

## WHAT TO SEND TO SOMEONE WHO IS DEPLOYED

### ***FOOD AND DRINK***

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**Powdered drink mix** - Your service member will appreciate anything that can be mixed with water. In cold months, send hot beverage mixes such as cocoa, instant coffee, tea bags, and creamer. During warmer months, sweetened drink mixes such as lemonade and iced tea will be welcome.

**Meal enhancers** - Anything that can be mixed with MREs (Meals Ready to Eat), such as ramen noodles, seasoned salt, individual packets of hot sauce, mustard, relish, and ketchup.

**Quick protein** - Energy bars, tuna fish, sardines, non-perishable beef jerky, or beef summer sausage. Make sure the meat is labeled USDA Beef.

**Snacks** - Look for small, hard containers of chips, pretzels, and nuts. These are easier to carry than large containers. Avoid bags, which may burst under high pressure. If you do send large bags or containers, include small zipper-lock bags so your service member can pack smaller amounts of snacks to carry. Snack cakes, cheese crackers, and cookies are in high demand. Salty snacks are good for those deployed in the desert, especially in the summer months, because they will encourage your service member to drink more water.

**Candy and gum** - Avoid chocolate if your service member is in a warm climate. It will melt in the heat. Gum and other types of candy may soften and become gooey, so send these in plastic zipper-lock bags. Send plenty of extras for your service member to share, especially if he or she comes into contact with children.

### ***PERSONAL CARE AND CLOTHING***

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**Travel size items** - Choose small, travel-size containers of personal care products, and avoid aerosol cans. To keep liquids from spilling, cover the opening of the container with plastic wrap, then recap before shipping.

**Toiletries** - Toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss, cotton swabs, shaving lotion, disposable razors, shampoo, individually packaged tissues.

**Personal care** - Individually packaged baby wipes, eye drops, lip balm, lotion, aspirin or other pain reliever, feminine hygiene products for women.

**Foot care** - Moleskin, medicated foot powder, athlete's-foot ointment.

**Disposable hand warmers** - Send these during the winter if your service member is in a cold climate.

**Goggle-style sunglasses** - Your service member will appreciate these if he or she is deployed in the desert.

**Cotton socks and underwear** - Make sure the garments are made of 100 percent cotton rather than a cotton blend.

**Winter wear** - Fingerless gloves, stocking caps, long underwear, if the climate is cold.

## ***ENTERTAINMENT AND COMMUNICATION***

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**Reading material** - Paperback books, current magazines, comic books.

**Word games and puzzles** - Crossword puzzles, word searches, jigsaw puzzles.

**Games.** - Foam footballs and basketballs, Frisbees, Hacky Sacks, playing cards, yo-yos.

**Electronics** - Portable DVD player, CD player, DVDs, CDs, handheld electronic games.

**Batteries** - Size AA and D batteries are in high demand. If you're sending a battery-operated device, such as a CD player, remove the batteries so the appliance doesn't accidentally turn on during shipment. And remember: you cannot ship lithium-ion batteries.

**Disposable camera**

**Writing material** - Notepaper, envelopes, pens, pencils, and stamps.

**Phone cards** - Shop around to get the best deal on overseas minutes.

## ***REMINDERS OF HOME***

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In every care package, be sure to include a personal note or other special reminder of home. Photographs, drawings, and videotapes of your activities at home will be comforting to your service member. Here are some more ideas:

- Your children's art projects or schoolwork.
- A small scrapbook filled with mementos from home.
- A homemade cassette tape or CD of your service member's favorite songs.
- The Sunday comics from your local newspaper.

- Homemade goodies, such as cookies or brownies. Just be sure to pack these in an airtight container.