



Importing into the US Guideline/Checklist

Importing into the US is relatively easy, however it is essential that every importer familiarizes themselves with the importation requirement that is mandated by US Customs and Border Protection.

Who May Import?

An owner or purchaser of merchandise is allowed to import and file an entry with US Customs. They are also known as the “importer of record”. This includes anyone with an economic interest, with permission to act as the importer of record. Foreign companies and/or individuals may also enter goods and be importers of record, by going through an authorized agent in the US. These agents, acting on their behalf, must be authorized to receive the service of processing on behalf of the importer, better known as a customs broker.

Documents Required from Importers by a Customs Broker:

1. Power of Attorney (and Terms and Conditions)
 - Also known as Customs Form 5291
 - Establishing a POA is necessary in the process of Importing into the US.
 - This document establishes the right to make an entry by a customs broker on behalf of the importer
 - A blank POA will be provided by Ram International upon first quote / booking.
 - Terms and Conditions vary from one broker to another. Importer of Record issuing a POA to the broker of their choice must agree to the terms and conditions attached to the Power of Attorney, by signing the forms with their initials, before the POA can be fully valid.
 - A properly executed POA, along with the initialed Terms and Condition pages, must be on file with your customs broker before they are able to make any entry on your behalf, including filing an ISF 10+2 on your behalf.

2. Customs Form 5106
 - This is used by US Customs to input the name, physical address, and IRS number of the importer of record into their database.
 - This must be on file for all consignees at the time of entry.
 - This form must be completed by the Importer of Record and filed with United States Customs, prior to importation.
 - Once this form is completed by the Importer, please send back to Ram International and we can file on your behalf.
 - Form 5106 can be found at the link shown below.
[\(<https://www.cbp.gov/document/forms/form-5106-importer-id-input-record>\)](https://www.cbp.gov/document/forms/form-5106-importer-id-input-record)



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PLEASE NOTE, IF YOU ARE A FOREIGN IMPORTER, YOU MUST OBTAIN A US EIN#

PLEASE CALL THE IRS AT +1-267-941-1099 AND THEY WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH AN EIN (EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER)

3. Customs Surety Bond

- “A customs surety bond is a contract used for guaranteeing that a specific obligation will be fulfilled between customs and an importer for any given import transaction. The main purpose of a customs bond is to ensure that the payment of import duties, taxes and fees owed to the federal government will be paid”
- If you are importing merchandise into the United States, (U.S.) for commercial purposes, that are valued over \$2,500, or a commodity subject to other federal agencies requirements (i.e. firearms or food), you must post a Customs bond.
- You have the option of obtaining a "single entry" or "continuous bond".
The type of bond you elect to obtain ultimately depends on how often you import into the U.S. For instance, if you only import on occasion, the single entry bond is recommended. Note that single entry bonds are only good for up to 5 shipments within a year. You will also be required to elect for an ISF bond, along with the single entry bond for ocean shipments. If you import frequently and through various ports of entry, the continuous bond is beneficial and economically the best choice. This is a yearly subscription and renewal.
- A continuous bond is 10% of duties, taxes and fees paid for the 12-month period. The minimum amount is \$50,000.00. Current bond formulas can be found at www.CBP.gov.
- A single entry bond is generally in an amount not less than the total entered value, plus any duties, taxes and fees. The minimum amount for a single transaction bond is \$100.00.
- Customs brokers, such as Ram International, can help and work as your agent to apply for the bond on your behalf. You should submit a bond application form to your customs broker in order for them to issue the bond.
- The key is to fill in as much information as you can on the form. Your broker is there to guide you.



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When to Request for a Quote from your Freight Forwarder?

For Amazon sellers looking to request for quotation, it is very important to note that you must have a supplier, goods chosen and ready for production, along with the complete details of your shipment such as:

- Origin Pick-up
- Final Destination – RAM Chicago, St Louis or Dallas Facility
- # of pieces/cartons (Supplier can advise)
- Dimensions of each carton (Supplier can advise)
- Weight per carton (Supplier can advise)
- Terms of Sale / Incoterms (i.e. FOB, EXW)
- Mode of Transport – Air or Ocean

** Having all of this information available before requesting a quote from your freight forwarder will help the experts provide more accurate pricing**

What is an HTS Code?

- All merchandise coming in to the US are statistically categorized. Each item will have its own applicable tariff rates.
- It is very important to know that your customs broker or freight forwarder cannot delegate or assign an HTS code to use for your shipment.
- Typically, your supplier provides the HTS code for your product.
- As an importer, you must be in agreeance to the code that is being used, as this will dictate the duty rate applicable for your shipment, which you are ultimately responsible for.
- Your customs broker may only suggest and help provide binding rulings associated to your HTS code.



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I am accepting the quote. What happens next?

- If the quote you received from Ram International, satisfies your needs and you are willing to accept, all customs forms such as, POA, 5106, and terms and conditions must be executed and sent back to your agent.
- If you are applying for a continuous bond, the bond application must also be filled out and sent back to your agent.
- Credit card information must be provided, to secure the transaction, but only to be kept **secure**, in your organizational records, where your forms will also be stored, to serve as a security deposit. Payment transactions will only be conducted with your approval, after a finalized invoice has been issued by the agent you are working with.
- Ram will then liaise with their agent overseas to contact your shipper to begin the booking arrangements.
- Sit back, relax, and wait for the shipment to arrive. Your forwarding agent will contact you via email with updates, as movement of your shipment progresses.
- Your final invoice should come before the freight arrives or becomes available at the final port of destination.
- Payment must be secured as soon possible, after receipt of the final invoice, to help ensure timely customs and freight release.