# Delivery Shortages and Credits

A receiving check and a paper trail from discrepancy to verified resolution.

**YOUR FINISHED RESULT**

A record that shows what was ordered, what arrived, what can be sold and what still needs an answer.

## Use it on one delivery

Have the purchase order or order confirmation, packing slip and invoice available. Use the same item codes and unit sizes. Assign one person to document exceptions and another authorized person to review the money side.

| Inside | What it gives you |
|---|---|
| 2 / Receiving sequence | A clear separation between missing stock, held stock and open supply. |
| 3 / Worked delivery | A 60-unit order with both a shortage and damage. |
| 4-6 / Reusable forms | Receiving sheet, claim message and resolution tracker. |
| 7 / Weekly check and sources | A way to close the loop without counting promises as refunds. |

Free to use. No purchase or wholesale account required. Supplier terms determine claim deadlines and remedies; this guide does not promise credits or replace the supplier agreement.

# Keep three records separate

An order, a physical receipt and a bill describe different things.

## Before putting stock away

Compare the delivery with the expected items. Count the actual case pack and loose units. Record damaged or questionable stock as held, not available to sell. Follow your store procedures for the goods involved; get the required help for temperature, contamination or other safety concerns. [1]

| What happened? | Record it this way |
|---|---|
| Ordered but not delivered | Show missing units and ask whether they are backordered, canceled or disputed. Do not silently remove them from the order. |
| Delivered but damaged / wrong item | Show physically arrived units, then held units and their reason. Keep them out of sellable stock until disposition is approved. |
| Partial delivery | Record this receipt and leave the confirmed remainder open with a due date. Do not receive the whole order. |
| More units or a different pack arrived | Recount and ask for a corrected confirmation or return instructions. Do not silently change the unit cost. |

## Document the request

Attach the invoice reference, your count and clear photos of the item label and damage where relevant. Note the supplier contact, reporting method and its actual deadline. Retain disputed goods and packaging as directed until the return or disposal decision is documented. Do not agree to a remedy on the supplier's behalf.

**AT RECEIPT**

Write what you observed. If signing a delivery receipt, follow the supplier process for noting exceptions; a signature does not substitute for a claim or guarantee acceptance of one.

# One delivery, two different problems

Hypothetical paper-towel delivery. Order PO-204; invoice INV-810. Unit price $2.00, 12 rolls per case. No tax or freight adjustment in this illustration.

| Record | Units | Meaning |
|---|---|---|
| Ordered and billed | 60 | 5 cases x 12; line charge $120.00 |
| Physically arrived | 48 | 4 cases counted |
| Held for damage | 3 | Included in the 48 arrived |
| Sellable received | 45 | 48 - 3 |
| Missing from delivery | 12 | 60 - 48; not part of the damage count |
| Proposed credit request | 15 | 12 missing + 3 damaged; 15 x $2 = $30 |

The supplier confirms the missing 12 units will **not** be shipped and approves a $30 credit for the shortage plus damage. The store records the cancellation and the approved disposition of the three held units. Later, the bookkeeper verifies credit memo CM-94 for $30 and its application to this invoice.

**RESOLUTION CHECK**

A $120 line charge less a verified $30 credit leaves $90 for this line: 45 sellable units x $2. The credit is closed only after the actual accounting application is verified. Other invoice lines, tax and freight are outside this example.

**If the 12 missing units were backordered instead:** keep them open with a due date. Request only the applicable damage remedy at that point. Do not count a 12-unit credit and a later free replacement as two separate recoveries for the same shortage.

# Delivery check sheet

All quantities below are individual selling units. Attach more sheets for additional items.

**Store / supplier / date and time / receiver**

**Order / invoice / packing slip / units per case for each item**

| Item / pack | Ordered | Billed | Arrived | Held* | Sellable** | Missing*** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

*Held is included in arrived. **Sellable = arrived - held, after any other exclusions. ***Missing = max(0, expected for this delivery - arrived). If the order has planned split deliveries, use the expected quantity for this shipment and note the remaining order separately.

**Exception / photo reference / shipment expected quantity if split**

**Open remainder / confirmed due date / supplier contact / next action**

# Make a clear discrepancy request

Complete the facts before contacting the supplier. Use its required portal or claim process where applicable.

**MESSAGE STRUCTURE**

Subject: Delivery discrepancy - [invoice] / [delivery date]

Hello [contact], we checked [item and pack] against [order / invoice]. We expected [units] on this shipment; [units] arrived, including [units] held for [reason]. The sellable receipt is [units].

Please confirm the missing quantity's status and the remedy for the affected units. Our requested adjustment is [quantity x billed unit price], subject to your review. Evidence is attached: [count / photos / packing slip].

Please confirm any return requirements, claim reference and next update date. Thank you, [name / store / contact].

**What was expected, what arrived and what is disputed?**

**Requested remedy / calculation / supplier deadline and its source**

**Evidence attached / sender / sent date / case reference**

Use facts and the actual billed unit price. Include separate notes for deposits, tax, freight or discounts; do not assume each follows the same adjustment rule.

# Track one claim until it is resolved

A promise, a credit memo and an applied credit are different milestones. [2]

**Supplier / invoice / claim reference / owner / original request date**

| Milestone | Date / amount / reference |
|---|---|
| Claim sent: disputed units and amount | |
| Supplier response and approved remedy | |
| Return / replacement / cancellation completed | |
| Credit memo or refund actually received | |
| Bookkeeper verified application or bank receipt | |
| Remaining disputed quantity / amount | |
| Next action / owner / next review date | |
| Closed date / reviewer / resolution evidence | |

## Close only the part that is resolved

If $20 of a requested $30 is approved, track the other $10 as disputed until there is a documented decision. If the remedy is a replacement, record the actual receipt instead of treating it as cash. Have the bookkeeper prevent duplicate credits and inventory adjustments.

**Final explanation / links or file names for retained evidence**

# A weekly open-claims check

| Check | What to look for |
|---|---|
| Reporting deadline | Did the claim go through the correct channel on time? Record supplier-specific terms. |
| Waiting for a response | Is there a named contact, a last-contact date and a next follow-up date? |
| Credit approved | Has a memo arrived, and has it been matched to the correct bill or refund? |
| Replacement promised | Was it received and counted, or is it still open? |
| Closing the case | Can a second person understand the resolution from the saved evidence? |

Useful measures: number of open cases, age of the oldest unresolved case and value of **verified applied credits or received refunds**. Keep disputed requests out of the recovered-total calculation. These measures show follow-through; they are not a savings guarantee.

Research checked October 13, 2026. Click a source title to open it. Source organizations do not endorse MH Wholesale or these guides.

**1.** **Shopify Help | Receiving from a purchase order**
Separates the order agreement from physical receipts and accepted or rejected units.

**2.** **Intuit QuickBooks | Vendor credits and refunds**
Recording a credit and applying it to a bill are separate steps; treatment depends on the original transaction.

All store scenarios, numbers, schedules and blank forms are original illustrations. They are not customer results. Adapt the worksheets to your own records and approved procedures.