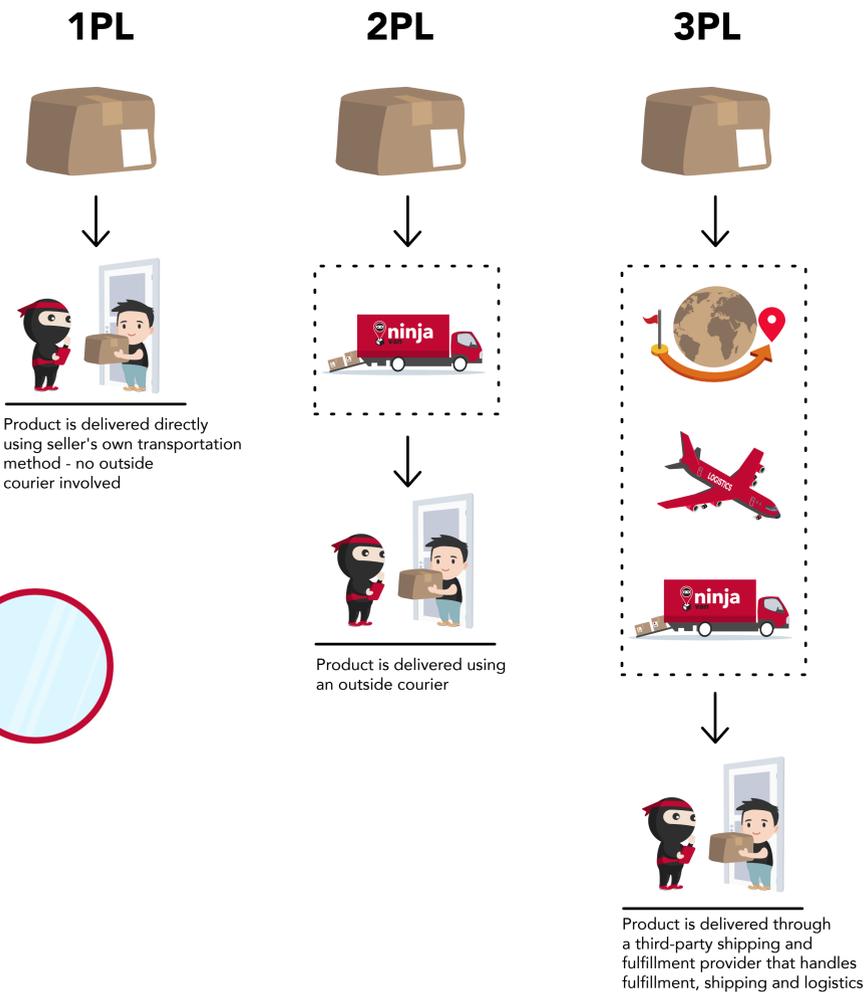


Logistics Fulfillment 101: How Does 3PL Work?



As your ecommerce business grows, you may find order fulfillment taking over more and more of your day-to-day work. Eventually, you'll find that fulfilling customer orders in-house is no longer practical.

This is where **third-party logistics (3PL)** comes to the rescue. A 3PL business accepts outsourcing of ecommerce logistics processes – they can pick, pack and ship all your orders domestically and internationally.



The 3PL business takes over the most repetitive parts of logistics: inventory management, warehousing, and fulfillment, among others – allowing you to focus on your business.

The 3PL order fulfillment process

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→ **Warehousing:** Because 3PL companies usually deal with stores that ship large volumes of stock, 3PL businesses have their inventory on hand in their warehouses.
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→ **Picking:** Every day, the 3PL's warehouse picking team will receive a picking list of items that were ordered that day, quantities, and warehouse storage locations; they will collect the items and prepare them for delivery.
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→ **Packing:** The warehouse team will get the items securely packed for shipping, using materials specific to the items being shipped.
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→ **Shipping:** 3PLs will send the item through carrier partners (like Ninja Van) that deliver to the location specified in the order. Many 3PLs will also purchase and print the shipping labels.
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→ **Returns:** 3PLs that offer return processing services will process any returns, and restock or dispose of the item depending on the store's policies.

Benefits of 3PL

- **Saves time and money:** Stores no longer need to buy or rent warehouse space, logistics infrastructure, and labor needed to do in-house fulfillment
- **Increases speed & accuracy:** 3PL services combine a multitude of logistics functions into one business – a "one stop shop" for stores that want to scale up without increasing complexity
- **Instant industry expertise:** 3PLs are staffed by ecommerce logistics professionals, ensuring your full compliance with the latest industry regulations and trends
- **Expanded reach:** The best 3PL companies have a wide network of fulfillment centers (sometimes spanning the whole world) that no in-house operation can match

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