

A GUIDE TO SHIPPING LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES

What are lithium-ion batteries?

Lithium-ion batteries (also known Li-ION batteries) are found in a variety of common household and personal items, including smartphones, laptops, tablets, e-readers, e-bikes, e-scooters, power tools, and even some toys and electronic cigarettes. They are also used in larger items like mobility scooters and some electric vehicles.

Why are they problematic to transport?

The safety of lithium-ion batteries depends on how they have been manufactured, used, and stored. Some of these batteries are sensitive to high temperatures and damage caused by crushing or impacts - all occurrences that can occur during transportation at sea.

When lithium-ion batteries fail, they can spontaneously combust and even explode, emitting dangerous gases and causing fires that are difficult to extinguish.

Does Britannia ship items that contain lithium-ion batteries?

Britannia member companies are obliged to follow guidance from our trade association, the British Association of Removers, and also to comply with restrictions imposed by the shipping lines. Therefore under current guidance, Britannia Movers is unable to ship items which contain lithium-ion batteries.

It may be possible for you to transport some smaller items such as e-readers, electric toothbrushes, and laptops in your personal luggage, but we recommend you check this in advance with your airline or travel provider.

What could happen if I ship an item containing a lithium-ion battery?

Aside from the fire risk, failure to declare a lithium-ion battery in your shipment (whether intentionally or in error) is treated by the shipping line as a misdeclaration. This is a serious offence under maritime law, and would lead to a substantial fine which is payable by the customer and is currently circa 30,000 US dollars.

In addition, the shipping line may confiscate and dispose of your whole consignment.

In order to avoid delays and serious safety and financial risks, please check your goods thoroughly for lithium-ion batteries before asking your mover to include them in your shipment.