Inbound receiving and put-away

Process Definition Document (PDD): template and worked example

Example company (fictional): Lusolog Armazéns S.A., a third-party logistics provider with a distribution centre in Azambuja, Portugal (about 210 employees).

Document control

Field	Value
Process name	Inbound receiving and put-away
Process owner	[Name, role]
Prepared by	[Name]
Reviewed by	[Names of the people who do the work]
Approved by	[Name, date]
Version	1.0 (as-is)
Status	Draft

How to use this template

This is a complete process definition document (PDD) for inbound receiving and put-away, also called goods receipt, warehouse inbound process or dock-to-stock. It describes how pallet deliveries are checked in at the gate, unloaded, counted against the advance shipping notice, inspected, labelled and stored, until the stock is available to the client in the warehouse management system. The company is fictional, but the roles, systems and exceptions are typical of a pallet warehouse.

Use it as a starting point. Replace the company details, keep the sections, and walk the floor with the gate clerks, operators and supervisors, because the real process is often different from the one on paper. Most warehouses change the discrepancy tolerance, the counting rule per client and the way advance notices arrive. Cross-docking, returns, cold storage and customs are left out on purpose.

- Replace the company, the WMS and the yard tool with yours. If you have no WMS, name the sheet or the paper form where receipts are recorded.
- Set your own discrepancy tolerance in step 17. The 2% of line value used here depends on the product value and the client contract.
- Write down the counting rule per client. Some clients accept a sample count, others require a full count, and that changes unloading time a lot.
- Add your own special handling: temperature, hazardous goods, serial numbers or quarantine rules, depending on what you store.
- Check how long pallets really wait in the receiving area. Put-away delays are often caused by staffing between inbound and outbound, not by the process itself.

1. Purpose and scope

This procedure describes how Lusolog Armazéns S.A. receives pallet deliveries and puts them away, from the moment a client announces a shipment or a truck arrives at the gate to the moment the pallets are in a storage location and the stock is confirmed available to the client. It gives the gate, the receiving team, supervisors, quality, forklift drivers and account managers one shared description of who does what, so that every pallet is counted, traceable and stored quickly, and so that damage and differences are documented before the carrier leaves.

In scope

- Pallet deliveries for retail, cosmetics and household clients
- Advance shipping notices received by EDI or email
- Gate registration, dock door assignment and unloading
- Counting, labelling and damage checks
- Discrepancy handling with the client
- Put-away to storage locations and stock confirmation

Out of scope

- Cross-docking
- Returns processing
- Cold storage
- Customs clearance

2. Process at a glance

Item	Description
Trigger	A client sends an advance shipping notice (ASN), or a truck arrives at the gate.
Starts when	The client sends the ASN, usually one day before arrival.
Ends when	The pallets are put away and the WMS shows the stock as available in the client portal.
Inputs	Advance shipping notice (EDI or email), CMR transport document, Pallets and cartons, Client counting rule, Client instructions on discrepancies
Outputs	Receipt in the WMS, Discrepancy report where needed, Pallet labels with batch and expiry date, Pallets in storage locations, Signed CMR returned to the carrier, Stock visible in the client portal
Volume	About 46,000 inbound deliveries a year, roughly 180 per working day
Working hours	Two shifts, 06:00 to 22:00, Monday to Saturday.

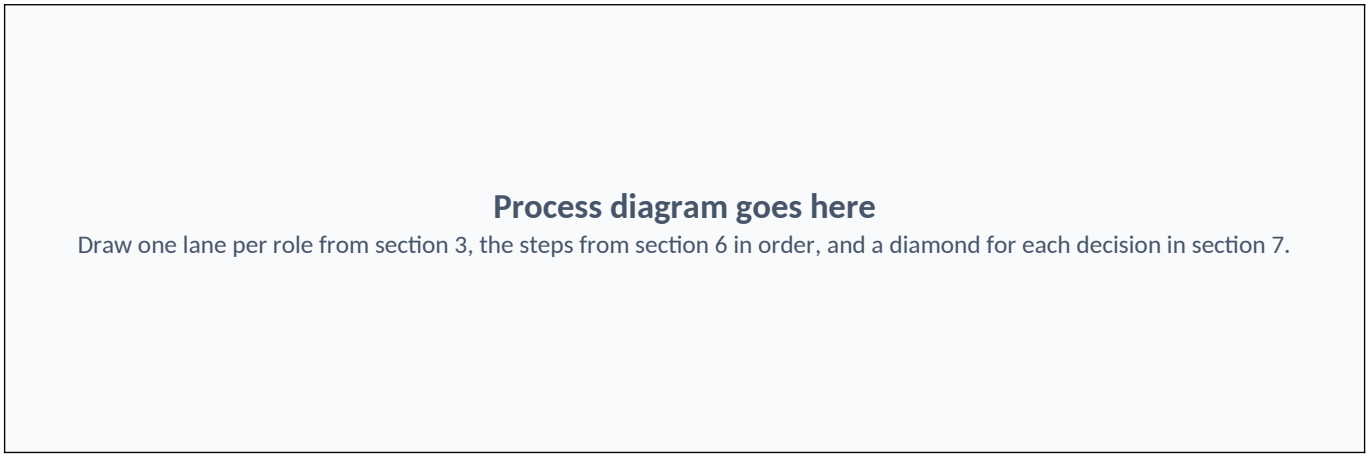
3. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Client (external)	Sends the advance shipping notice, answers discrepancy reports and decides whether to accept unannounced deliveries.
Carrier (external)	Delivers the goods and hands over the CMR transport document at the gate.
Gate Clerk	Registers arriving trucks, matches them to the ASN, assigns dock doors, retypes email ASNs and closes the yard entry.
Receiving Operator	Opens and checks the truck, unloads, scans and counts pallets, flags discrepancies, and prints and applies labels using a handheld scanner.
Receiving Supervisor	Reviews discrepancies, decides how to receive, orders recounts, approves receipts with differences and reassigns blocked locations.
Quality Inspector	Inspects damaged or sampled pallets and records accept, quarantine or reject in the WMS.
Forklift Driver	Takes pallets from the receiving area to the assigned locations and confirms each placement by scanning.
Client Account Manager	Talks to the client about unannounced deliveries and discrepancies, and collects instructions.
Manhattan WMS (system)	Proposes a storage location for each pallet automatically and updates stock when the pallet is placed.

4. Systems

- Manhattan WMS: receiving, locations and stock
- Client ASN via EDI or email attachment
- Handheld RF scanners and label printers
- Yard booking spreadsheet in Excel
- Client portal for stock visibility

5. Process map



6. Procedure, step by step

#	Step	Who	What happens	System	Output
1	Send the ASN	Client	Sends the advance shipping notice by EDI or email, usually one day before arrival.	EDI, email	ASN received
2	Enter an email ASN	Gate Clerk	If the ASN arrives by email, retypes it into the WMS as an expected receipt. About 35% of ASNs arrive this way, and each takes 10 to 15 minutes.	Manhattan WMS	Expected receipt in the WMS
3	Arrive and hand over the CMR	Carrier	The carrier arrives and the driver gives the CMR transport document to the Gate Clerk.	Paper CMR	CMR at the gate
4	Register the truck	Gate Clerk	Registers the truck in the yard spreadsheet and matches it to the ASN in the WMS. This takes 4 to 6 minutes.	Excel, Manhattan WMS	Truck registered and matched
5	Handle a delivery without an ASN	Client Account Manager	If no ASN exists, the Gate Clerk calls the account manager, who confirms with the client whether to accept the delivery. This happens in about 7% of arrivals and takes 20 to 60 minutes.	Phone, email	Accept or refuse decision
6	Assign a dock door	Gate Clerk	Assigns a dock door and notifies the Receiving Operator by radio. Trucks wait 20 to 90 minutes for a free door.	Excel, radio	Dock door assigned
7	Check seals and damage	Receiving Operator	Opens the truck and checks seals and visible damage, taking photos with the handheld. This takes about 5 minutes.	Handheld scanner	Seal and damage check with photos
8	Record visible damage	Receiving Operator	If pallets are visibly damaged, notes the damage on the CMR and calls the Quality Inspector. This applies to about 9% of deliveries.	CMR, handheld	Damage noted on the CMR
9	Unload and scan pallets	Receiving Operator	Unloads the pallets and scans each pallet label against the ASN in the WMS. This takes 35 to	Manhattan WMS, scanner	Scanned pallets

#	Step	Who	What happens	System	Output
			50 minutes per truck.		
10	Count cartons	Receiving Operator	Counts cartons on a sample or in full, depending on the client's rule. This takes 20 to 30 minutes.	Manhattan WMS, scanner	Carton count
11	Flag a discrepancy	Receiving Operator	If the scanned quantity or product code differs from the ASN, flags a discrepancy in the WMS. This happens in about 14% of deliveries.	Manhattan WMS	Discrepancy flagged
12	Review the discrepancy	Receiving Supervisor	Reviews each discrepancy, recounts if needed and decides to receive as is, receive partially or hold the goods. This takes 15 to 40 minutes.	Manhattan WMS	Receiving decision
13	Report to the client	Client Account Manager	Emails the client with the discrepancy report and waits for instructions. The pallets stay in the receiving area for 2 to 24 hours.	Email	Client instructions
14	Order a full recount	Receiving Supervisor	If the client rejects the recount result, orders a full recount and the operator repeats steps 9 and 10. This rework loop affects about 20% of discrepancies.	Manhattan WMS	Recount ordered
15	Inspect damaged or sampled pallets	Quality Inspector	Inspects damaged or sampled pallets and records accept, quarantine or reject in the WMS. This takes 10 to 20 minutes.	Manhattan WMS	Quality status per pallet
16	Print and apply labels	Receiving Operator	Prints WMS pallet labels with batch and expiry date and applies them. This takes 10 to 15 minutes.	Label printer, Manhattan WMS	Labelled pallets
17	Approve the receipt	Receiving Supervisor	Approves receipts with differences over 2% of line value, or with any quarantined pallets. About 16% need approval. Other receipts close automatically.	Manhattan WMS	Approved receipt
18	Propose storage locations	Manhattan WMS (system)	The WMS proposes a storage location for each pallet by product class and slot size. No one keys this step; the proposal appears on the forklift scanner.	Manhattan WMS	Proposed locations
19	Put away the pallets	Forklift Driver	Picks up each pallet from the receiving area, scans the pallet and the location label, and places it. This takes 3 to 5 minutes per pallet, after 30 to 120 minutes of waiting in the receiving area.	Scanner, forklift	Pallets in locations
20	Reassign a blocked location	Receiving Supervisor	If the proposed location is full or blocked, the driver calls the supervisor, who reassigns a location manually. This applies to about 6% of pallets.	Manhattan WMS	New location assigned
21	Release stock and close the entry	Gate Clerk	The WMS updates stock to available and the client portal shows the new quantity. The Gate Clerk closes the yard entry and returns the signed CMR to the carrier. This takes about 5 minutes.	Manhattan WMS, Excel	Stock available, CMR returned

7. Decision points and business rules

- Did the ASN arrive by email? Yes: the Gate Clerk retypes it into the WMS (step 2). About 35% of ASNs.
- Does an ASN exist for this delivery? No: the Gate Clerk calls the Client Account Manager, who confirms with the client whether to accept it (step 5). About 7% of arrivals.
- Are pallets visibly damaged? Yes: the operator notes it on the CMR and calls the Quality Inspector (step 8). About 9% of deliveries.
- Do the scanned quantity or product code match the ASN? No: the operator flags a discrepancy and the Receiving Supervisor decides to receive as is, receive partially or hold (steps 11 and 12). About 14% of deliveries.

- Does the client reject the recount result? Yes: the supervisor orders a full recount and the operator repeats steps 9 and 10 (step 14). About 20% of discrepancies.
- Is the difference over 2% of line value, or is any pallet quarantined? Yes: the Receiving Supervisor must approve the receipt. No: it closes automatically (step 17).
- Is the proposed location full or blocked? Yes: the supervisor reassigns a location manually (step 20). About 6% of pallets.

8. Exceptions

- Delivery arrives outside the booked time slot (about 20%): trucks queue until a door is free, or are turned away after 3 hours.
- Mixed pallets with several products (about 5%): the operator breaks them down and relabels, which adds about 30 minutes.
- Goods without a barcode or with the wrong barcode (about 4%): labels are created manually.
- Hazardous goods not on the client contract (under 1%): refused.

9. Controls

- Segregation of duties: the operator who counts goods does not approve receipts with differences.
- GDP-style traceability for cosmetics: batch and expiry are scanned and stored for every pallet.
- Damage is recorded on the CMR before the driver leaves, to preserve claims against the carrier.
- Every WMS transaction records user, time and scanner ID, which gives an audit trail.
- Monthly cycle counts check stock accuracy.

10. Known issues today

- Email ASNs have to be retyped, and typing errors create false discrepancies.
- The yard spreadsheet is edited by two clerks and often shows conflicting information.
- Clients answer discrepancy emails slowly, so pallets block receiving space for a day or more.
- Supervisors are called for all discrepancies, even small ones, and become a bottleneck at shift start.
- Put-away is delayed when drivers move to outbound picking.

11. RACI matrix

R = responsible (does the work), A = accountable (owns the outcome), C = consulted, I = informed.

Activity	Gate Clerk	Operator	Supervisor	Quality	Forklift Driver	Account Manager
Register the truck and match the ASN	A/R	I				C
Unload, scan and count	I	A/R	I			
Record visible damage		R	A	C		
Resolve discrepancies		R	A			C
Inspect damaged or sampled pallets		I	I	A/R		
Report discrepancies to the client			C			A/R
Approve receipts with differences		I	A/R	C		I
Put away pallets		I	A		R	

12. KPIs

KPI	Definition	Target
Dock-to-stock time	Time from truck arrival at the gate to stock being available in the WMS. Target: under 4 hours.	[set]
Receiving accuracy	Share of deliveries received without a discrepancy. Today 86%.	[set]
Average truck waiting time	Average minutes between arrival at the gate and a free dock door.	[set]
Pallets in the receiving area over 24 hours	Number of pallets still in the receiving area more than 24 hours after being unloaded, counted at the start of each shift.	[set]
Email ASN share	Share of advance notices that arrive by email rather than EDI and have to be retyped.	[set]

13. Revision history

Version	Date	Author	Change
1.0	[date]	[name]	First as-is version

Free template from processfix.ai. You may copy and adapt it. The company in the example is fictional.