

Expedite or LTL?

A 2-minute guide for shippers who can't afford late freight

Most freight should ship LTL. Some freight shouldn't. This guide helps you tell the difference before a missed deadline does it for you.

1. The 5-question test

Answer yes to two or more, and a dedicated cargo van is worth pricing.

- Does the freight have a **hard deadline**, such as a line-down situation, an event, or a customer penalty?
- Would one day of delay **cost you more** than the price difference between LTL and a dedicated van?
- Is the load **small enough for one van** (a few pallets or a few thousand pounds)?
- Is the freight **fragile or high-value**, or something you don't want handled at multiple terminals?
- Do you need a **set pickup window**, a direct route, or a driver who calls ahead?

2. Side by side

	LTL	Dedicated cargo van
Handling	Moves through multiple terminals	Loaded once, delivered dock to dock
Timing	Quoted as a range of days	Pickup and delivery windows you set
Tracking	Terminal scans	Direct contact with the driver
Cost	Lower per shipment	Higher per shipment
Best for	Non-urgent, palletized freight	Time-critical, fragile, or high-value loads

3. The cost-of-delay check

(Cost of delay per day) x (days saved by going direct) vs. (extra cost of a dedicated van)

If the first number is larger, expediting pays for itself.

Illustrative example (use your own numbers)

A stalled production line costs \$2,500 per day. LTL transit would add 2 days over a direct van. Delay cost avoided: 2 x \$2,500 = \$5,000. If the van costs \$1,200 more than LTL, the van saves \$3,800.

4. Ready-for-pickup checklist

Hand this to your dock team. Missing details are the most common cause of avoidable delays at pickup.

- **Bill of lading** completed, with piece count and weights
- **Dimensions** of each piece or pallet, including the tallest and longest
- **Packaging and labeling** secure, with pickup and delivery references visible
- **Dock hours**, contact name, and phone number at both ends
- **Appointment, gate, or site-access requirements** (badges, check-in, safety gear)
- **Special handling** noted: fragile, temperature, orientation, do-not-stack

5. When to call

If your load passes the test above, send the lane and the deadline. You'll hear from the driver who would haul it, not a call center.

Have a load that can't wait?

Request a lane quote at voyageronelogistics.com/contact or call (251) 289-9597.

Voyager One Logistics is an owner-operated expedite cargo van carrier based in Mobile, AL. 23+ years of professional driving. This guide is general information; actual rates and transit times depend on the lane, load, and timing.