Read it, don't estimate — it sets how heavily it's regulated.
- ☐ **UN 38.3 test summary available on request**
You or the manufacturer can produce it; carriers increasingly ask before acceptance.
- ☐ **Air: state of charge $\leq 30\%$ and aircraft type confirmed**
Standalone lithium is cargo-aircraft-only; the $\leq 30\%$ charge rule applies (see air limits). Decide passenger vs cargo early.

C CHOOSE THE MODE, PACKAGING & ANY RELIEF

- ☐ **Mode fixed before the dangerous-goods declaration (DGD)**
Sea (IMDG), air (IATA DGR) and US road (49 CFR) need differently-built declarations. Air is far tighter — decide sea vs air first.
- ☐ **Packing instruction followed; UN-spec packaging where required**
The packing instruction is met and cited on the DGD — quantity limits, terminal protection, cushioning.
- ☐ **Limited or excepted quantity checked first**
Could it move as a Limited Quantity (diamond mark, often no DGD) or Excepted Quantity (E-code, minimal docs) before you default to full DG?

D RECONCILE THE PAPERWORK

- ☐ **DGD built, signed and mode-correct**
Matches §14 exactly; right form for the mode — DG Note for sea, IATA Shipper's Declaration for air.
- ☐ **Every document tells one story**
DGD, commercial invoice, packing list and package marks & labels agree on UN number, name, quantity and count. One mismatch stops it.

LITHIUM BATTERY UN NUMBERS

CHEMISTRY	ALONE	IN EQUIP.
Lithium-ion	UN3480	UN3481
Lithium-metal	UN3090	UN3091
Sodium-ion	UN3551	UN3552

+ UN3536 installed in a cargo transport unit.
Sodium-ion figures are for organic-electrolyte cells; aqueous-alkali types are UN2795.

AIR LIMITS AT A GLANCE

- **State of charge (air):** lithium-ion at $\leq 30\%$ (or $\leq 25\%$ indicated) — UN3480 alone, and from the 2026 IATA edition also UN3481 in / with equipment (> 2.7 Wh) and UN3556 vehicles (> 100 Wh).
- **Standalone lithium is cargo-aircraft-only:**
UN3480 (ion) and UN3090 (metal) are forbidden on passenger aircraft.
- **Size thresholds:** Li-ion cell ≤ 20 Wh / battery ≤ 100 Wh; Li-metal cell ≤ 1 g / battery ≤ 2 g.

VEHICLES & POWERED EQUIPMENT

UN3166	Flammable-liquid / gas / fuel-cell — engines: cars, loaders, generators.
UN3171	Non-lithium battery vehicle (e.g. lead-acid / wet).
UN3556	Lithium-ion battery powered — EVs, e-scooters, battery machinery.
UN3557	Lithium-metal battery powered.
UN3558	Sodium-ion battery powered.

WHAT MUST MATCH ACROSS THE DOCUMENTS



All four must agree on UN number, proper shipping name, class, packing group, quantity and package count. Any single mismatch is a stop.